

## L.A. County Achieves Nationally Recognized Environmental Certification for Its New Library

*Recognition is the first of its kind among L.A. County Libraries*

The highly anticipated new Topanga Library, located at 122 North Topanga Canyon Boulevard, will celebrate its grand opening and dedication on Saturday, January 21, 2012.

Commencing at 11 a.m. and continuing until 4 p.m., the day-long festivities will include an open house and special programming with music and refreshments for the entire family.

The 11,000 square foot, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver-certified new Topanga Library will serve as the centerpiece of the Topanga community. The library is designed to reflect the town's rich intellectual, literary and artistic traditions and provide an inspirational showcase for Topanga's passionate commitment to lifelong learning.

The new library will offer ample parking, spacious reading areas, and a community meeting room, homework center, group study room, teen center and children's area with outside reading patio. Separate adult and children's sections feature state-of-the-art technology, self-checkout stations, online computer terminals, free WiFi access for laptops and other mobile devices, and an opening day collection of 42,000 books and materials.

The building is decorated with several distinctive civic art pieces by the internationally renowned sculptor Norman Grochowski. It is the largest commission for the library, comprising three nine-foot painted steel flowers whose petals are open books. Complementing the flowers are steel vines winding their way through a trellis as dragonflies hover above. Other notable contributors to the Topanga library artwork include brothers Matt and Paul Doolin, Megan Rice and James Sullivan.



*"Horse and Reader" by Megan Rice*

The Topanga Library becomes the newest community library of the County of Los Angeles Public Library system. For more information, please call (310) 455-3480 or visit the County Library website at [www.colapublib.org](http://www.colapublib.org).

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Los Angeles County Museum of Art**  
5905 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles 90036  
(323) 857-6000  
[www.lacma.org](http://www.lacma.org)

Through February 26 – Contested Visions in the Spanish Colonial World

**Center Theatre Group**  
[www.centertheatregroup.org](http://www.centertheatregroup.org)

**Ahmanson Theatre**  
Through January 22 – Fela!  
May 3 through June 9 – Follies

**Mark Taper Forum**  
January 11 through February 26 – Clybourne Park

**Kirk Douglas Theatre**  
January 19 through February 19 – “A Raisin in the Sun”

**Los Angeles Opera**  
(performances at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion)  
[www.losangelesopera.com](http://www.losangelesopera.com)

February 11 through March 4 – Verdi’s *Simon Boccanegra*  
February 25 through March 17 – Britten’s *Albert Herring*

**Kodak Theater**  
Now playing – Cirque du Soleil: IRIS

**Natural History Museum**  
900 Exposition Boulevard, Los Angeles 90007  
(213) 763-DINO  
[www.nhm.org](http://www.nhm.org)

Now open – New Dinosaur Hall and Fin Whale Passage

**The Ford**  
2580 Cahuenga Boulevard East, Hollywood 90068  
(323) 461-3673  
[www.FordTheatres.org](http://www.FordTheatres.org)

January 21 through February 26 – No Good Deed



Visit <http://hr.lacounty.gov>  
for information on employment  
opportunities with the  
County of Los Angeles



## Members of the Board

**Zev Yaroslavsky**  
Chairman  
Third District

**Gloria Molina**  
First District

**Mark Ridley-Thomas**  
Second District

**Don Knabe**  
Fourth District

**Michael D. Antonovich**  
Fifth District

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Director of Personnel

**Carla D. Williams**  
Executive Services

**John S. Mina**  
Editor-in-Chief

**Martina Abgaryan**  
Creative Director



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Submissions to the DIGEST may be  
edited or otherwise altered for clarity.

Check out the DIGEST at

<http://dhrdcap.co.la.ca.us/jic/digest/>



## Los Angeles Museums Band Together for Museums Free-For-All

In a joint effort to present the arts and culture to the diverse and myriad communities in Southern California, the Museum Marketing Roundtable announces the seventh annual “Museums Free-For-All” on Saturday, January 28, and Sunday, January 29. The museums—presenting art, cultural heritage, natural history, and science—will open their doors wide and invite visitors free of charge.\* For more information, visit [www.museumsla.org](http://www.museumsla.org).

