Sun Day

1:00 pm - 4:30 pm | Michael Towbes Library Plaza, 40 E Anapamu St
a day of action celebrating the power of clean energy

What is Sun Day?

Sun Day is a nationwide day of action and celebration where people come together to advocate for clean energy solutions such as solar, wind, and battery storage. Organized by environmental and grassroots organizations across the country, the September 21 gatherings aim to build public support, highlight the cost-effectiveness of renewable energy, and advance policies that accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels and toward a clean energy future.

Thanks to our amazing Santa Barbara Sun Day hosts, our community has the chance to come together to learn more about clean energy opportunities, gain new perspectives on the climate crisis, and support the changes already underway in our region. At Santa Barbara's Sun Day event, community members will hear from panels of experienced clean energy professionals who will share insights on how the transition to a sustainable future can be achieved. In addition to the panels, attendees can explore booths hosted by environmental and grassroots organizations to learn more about who is driving the process of decarbonization in our community, and how you can get involved.

Santa Barbara Sun Day Hosts

3C-REN
Santa Barbara Public Library
Clean Coalition
Seal of the City of Santa Barbara, California
Central Coast Community Energy
Sierra Club Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter
City of Santa Barbara Sustainability & Resilience
Community Environmental Council
Society of Fearless Grandmothers Santa Barbara

BOOTHS

Learn more about clean energy and how you can get involved from local organizations throughout the event!

Organizations

350 Santa Barbara
3C-REN
City of SB Sustainability and Resilience Dept
Environmental Defense Center
Make Polluters Pay
Santa Barbara County Sustainability Division
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
Santa Barbara Public Library Foundation
SBCAN
Sierra Club SB
Society of Fearless Grandmothers
Unite to Light
Central Coast Community Energy

Elected Officials Booth

1:00 pm
Joan Hartmann, SB County Supervisor

1:30 pm
Monica Solorzano, Vice Mayor, City of Carpinteria

2:00 pm
Kristen Sneddon, SB City Council

EVENTS

Opening Comments

1:30 pm | Lower Library Plaza

Emily Engel

Sierra Club

Emily Engel is a local leader with the Sierra Club, one of the nation's most influential grassroots environmental organizations. She supports campaigns to protect natural resources, reduce fossil fuel dependence, and expand access to clean energy.

Em Johnson

CEC

Em Johnson is the Director of Climate Resilience at the Community Environmental Council, guiding efforts to help California's Central Coast adapt and thrive in the face of climate change. She brings experience in rural innovation and community-driven climate solutions.

Pamela Bury

Fearless Grandmothers SB

Pamela Bury is an active member of Fearless Grandmothers Santa Barbara, an intergenerational group dedicated to climate justice and social equity. She helps mobilize community voices to demand bold action on the climate crisis.

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Alelia Parenteau

The City of Santa Barbara

Alelia Parenteau is the City of Santa Barbara's Sustainability & Resilience Director, where she leads efforts to expand clean energy, reduce emissions, and prepare the community for climate impacts. Under her leadership, the City has advanced policies and programs that strengthen local resilience and promote a sustainable future.

Opening Comments: Leah Stokes

Professor of Environmental Politics at UC Santa Barbara

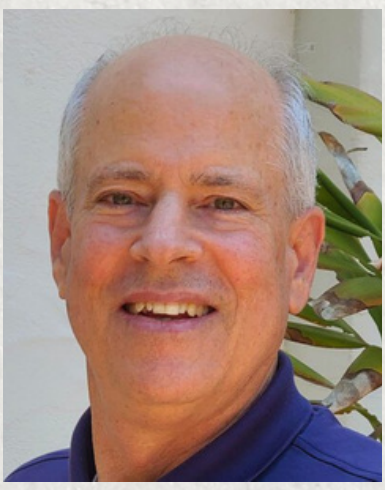
An expert in climate and energy policy,Leah Stokes is the author of the award-winning bookShort Circuiting Policy, which examines the role of utilities in undermining regulation and promoting climate denial. She was named to 2022 TIME100 Next and Business Insider 2022 Climate Action 30 lists. Trained at MIT, Columbia, and the University of Toronto, Stokes has been published in top scholarly journals, as well as theNew York Times,Washington Post, and other popular media outlets. She is the Anton Vonk Associate Professor of Environmental Politics at the University of California, Santa Barbara, a 2023-24 fellow of the Harvard Radcliffe Institute, and co-host of the climate podcast "A Matter of Degrees."

