



SIT BACK AND RELAX

You won't find too many stressed-out moms and dads on Malibu Country Mart's playground. Parents there are pretty laid back and let their kids roll around in the grass and touch whatever equipment they want, and possibly even eat the grass. They're not clueless; they just know the property well.

The Zen-like experience comes straight from the center's Green Initiative Program, which has produced an eco-friendly playground. The sandbox is chemical-free, the cleaners used to sanitize the jungle gym and swings are plant-based and biodegradable, the paint is low VOC (volatile organic compounds, which are nasty chemicals) and fertilizers are organic. Another Om-inducing factor: the quietness, thanks to the cordless, electric lawn mowers, blowers and trimmers used to maintain the play area—these are all powered by energy-efficient lithium ion battery technology instead of gas.

"We are the first commercial property to be certified by The Greenstation, [our electric mower supplier], along with Santa Monica College and other multi-acre facilities," said Julie Labin, the

center's director of sustainability.

"Most people don't know how polluting gas-powered equipment is. According to the Air Quality Management District (AQMD), a lawnmower used just once a week for a year is the equivalent of a new car driven 22,000 miles."

The center has dramatically reduced its carbon footprint off the playground as well, through a series of strategies ranging from drip irrigation and the use of native, drought-tolerant plants in its landscaping to composting and biodiesel collection—restaurant tenants participate in this program and store their used grease, which Geo Green Biofuels then picks up before it is converted into biodiesel and used to fuel transport trucks.

"Our next goal for the Malibu Country Mart's Green Initiative Program is to achieve LEED certification, and [we're proud] to announce that we have registered with the US Green Building Council, aiming to be one of the first LEED-certified commercial properties in Malibu [and join] other LEED projects, such as the new City Hall, library and additions to Pepperdine University," Labin said.

"One main thing [in helping us to achieve this] is how the management, Koss Real Estate Investments and [notably] general partner Michael Koss, work closely with the tenants to help make these initiatives possible. Going green at the Mart is a collaborative effort between all of us—management, maintenance crews, suppliers and tenants."

Malibu Country Mart launched its zero-emission play area this past Earth Day.



obviously. There are several other apps that could be useful to you, shoppers and malls wanting to adopt greener ways. If you've got some favorites, tell us about them and we'll share them in the next edition of *Tactics*. Just e-mail your suggestions to myriamb@tacticsmagazine.com.

GREEN PROFILING

If sustainability is among your shopping center's top priorities, then you'll need to maintain a management team comprised of like-minded people. You can find such employees in job forums focused on eco-friendly companies and social

enterprises. Scan your city's online events pages to find a green job forum and then get involved, as a sponsor, speaker provider and exhibitor.

SUSTAINABLE LOYALTY

Hosting annual recycling drives and green living expos is one way to solidify your center's bond with consumers who value sustainability as an important point of differentiation when choosing where to shop. An even better way is to link all of your initiatives together with one loyalty program, and then reward member shoppers. That's what Live Green Toronto is all about.

The Canadian loyalty program offers a Live Green Toronto Membership Card that delivers exclusive offers and savings at participating green-committed businesses, and deals are updated weekly.

You could enhance your own version of the loyalty program and tie it to your primary non-profit partner. For every dollar that members spend at one of your eco-friendly retailers, you could donate a certain amount (provided in cash or in kind) to the charity.