- The Annenberg Space for Photography
- Autry National Center
- California African American Museum
- California Science Center
- Chinese American Museum of Los Angeles
- Fowler Museum at UCLA
- The Hammer Museum
- The Getty Center
- The Getty Villa\*\*
- Laguna Art Museum
- L.A. Fire Department Museum and Memorial/  
Hollywood and San Pedro (Saturday only)
- The Museum of Tolerance (Sunday only)
- The Museum of Contemporary Art (Saturday only)
- Museum of Latin American Art
- Pasadena Museum of California Art
- Santa Monica Museum of Art (Saturday only)
- Skirball Cultural Center\*\*\* (Saturday only)
- Zimmer Children’s Museum (Sunday only)

\*Regular parking fees apply. General museum admission only. May not apply to ticketed exhibitions.

\*\*Timed tickets are required. Visit [www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu).

\*\*\*Timed entry to the Noah’s Ark exhibition will be on a walk-up, first-come, first serve basis on this date.



## New Series of Property Tax Assessment Seminars Set

The County of Los Angeles is sponsoring a series of free seminars from January through June 2012 to assist property owners who feel their taxes should be lowered due to a decline in the value of their property.

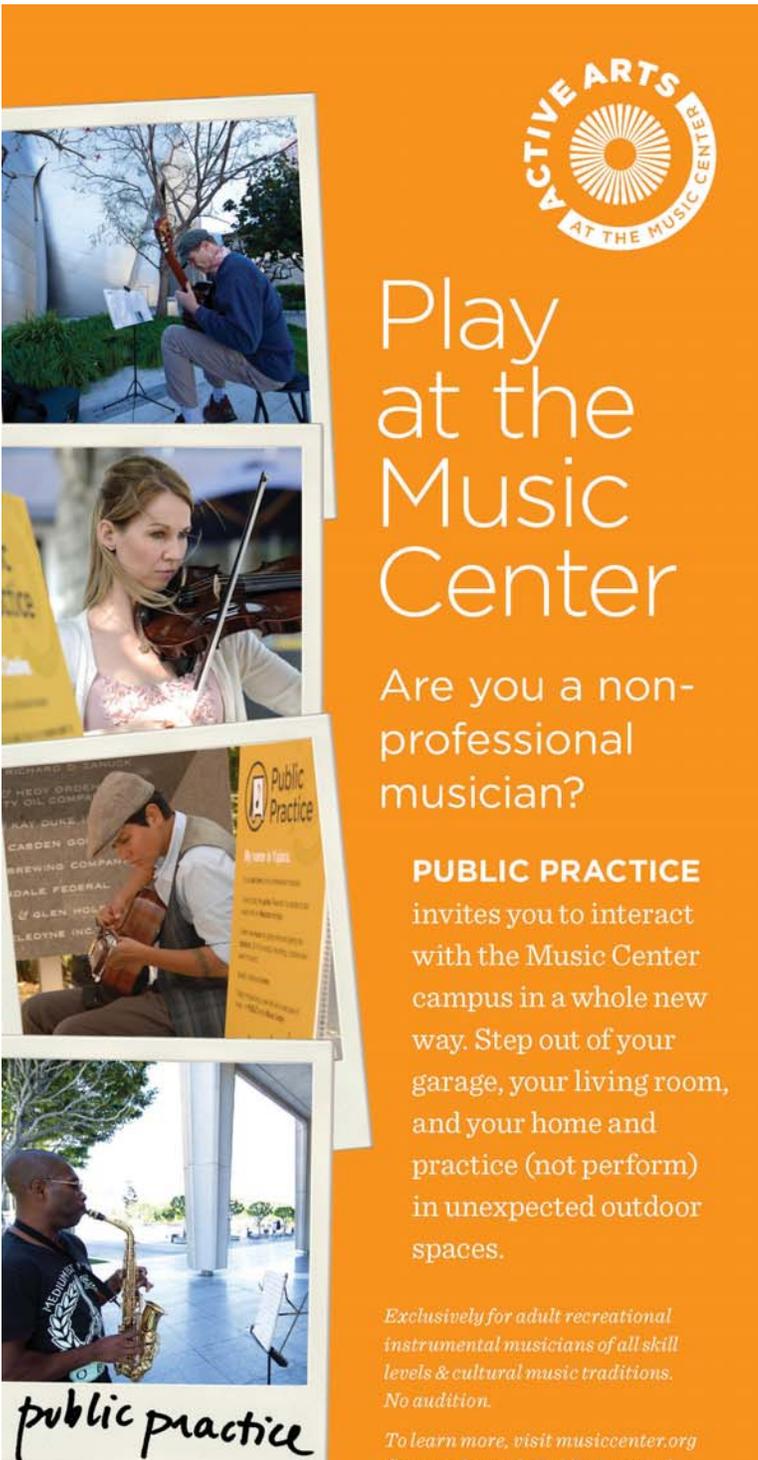
The 90-minute seminar will be offered in six cities: Culver City, El Monte, Glendale, Lakewood, Lancaster and Van Nuys. It is intended to help taxpayers better understand the assessment appeals process. Homeowners will find the seminar valuable, especially those who are interested in learning about the assessment appeals process and those who have already filed an appeal. The seminar will also cover taxpayers’ appeal rights, when to file an application for reduction in assessment, how to prepare for a hearing, what qualifies as admissible evidence, what will happen at the hearing and what to expect after the hearing.