Keynote Speaker: Laura Capps

Chair of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Laura Capps is Chair of the Board of Supervisors in Santa Barbara County where she focuses on affordable housing, climate change, and improving the responsiveness of local government. Under her leadership, the Board approved solar installations on eight county facilities (doubling renewable generation), projected to save tens of millions of dollars over the coming decades. For six years prior, she served as an elected school board member of Santa Barbara Unified School District.

MC: Craig Lewis



Founder and Executive Director of Clean Coalition

Craig Lewis is the Founder and Executive Director of the Clean Coalition, which he launched in 2009, and he has three decades of experience in technology and policy innovation, including with respect to the proliferation of Solar Microgrids and Community Microgrids. In recent years, he has led groundbreaking work on the Goleta Load Pocket Community Microgrid, positioning Santa Barbara as a national model for local energy resilience, and has been a strong voice advancing California's transition to a decentralized, renewable energy grid. Craig continues to shape state and national energy policy while building partnerships that expand access to clean, reliable, and affordable power.

Community Action

2:00 pm | Lower Library Plaza

How we can create a greener, more resilient future locally

Panelist

Tim Hade
Scale Microgrids

Tim Hade is an energy infrastructure leader with nearly two decades of experience advancing clean energy innovation. He is a co-founder of Brightfield Infrastructure, where he focuses on developing and investing in distributed energy resources. Tim was previously a co-founder and Chief Operating Officer at Scale Microgrid Solutions, where he led development of cutting-edge solar, storage, and microgrid projects for leading institutions and businesses across North America. Tim was recognized as an Energy and Environment Top 50 Leader in 2022 and was the recipient of the Microgrid Knowledge Greater Good Award in 2023. Prior to joining the clean tech industry, Tim served as an officer in the United States Air Force. He holds an MBA from Stanford Graduate School of Business and a B.S. in Management from the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Das Williams
3CE

With over two decades of public service, former State Assembly member and Santa Barbara County Supervisor Das Williams brings a wealth of experience in meeting community needs through local and state policy, having played a key role in advancing legislation such as SB350. More recently, as Chair for 3CE's Policy Board of Directors, Williams helped the agency navigate complex state policy challenges to further 3CE's mission of delivering economic and environmental benefits to the communities it serves through clean energy resources.

Kristen Sneddon
SB City Council

Kristen Sneddon is a Santa Barbara City Council member representing District 4 and a geophysicist who teaches environmental geology at Santa Barbara City College, bringing a scientific perspective to local policy. She was instrumental in creating the City's Department of Sustainability & Resilience and establishing the Santa Barbara Clean Energy program, which now delivers 100% carbon-free electricity to residents. Sneddon has also been a strong advocate for the city's Climate Action Plan.

The Big Picture

2:40 pm | Lower Library Plaza

Policies and incentives to unleash the power of renewable energy

Panelist

Lori La Riva
3C-REN

Lori La Riva is the Multifamily Program Manager for 3C-REN in Santa Barbara County, where she leads energy efficiency and electrification programs that help residents access incentives and reduce carbon emissions. She has also promoted regional sustainability through initiatives like federal clean energy funding outreach and local low-carbon transportation efforts, including e-bike and cycling programs.

Jon Griesser
SBCE

Jon Griesser is the Program Manager for Santa Barbara Clean Energy, where he leads initiatives like expanding residential EV rebates and supporting local building electrification. He has also directed regional clean energy and efficiency programs with Central Coast Community Energy and 3C-REN to improve access and equity across the Central Coast.

