

# ♻️ Leaders In Business

Some local businesses, organizations and institutions are taking the lead on becoming greener and more sustainable. We applaud their efforts, and shine a bright green halo around them in this monthly column - with the intent and hope they will inspire other community leaders to take swifter action toward caring for earth and the future of our community. If you know of a local business that is thinking outside of the box and taking a lot of serious innovative action to be "green" let us know about them. Send a brief summary (300 to 500 words) of what they've accomplished, including their contact information, to [tucsongreentimes@cox.net](mailto:tucsongreentimes@cox.net).

- Editor, Tucson Green Times

## Changing the World One Diaper At A Time

Sometimes, people wonder how they can change the world for the better. They will imagine a world with fewer diseases, a reduced amount of temperature change, less pollution and garbage - but sometimes it's hard to actually get it done.

Alison Manes of Tucson, Ariz. and her business partner, Melissa Morgan, have

begun a revolution in the diapering industry. Their company, Go Green Sustainable Industries (GCSI) located in Tucson and in Newman Lake, Wash., is completely sustainable. All of their products are made of recycled materials.

One of the first projects GCSI took on was creating a line of diapers that are eco-friendly and fashionable. LolliDoo diapers are made from certified organic cotton and recycled fleece made of PET bottles. Instead of your water bottles or soda bottles going to a landfill they go toward making the soft fleece for LolliDoo diapers.

Manes and Morgan firmly believe in the "buy local" philosophy, helping the local economy by supporting local businesses and creating more jobs. Buying locally also saves gas because the materials travel less distances. All the materials for making the GCSI diapers come from the U.S.

Not only are LolliDoo diapers good for the environment, they're good for your baby, too. Disposable diapers have been proven to cause sterility in boys; LolliDoo diapers do not contain any toxic chemicals that are found in disposable diapers. Most cloth diapers are waterproofed by using wool or polyurethane (PUL). Polyurethane is not only toxic but is not recyclable and a lot of children are allergic to lanolin which is found in wool. Instead of wool or PUL, each LolliDoo diaper has a StayDry skin layer of soft fleece made from at least eight PET bottles.

Because of LolliDoo diapers, there will be less garbage, less disease, and more happy babies in the world. Check out their website: [www.lolliDoo.com](http://www.lolliDoo.com).

- Jordan McComb, Age 15, Tucson, AZ



## Green Interiors

By Pamela Portwood  
For Tucson Green Times

### Shopping for a Darker Shade of Green

When we're standing in the grocery aisle debating which brand of bread to buy, we can flip the package over and read the nutrition label. Thanks to the Food and Drug Administration, we can find out the calorie count, saturated fat level and more on packaged foods.

Yet when it comes to shopping for furniture, flooring and other home products, there is no universal standard. Companies everywhere are touting their products as "green," "environmentally friendly," "natural," "organic" and "eco" everything. Even green certifications can be misleading. So what's a consumer who is concerned about the environment and their family's health to do?

There is no easy answer for how to avoid greenwashing, which makes a product seem greener than it is. To find the best, greenest product to meet your needs, you must ask many questions. Ask yourself the first questions: What do I need? Can I have my current model repaired, or will a used piece work?

If you want to purchase a new product, some of the overarching issues to consider are: the product's qualities and performance; its impact on your health and the environment; its life cycle; and the manufacturer's environmental policies.

In terms of the product itself, choose a durable product that won't have to be replaced soon. Investigate the product's component parts. Does it include recycled content? Does it use nonrenewable, natural resources?

The manufacturer's website is a good place to begin. You also can ask for the product's Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). Although it's technical, the MSDS includes a list of the product's toxic components.

To make sense of such technical information, consult the Environmental Protection Agency's website ([www.epa.gov/iaq](http://www.epa.gov/iaq)). The EPA is a good source for tackling indoor air quality issues to promote a healthy home and environment.

Consulting third-party certifications is an excellent way to be assured about a product's green characteristics. Be careful though, because most certifications cover specific areas. For example, a Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification on a sofa tells you that the wood comes from forests that are sustainably managed, but it tells you nothing about whether its glues or finishes will emit hazardous volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

Check with [ecolabelling.com](http://ecolabelling.com) to find out what certifications are available in a particular product area and how they work.

Life cycle assessment (LCA) considers a product's complete life cycle, from the extraction of raw materials through the

manufacture, distribution, use and disposal of the product as well as the transportation steps involved. Since the majority of certification systems do not include LCAs, remember that a product's manufacturing and transportation processes impact the environment and that using nonrenewable resources depletes the earth.

For example, buying furniture made of repurposed teak reduces deforestation, but shipping the teak from Asia to the United States uses a lot of fuel and generates more greenhouse gases than a locally produced product would.

Also, look online for the manufacturer's environmental policies. Are they committed to recycling; conserving energy and water; and using renewable energy? Are they working to make their products greener? The depth of the manufacturer's environmental policy is an indication of how green their products are.

These are a few of the questions to pursue. There are always trade-offs in green characteristics because there are no perfectly green products. So the question becomes: What "shade of green" - from pastel to forest green - is the product over-all?

Ultimately, if a product doesn't meet your needs and perform well, it doesn't matter how green it is. Don't buy it.

Author: Pamela Portwood, Allied Member ASID, LEED AP, is a local interior designer who specializes in healthy and eco-friendly interiors.

## Sustaining Tucson

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highlight local action on climate change. This event, held on Earth Day, April 22, at the University of Arizona, drew more than 100 community members to talk about how climate change affects important community aspects such as water supply, affordable housing, mobility, health and food security, and green jobs. The information gathered at this event will be used to influence climate change policies in the General Plan when it is revised in 2010.

Powerpoint presentations and information on the event can be found online at [www.tucsonaz.gov/ocsd/climateaction](http://www.tucsonaz.gov/ocsd/climateaction)

More information about these and other projects and programs highlighted in the Report - such as Tucson's SustainLane Ranking, U. S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, the Climate Change Citizens Advisory Committee, Departmental programs, various awards won by our City government, Green projects in building, renewable energy, transportation and resource conservation as well as new codes and ordinances focused on sustainability - are available on the OCSD sustainability website at [www.tucsonaz.gov/ocsd](http://www.tucsonaz.gov/ocsd).

### CORRECTION

In the June 15, 2009 edition of Tucson Green Times, we misspelled Natasha Winnik's last name in the article on page 11 about the Originate natural building materials showroom. (We accidentally got it in our spell check as "Winnick" which is incorrect. The correct spelling is "Winnik.") We apologize for any inconveniences this typo may have caused Ms. Winnik.

- Mikaela Quinn, Editor

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