The dates, time and locations of the seminars are:

- Thursday, January 26, 10 a.m.  
Culver City Public Library  
4975 Overland Avenue (Free parking behind the library)
- Wednesday, February 8, 10 a.m.  
Glendale Public Library  
222 East Harvard Street (The library will validate three hours parking at the corner of Maryland and Harvard)
- Thursday, March 22, 10 a.m.  
El Monte—Jack Crippen Senior Center, Crafts Room  
3120 North Tyler Avenue (Free parking)
- Wednesday, April 11, 2 p.m.  
Van Nuys—Bernardi Senior Center  
6514 Sylmar Avenue (Free parking, entrance on Hamlin Street)
- Wednesday, May 16, 10 a.m.  
Lancaster Public Library  
601 West Lancaster Boulevard (Free parking)
- Thursday, June 21, 10 a.m.  
Lakewood—Angela M. Iacoboni Library  
4990 Clark Avenue (Parking at corner of Clark Avenue and Del Amo Boulevard)

Persons with disabilities may call (213) 974-7953 or (800) 735-2922 (TDD).

To obtain seminar schedules, call (213) 974-4240 or visit <https://lacaab.lacounty.gov/PubEdProg.aspx>.



# Play at the Music Center

Are you a non-professional musician?

**PUBLIC PRACTICE** invites you to interact with the Music Center campus in a whole new way. Step out of your garage, your living room, and your home and practice (not perform) in unexpected outdoor spaces.

*Exclusively for adult recreational instrumental musicians of all skill levels & cultural music traditions. No audition.*

*To learn more, visit [musiccenter.org](http://musiccenter.org) (keyword search: Public Practice)*

**FREE** APPLY ONLINE February 10 through March 10, 2012

**Active Arts® at the Music Center**  
From the novice dancer, to the casual singer, to the recreational musician, Active Arts® invites you to come sing, dance, make music and tell stories in Downtown Los Angeles. **Be Active** with this series of low or no cost do-it-yourself programs.

[musiccenter.org](http://musiccenter.org) | (213) 972-3660



## Volunteer Opportunities Available

The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) Volunteer Services Section is seeking volunteers for short term or long term assignments throughout the County. DPSS serves an ethnically and culturally diverse community through programs designed to both alleviate hardship and promote health, personal responsibility, and economic independence. Volunteering can be personally rewarding and has a tremendous impact on the community. Volunteers dedicate their time for the betterment of families, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.

Volunteers gain experience that is highly marketable in the workforce today. They commit to serving in one or more ongoing assignments. The number of hours served is often 20-40 hours per week. Volunteers will be able to use their expertise, talents and wisdom to serve individuals, families and children.

All volunteers are required to:

- Complete a personal background/fingerprinting and reference check
- Complete a DPSS confidentiality agreement
- Be at least 16 years old

The DPSS Volunteer Services Section is committed to creating volunteer opportunities of true value for students, displaced workers and senior citizens from L.A. County.

For more information on volunteer placement, please contact Rafael Navarro, DPSS Volunteer Coordinator, at (213) 744-4348 or [rafaelnavarro@dpss.lacounty.gov](mailto:rafaelnavarro@dpss.lacounty.gov).

*The Department of Public Social Services thanks the employees of L.A. County for their outstanding support of the Adopt-A-Family Program . They recruited over 450 sponsors and adopted over 600 families, comprised of more than 1,000 children.*

## Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk Fee Increase

L.A. County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) Dean Logan said that effective January 1, 2012, the L.A. County RR/CC will implement a \$2 fee increase for certified copies of birth and death records. Fees for certified copies of birth records will increase from \$19 to \$21 and \$12 to \$14 for death records.