Chris Cook
3CE

Chris Cook serves as the Director of Energy Programs for Central Coast Community Energy (3CE).Through this role Cook has lead impactful offerings like the Residential Battery Rebate Program, aimed at making home battery storage more accessible to local residents and advancing clean and renewable energy adoption across Santa Barbara and the broader Central Coast.

Bring Clean Energy Into your Life

3:20 pm | Lower Library Plaza

Transform your home with the help of the sun

Panelist

Tim Gorter
Architect

Tim Gorter is a licensed and Passive House–certified architect based in Santa Barbara. He earned his Master of Architecture from UCLA with distinction in 2005 and founded Tim Gorter Architects in 2013. Tim's experiences growing up in the fields and forests of Northern California and working in agroecology shaped his belief that architecture should embody abundance, regeneration, and leave the earth with more than it takes. For more than 20 years, he has brought that conviction into practice, designing buildings that foster human and environmental flourishing.

Dennis Allen
Builder

Dennis Allen, chair of Allen Construction, began his career in 1975 driven by a deep passion for solar energy and sustainable practices and has since become a nationally recognized authority on environmentally friendly building. In Santa Barbara, he has served on the County's Innovative Building Review Committee since 1995, chaired the Dean's Council of UCSB's Bren School, and founded the Parade of Green Buildings to showcase local excellence in green construction

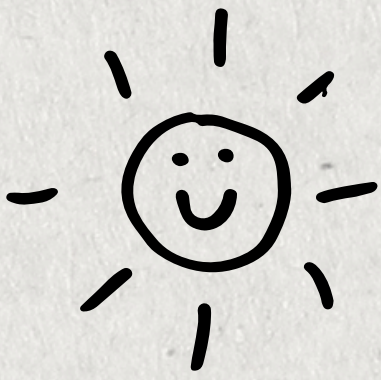
Matto Mildenberger
Green Homeowner

Matto Mildenberger is an Associate Professor of Political Science at UC Santa Barbara and directs The 2035 Initiative, a university-based "think-and-do" lab working to develop equitable, actionable roadmaps for decarbonizing energy systems over the next decade . As co-leader of the ENVENT Lab (Energy and Environment Transitions), Mildenberger's research focuses on the political dynamics of climate policy, public opinion on clean energy, and comparative policymaking.

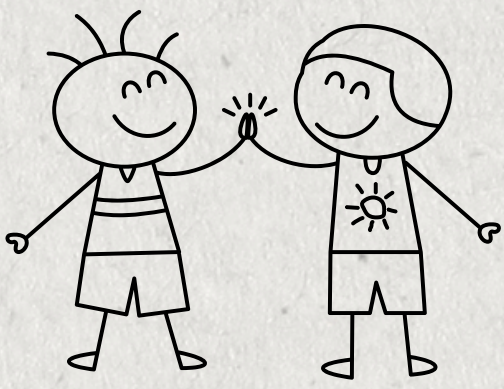
KIDS ACTIVITIES

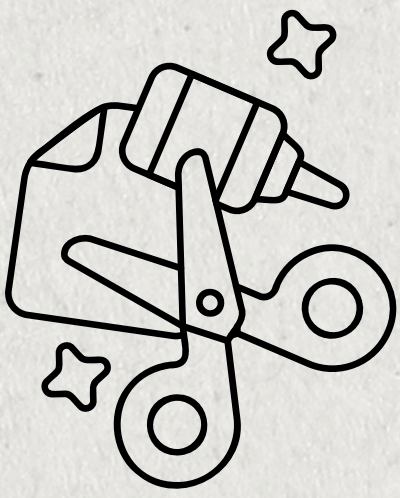
1:00 pm | Upper Library Plaza

Family sing along with a ton of great SUN themed songs!



After the sing along, kids can enjoy craft activities all event long!





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