

CASE STUDY

June 2016



COOLCALIFORNIA CLIMATE LEADER

The Refill Shoppe **Ventura CA**

Reducing Waste, One Bottle at a Time



Michelle Stevens demonstrating the refilling service that The Refill Shoppe provides.

The Refill Shoppe is an eco-conscious store offering quality bath, body, home and cleaning liquids in bulk. By allowing customers to refill their own bottle, or purchasing one of the many bottles that the store carries, customers can do their part to reduce waste in a fun way. The Refill Shoppe carries shampoo, conditioner, lotion, bath gel, bubble bath, dish soap, laundry detergent, window cleaner, castile soap and more. Fragrances and essential oils can be added to most of the products and re-useable water bottles, coffee mugs, lunch containers, and utensils are also offered for sale.

The owners of The Refill Shoppe believe that reusing is better than recycling, which is why they have gone the extra mile to get as many materials reused as they can. All cardboard boxes are saved and provide to customers for reuse. All packing materials are given to a local woman with an Internet shipping business. A local painter is given the buckets that are used to deliver bulk items to the store.



The store continues to look for creative ways to use recycled items such as decorating the store.



BUSINESS SNAPSHOT

The Refill Shoppe is an eco-conscious store offering quality bath, body, home and cleaning liquids in bulk.

Green Practices:

- Reduced energy use by not using any heating or air conditioning
- Installed LED and CFL light bulbs
- Purchased an ENERGY STAR refrigerator for the break room
- Planted drought resistant plants
- Reduced purchasing of items that come in plastic bags
- Upcycled most of the office furnishings
- Reduced the use of printed marketing materials
- Use 100% clean energy



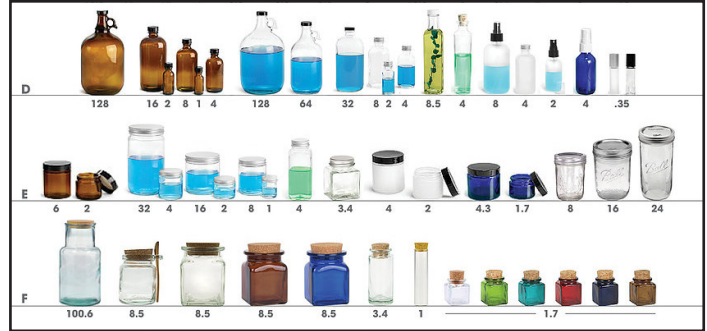
The Refill Shoppe has also come up with creative ways to use recycled and reclaimed materials to decorate the store such as using cardboard boxes to make the signage in the office. They use 100% clean energy in their business operations; every kilowatt of electricity used is now a kilowatt produced and put on the grid by a pollution-free renewable source.



Air Resources Board's Research Division Chief Bart Croes with The Refill Shoppe owner Michelle Stevens.

The Refill Shoppe installed CFL and LED lighting, most of which are turned off during non-business hours. They planted drought-resistant plants in front of the shop and use the water left in the dog bowl to water the plants at the end of each day. They provide filtered water in the break room, purchased an ENERGY STAR refrigerator, and provide reusable plates, cups, and bowls for their employees. They changed credit card processors to collect customer signatures and send receipts digitally, use only non-toxic and biodegradable cleaners, and do not use any heating or air conditioning. The very nature of their business makes The Refill Shoppe an ambassador for sustainability.

The Refill Shoppe began with environmentally conscious goals in mind, but the CoolCalifornia calculator gave perspective on how the store compares to other businesses and how their actions can reduce their carbon footprint. The calculator has proven to be useful because it has allowed the business owners to push themselves to constantly find ways to improve their business model.



The Refill Shoppe refills a variety of containers for many purposes.

The Refill Shoppe is actively involved in their community. The store supports events such as the Charter School's Trash-a-thon, donating 1% of sales to local environmental non-profits such as the Los Padres Forest Watch and Ventura Surfrider. The Refill Shoppe also hosted a workshop in the area on worm composting.

"This earth, our planet, is so important, any step that we can take definitely helps."

- Michelle Stevens, Owner of The Refill Shoppe

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