Assembly Bill 1053, signed into law by Governor Brown, amended California Health and Safety Code Section 103625 (a) and (b) to authorize a \$6 fee increase to the base fee for certified copies. The fee increase will be spread out over a three-year period, with a \$2 increase on January 1, 2012, a second \$2 increase on January 1, 2013 and a third \$2 increase on January 1, 2014.

Certified copies of birth and death certificates may be obtained from any RR/CC office weekdays (excluding holidays) as follows:

### Norwalk

Department Headquarters  
12400 Imperial Hwy., 1<sup>st</sup> floor  
Norwalk 90650  
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
8 a.m. – 7 p.m. (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday)  
(562) 462-2137  
(800) 201-8999

### East Los Angeles

4716 E. Cesar E. Chavez Ave.  
Los Angeles 90022  
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
(323) 260-2991

### Florence-Firestone

7807 S. Compton Ave., 1<sup>st</sup> floor  
Los Angeles 90001  
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
(323) 586-6192

### Lancaster

1028 W. Ave. J2  
Lancaster 93534  
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
(661) 945-6446

### LAX Courthouse

11701 S. La Cienega Blvd., 6<sup>th</sup> floor  
Los Angeles 90045  
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
(310) 727-6142

### Van Nuys

14340 W. Sylvan St.  
Van Nuys 91401  
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
(818) 376-3700

Information on how to obtain a copy of a birth record is available from the RR/CC website at [www.lavote.net](http://www.lavote.net) or by calling one of the RR/CC offices. Additional information regarding the fee increase can be obtained by calling Portia Sanders, Manager, RR/CC Public Records Division at (562) 462-2081 or Maggie Lien, Assistant Manager, RR/CC Public Records Division at (562) 462-2983.

Persons requiring multilingual assistance in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog/Filipino, or Vietnamese can call (800) 481-8683.

## The DHR Website – Helping to Make the County the “Employer of Choice”

<http://hr.lacounty.gov>

On December 14, 2011, the Department of Human Resources (DHR), in conjunction with the Chief Information Office (CIO) and Internal Services Department (ISD), implemented a new DHR website. The new website serves as an HR information portal for the public and employees. At close to 35,000 hits per week and over one million visits per year, the DHR website is one of the most visible government resources in the entire County. Web analytics indicate that the DHR website has a global footprint, receiving visitors from other cities, states and even countries.

The new design greatly improves the user experience through simplistic navigation. Because the average web user only stays engaged for a few minutes at most, the design philosophy was to reduce the amount of text based content from the previous DHR design, and incorporate more visual stimuli such as pictures and video to convey the desired message.

This new website will help the County to reshape the traditional face of government service by showing our employees and the public that the County is seeking to progressively provide relevant services in a manner that far exceeds yesterday’s methods. DHR’s objective is to showcase the County as an “Employer of Choice.”

The new look and feel of this website is moving the County closer in that direction.

# 27th Annual “Women of the Year” Awards Luncheon



On March 12, 2012, the L.A. County Commission for Women and the Board of Supervisors will host its prestigious 27th Annual “*Women of the Year*” Awards Luncheon at the Crystal Ballroom, Millennium Biltmore Hotel, 506 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles.

In 1975, the Commission for Women was established to represent special interests and concerns of women of all races, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, religious convictions, social circumstances, and sexual orientation. One of the Commission’s priorities has been to recommend programs or legislation to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunities for women. The Commission also recognizes outstanding women who have made a difference in the lives of women throughout the County.

We salute these dynamic women for their work to bring about social and economic change, promote women’s equality, serve as outstanding role models, work on behalf of women’s issues and demonstrate outstanding performance within their professions to further advocate women’s rights.

For more information, visit the Commission’s website at <http://laccw.info>. Register online at <http://bosevents.lacounty.gov> or for questions contact the L.A. County Commission for Women office at (213) 974-1455.

We look forward to your participation and your continued support.



## *County of Los Angeles Gets Active For Life!*

January 23, 2012 – April 1, 2012

Active for Life is a 10-week online workplace physical activity program offered to you by the County of Los Angeles & the American Cancer Society.

**Get in on the action!**

**Form your team of 3 – 15 members, pick a Team Name and Team Captain,  
& win great prizes for meeting your team goals!**

**Team Captains:**

Team registration starts January 4, 2012, so get your Team organized and be ready to start on January 23, 2012! Let your Wellness Manager know you are forming a team, so an electronic invitation can be sent to you to create your online team profile.

