

CASE STUDY

Nov 2017



COOLCALIFORNIA BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Toole's Garage **San Carlos, CA**

Extending Hybrid Vehicle Battery Life: Good for Business and the Environment!



Staff performing test on hybrid vehicle battery.



Beau Toole, Service Manager of Toole's Garage, being presented the Business of the Year award by Richard Corey, Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board (CARB), and La Ronda Bowen, Ombudsman of CARB.

Toole's Garage is a family owned and operated automotive repair shop that specializes in hybrid battery maintenance. This certified green business is one of the only shops in the Bay Area that has the technology for conditioning and reviving old hybrid batteries, preventing toxic nickel metal halide (NiMH) battery waste from being sent to landfills. These efforts support electric vehicle usage by keeping these vehicles on the road longer and preventing expensive battery replacement costs for customers.

Toole's commitment to sustainability extends far beyond the services they provide. The shop is committed to minimizing their carbon footprint by taking steps to reduce their material waste and energy usage. Auto maintenance businesses often deal with a large amount of paperwork but Toole's does things differently. All customer paperwork is completed electronically. Employees are given tablets for entering customer information and

performing vehicle inspections, preventing any need for paper waste. Customer car check-ups are provided through an online portal where customers can view a detailed list of suggested maintenance for their vehicle. The shop also provides customers with shuttle rides using their own Prius fleet.

BUSINESS SNAPSHOT

Toole's Garage has taken a bold stance for environmental sustainability through changes to daily operations and a comprehensive set of facility improvements.

Sustainable practices:

- Staff trained on building energy performance and reduced need for air conditioning
- All scrap metal is recycled
- All customer service is performed electronically
- Air compressor is turned off every evening

Facility Renovations:

- Installed 43 kW of solar panels, powering the entire garage
- Replaced all office lighting with LEDs
- Installed drought tolerant landscape
- Installed water refill station and electric hand dryer



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CLIMATE LEADER

Staff have even implemented policies to cut daily energy usage including: reduced lighting hours, powering down of all equipment upon closing, setting a higher air conditioning setpoint, and using blinds effectively for cooling. To cut waste, all scrap metal is recycled, each employee is given a reusable water bottle, and a water refill station was installed for customers. All shop lighting was recently replaced with LEDs and landscaping was replaced with drought-tolerant plants. The shop is also very proud to announce the addition of a high capacity solar panel array atop their facility.



New 43 kW solar panel array installed on top of Toole's Garage

This 43 kW solar system has the capacity to power the entire garage and even run the meter backward! The shop estimates it is saving over \$500 a month on electricity costs.

Toole's is also actively engaged in community outreach. The business held a women's car care clinic and a Boy Scouts of America certification class, highlighting how smart car choices can reduce GHG emissions. Staff also attended a sustainability event held by San Mateo County to learn how they can engage with the community to promote climate action. The shop also offers its proprietary battery conditioning equipment to other local auto shops to further reduce battery waste being sent to landfills.



Toole's Garage team, standing proud for their eco-minded business

"We are always thinking of how to change our business operations to be more sustainable"

- Dave Toole, Owner of Toole's Garage



CONTACT INFORMATION

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