



Maryland Green Registry MEMBER

The Maryland Green Registry promotes and recognizes sustainable practices at organizations of all types and sizes. Members agree to share at least five environmental practices and one measurable result while striving to continually improve their environmental performance.

Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop



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Ocean City, MD 21842

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Restaurant

Member since April 2017

Management and Leadership



Environmental Policy Statement

Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop is a product of the organic growth of our family's love of food and cooking international cuisine, and our commitment to the environment and our local community. We love what we do, and the dollars we earn are recycled back into our local vendors, including farms, artisans, service providers, and anglers.

Our focus on local food, reducing food miles, and getting closer to our food sources is the cornerstone of what we do. We are committed to our environment not only through our food choices, but also through our effort to become a completely paperless company. By relying on evolving technology and increasingly environmentally friendly products and services, we are making constant progress towards our goals.

Our commitment to the environment is demonstrated by our business practices that affect customers, staff, and community. Our commitment is demonstrated by:

- *Complying with current environmental regulations;*
- *Participating in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Oyster Recovery Project and becoming a DNR certified True Blue restaurant by committing to only serve local Maryland crabs;*

- *Switching all of our carryout products to compostable materials including brown bags and “GreenWave” containers provided by Lankford Sysco;*
- *Remaining largely paperless by refusing to accept or provide paper information (all of our business information is available in electronic form), using handheld ordering systems instead of written paper orders, maintaining a policy of only providing electronic transactions with customers and vendors (all payments and invoices received must be electronic), and increasingly using technology for all business and personal communications vs. paper products;*
- *Full - 100% LED lighting conversion and purchasing of renewable with energy through our power contractor;*
- *Recycling all waste oils for use in BioFuel;*
- *Participation in Ocean City’s Adopt Your Beach program, where our staff and family meet to clean our local beach at least once every two months.*



Environmental Team

Our team at Mother’s Cantina is comprised of husband and wife team Neely and Ryan James. Our commitment to the environment and our community permeates both our family and business life, and our efforts are constant and passionate. We meet to go over changes and improvements on the first Tuesday of every month, where we pinpoint potential cost savings, environmental impact, and the ability of our business and family to set an example with our conscious practices. For example, we are constantly reducing paper waste, as it has a very clear impact on trash volume and litter on our local beaches. Our current effort is to create an entirely paperless ordering system based on handheld devices and use of a unique cell phone application that customers may use at their tables.



Annual Environmental Goals

Our specific goals this year are to complete production of our electronic device application for ordering. When our ordering system is completed and fully implemented within the restaurant, we will be completely paperless other than the necessary carryout containers and napkins. We will reduce purchasing and waste of approximately 192 lbs of register tape and note pads in one calendar year.

Additionally, we plan to participate in a new renewable energy purchase to reduce power usage. We anticipate a reduction of approximately 15% of our kWh of usage during the upcoming year. Finally, we currently freeze only five food products. We plan to move towards only two frozen food items on our menu (one being ice cream) by

June 2017. The reduction of movement in and out of a freezer will save both energy and water waste (at the rate of approximately fifty gallons of water per week used for dethawing).

Environmentally Preferable Products and Services

Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop has reduced its environmental impact through our commitment to the environment and our local community. Our focus on local food, reducing food miles, and getting closer to our food sources is the cornerstone of what we do. Every menu item is made from scratch and prepared daily, and sourced as locally as possible. Reducing food miles causes less stress on our roads, reduced fuel usage, and limits potentially damaging chemical usage on foods that would have to be artificially preserved if purchased from distant vendors. Our food and beverage vendors include local companies: Becky's Beans, Terrapin Farms, Capt. Kerry's Seaborn, Cole Farms, Cosmic Spice, Purdue (for whole chickens purchased locally and butchered in house to reduce production energy/waste), Burley Oak Brewery, EVO, Backshore Brewing Co, and Sysco for a "green line" of products including our compostable carryout containers and bags.