**Questions?**

**Contact your Departmental Human Resources Manager.**





(Photo: Derek Cutler, Volunteer Photographer, LACoFD)

Los Angeles County Efficiency Initiative Project

## Fire Department Fleet Services Division Saves Over \$400,000 through Tire Retread Program

The L.A. County Fire Department’s Fleet Services Division saved over \$400,000 in 2011 through its tire retread program, as part of the County’s Efficiency Initiative. Historically, the Department has been reusing tire casings once. But new technologies became available to allow tire casings to be reused at least twice. The retread program not only extends the service life of Fire apparatus tires, resulting in a cost savings, but is also environmentally friendly, reducing oil consumption and recycling rubber materials.

The idea to modify the tire retread program began two years ago when Fleet Services evaluated the Department’s tire consumption rates, as well as how many barrels of oil it required to manufacture the large tires. While they initially used Bandag retreads, Fleet Services did not want to compromise public safety by doing a retread more than once. However, after some research Fleet Services found that Michelin, the manufacturer of the tires they use, had a factory retread process in which they could get an exact rubber compound match to the existing tire casing that would also allow for the same tread pattern.

“Our previous retreads actually caused a little wandering while driving until the excess retread wore off,” says Fleet Services Division Chief Craig Weeks. “But we’re not seeing any of those issues with the factory retreads. We are seeing stronger, more durable retreads that track much better than the previous process.”

The Department is saving 38 percent on tire costs by retreading tires instead of purchasing new ones. In addition, Fleet Services is now rotating partially used tires from high use vehicles onto low use vehicles. For example, low-use Federal Emergency Management Agency trucks would receive good, used tires from high-use crew carriers. By rotating these tires, they are eliminating the need to purchase new tires for support vehicles. Purchasing retreads also fulfills the Department’s “Going Green” initiative. Manufacturing a retread only uses seven gallons of oil, as opposed to the 22 gallons required in manufacturing a brand new tire.

According to Weeks, further evaluation has shown that tire casings were still good after two retreads, and barring no major damage from off-roading, it is feasible the tires could sustain a third retread.

“While these retreads cost more than the Bandags, they last much longer,” says Weeks, who credits Fleet Services Assistant Chief Ernie Ramirez as the driving force behind this program. “Ernie did a lot of evaluation and visited both factories to see how the process was done.”



### Rideshare L.A. County!

What is Rideshare?

Rideshare is a great way to get to work or get around town. If you Rideshare to work for a total of 30 miles one way instead of driving alone, you can save approximately \$900 a month. Check it out for yourself at <http://www.commutessmart.info/commute-cost-calculator.asp>.

Ridesharing includes carpooling, vanpooling to transit riding and commuter buses and even bicycling and walking. Using any of these Ridesharing methods will save you money and time.

Contact your department Employee Transportation Coordinator for more information.

## What's New at LACMA?

### Exhibitions/Installations

#### *Metropolis II*

January 14, 2012—ongoing

*Metropolis II* is an intense and a complex kinetic sculpture, modeled after a fast paced, frenetic modern city. Steel beams form an eclectic grid interwoven with an elaborate system of 18 roadways, including one 6 lane freeway, and HO scale train tracks. Miniature cars speed through the city at 240 scale miles per hour; every hour, approximately 100,000 cars circulate through the dense network of buildings.

#### *Ellsworth Kelly: Prints and Paintings*

January 22 through April 22

Ellsworth Kelly (b. 1923) is the master of pure color and carefully calibrated shape. He refined his signature chromatic and graphic vocabulary in the medium of printmaking.

**Curators:** Stephanie Barron, Modern Art, LACMA, with Britt Salvessen, Prints and Drawings, LACMA

#### *In Wonderland: The Surrealist Adventures of Women Artists in Mexico and the United States*

January 29 through May 6

*In Wonderland* demonstrates the unique role geography and gender played in this international movement. Iconic figures such as Louise Bourgeois, Leonora Carrington, Frida Kahlo, Lee Miller, Kay Sage, Dorothea Tanning, and Remedios Varos will be represented along with lesser known or newly discovered practitioners, including Maya Deren, Helen Lundeberg, Marie Izqueirda, Jacqueline Lamba, and Janet Sobel.

**Curators:** Ilene Susan Fort, American Art, LACMA, and Teresa Arcq, adjunct curator, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico

### Programming

#### **Film Series: Contested Visions in Latin America through Film**

January 21 and 22

A special program organized in conjunction with the exhibition [\*Contested Visions in the Spanish Colonial World\*](#). Hosted by **Edward James Olmos** and curated by **Marlene Dermer**, co-director of the Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival, this two-day film program, explores themes from the exhibition through cinema.