Also, while the closest fresh tortilla product used to be delivered to the shore from Baltimore, Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop is not only preparing and packaging preservative tortillas in house, we are also packaging them in recyclable, non-toxic tubing for distribution and sale. Mother's Tortilla Shop is licensed with the USDA for packaging and distribution of our flour tortillas and wraps and because the product will be available to all stores restaurants on the Eastern Shore from our local distribution center, it will reduce food miles for our peers in the local food industry providing them with a more environmentally conscious product.

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing

As mentioned above, Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop chooses to work with local food vendors, and we also choose to work with service providers including Delaware Business Systems and Sens Construction and Service, and we support local artisans including Returning Tide and Steven Shreve woodworking. We value reinvigorating our local community with our spending power, as that in turn empowers them to make better choices in their own business practices. We encourage all of our product and service providers to re-use their packaging by refusing to accept non-

reusable methods of packaging and delivery. We also require paperless financial transactions from our providers, reducing waste of time and paper product.

Environmental Restoration or Community Environmental Projects

Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop is involved in environmental initiatives in our local community. We participate in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Oyster Recovery Project and have become a DNR certified True Blue restaurant by committing to only serve local Maryland crab.

Additionally, we are a member of the Adopt Your Beach program, where we have committed ourselves and our staff to clean our beaches in Ocean City Maryland at least six times a year.

Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop has also been recognized with a Governor's Volunteer Service Certificate for our efforts to keep our local beaches clean.

Waste

Recycling

All cooking oil waste is recycled by an independent BioFuel provider. We also use all compostable and recyclable carryout packaging material.

Composting

Food waste is composted at the rate of approximately 60lbs per day! While not all used within the restaurant (much is used for our James Family organic home gardens which also supply Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop with fruits, vegetables, and herbs), some composted soil is used for our hanging herb and tomato plants on the east wall of our exterior restaurant fence.

Hazardous Waste/Toxic Use Reduction

Hazardous and toxic waste have been almost eliminated from the Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop business. We use all Melaleuca brand cleaners and house blended disinfectants (composed of vinegar water and natural oil fragrance). For heavy disinfectant for kitchen use, we do use bleach, which is diluted during disposal to the

point of having little environmental impact. Potentially damaging oil waste is 100% recycled into BioFuel.

Energy

Energy Efficiency

We have become increasingly efficient by reducing the flow of traffic into and out of our walk in refrigerators by simply reconfiguring workflow patterns. We have also reduced frozen items to the point of almost never having to enter a freezer, which greatly reduces energy needed to cool our boxes.

Renewable Energy

Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop has completely switched to LED lighting, and we have also purchased renewable wind energy to supplement our current energy sources through Delmarva Power. Our hope is to bring our landlord on board to install solar panels on our expansive roof at 28th street plaza.

Transportation

Employee Commute

We have very few employees who commute. We often offer carpools with employees, and often bring at least one to two of our employees to work and home daily. Additionally, approximately 70% of our staff either walk or bike to work. Another 10-15% regularly ride the bus to and from work.

Efficient Business Travel

All of our interviews take place via Skype interview. We very rarely travel for business. Delivery of goods will use already established USPS routes.

Water

Water Conservation

Mother's Cantina has outfitted all faucets with low flow spouts, and we have also installed all water efficient toilets. We also have a highly capable service through Sens Service that guaranteed our dishwashing equipment is well maintained, efficient, and free from waste from plumbing leaks.

Stormwater Management and Site Design

In 2014, 28th Street Plaza, at our request, was resurfaced to eliminate low elevation pooling of water and runoff from trash receptacles. Additionally, our breezeway elevation within 28th Street Plaza was raised approximately one foot to eliminate pooling of water within walkways.

In addition, Mother's Cantina and Tortilla Shop re-laid all of our exterior draining plumbing, bringing the incidence of leaching into groundwater/soil to almost zero. All exterior plumbing was replaced with the assistance of our landlord Bruce Moore in December 2016, and now exceeds current plumbing code.



Help build a greener, more sustainable Maryland through voluntary practices that reduce environmental impacts and save money.

Learn more at green.maryland.gov