## County Solicits Green Leadership Award Applications



The County of Los Angeles is accepting applications for the 2012 “Green Leadership Awards” program. This program recognizes outstanding efforts to improve our environmental sustainability. Each year, residents, businesses and local organizations face challenges involving environmental issues in the County. The Board of Supervisors seeks to recognize the outstanding efforts to address these challenges.

The program is open to all County residents, public agencies, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.

Guidelines and application can be found at [www.lacounty.gov](http://www.lacounty.gov). Application deadline is 5 p.m. on Friday, February 24.



## Be a Pollworker

### Upcoming Elections

1. June 5, 2012 - Presidential Primary Election
2. November 6, 2012 - Presidential General Election

### What Do Pollworkers Do?

1. Arrive at the Polling Place at 6 a.m.  
- Help set-up -
2. Assist voters
3. Issue ballots
4. Help close Polling Place at 8 p.m.

### EARN UP TO \$175.00 FOR THE DAY

SIGN UP TODAY TO BE A  
POLLWORKER!!!  
(800) 815-2666 Option 7  
[www.lavote.net](http://www.lavote.net)



**Do your part to protect Democracy!**

# Retirees

*Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after their many years of service to Los Angeles County:*

40+ Years

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:** Khanh P. Nguyen  
**HEALTH SERVICES:** Velina Howard, Earnest E. Johnson  
**INTERNAL SERVICES:** Warren Johnson  
**PROBATION:** Gloria J. Mayfield  
**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Sylvia Becerra, Ralph Lopez  
**PUBLIC LIBRARY:** Frederick M. Hungerford  
**PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Alvonia L. Fonteno, Brenda J. Lewis, Kathleen J. Phillips, Ejai Ramsey  
**PUBLIC WORKS:** Isabel De La Vega  
**SUPERIOR COURT:** Marchael A. Bayne, Anita B. Bazile  
**TREASURER AND TAX COLLECTOR:** Kenneth Livingston

30+ Years

**CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES:** Judy A. Jones  
**CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES:** Robin L. Cooper, Donald B. Gridley, Maxieana Lewis, Andrew J. Ringer  
**COUNTY COUNSEL:** Tighe F. Hudson  
**FIRE:** James A. Kross  
**HEALTH SERVICES:** Manuela P. Arevalo, Rickey Boyd, Maria Castro, Albert Chow, Lenola M. Coleman, Guadalupe Diaz, Merlyn A. Dubria, Hazel Y. Jackson, Corazon A. Jardenil, Brian K. Leong, Bonnie Mc Coy, Zelma D. McCrimmon, Phyllis Murphy, Rodrigo Ricardez, Marsha Simpson, Deeann Thomas, James Thomas Jr. , Alicia Torres, Louella K. Urasaki, Roger T. Ward, Julie N. Yu  
**INTERNAL SERVICES:** Estoria M. Pittman  
**MENTAL HEALTH:** Ernestine Lewis, Montreal Rodney  
**PROBATION:** Carol T. Clark, Dorothy J. Harris-Lewis, Izsaka Nkrumah, Mark H. Salcido  
**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Mary Ledbetter  
**PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Judith A. Bradt, Le H. Doan, Betty J. Fontenot, Nicholas Hernandez, Ann M. Justice, Patricia J. Macdonell  
**PUBLIC WORKS:** Linda Harris, Calvin D. Johnson, Esther E. Vidales, Arthur Williams  
**SHERIFF:** Lamont F. Alcanter, Janis R. Campbell, Robert D. Mazone, Daniel H. Oppenheim, Ronald D. Spear  
**SUPERIOR COURT:** Robert Axel, Gary L. Bounds, Dorothy W. Graves, Linda M. Green, Rita S. Grier,  
**TREASURER AND TAX COLLECTOR:** Susan Antonio

25+ Years

**ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL:** May Lee  
**CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES:** Estefania Frilarate, Elvia Islas, Rosalind G. Pariot, Maria O. Seanez  
**FIRE:** James T. Gandee  
**HEALTH SERVICES:** Chauncey Bell, Marjorie Brown, Araceli Gagajena, Martha S. Hawkins, Rose Lai, Nora D. Martinez, Theresa

Moran, Thanh T. Nguyen, Shirley Nixon, Lourdes R. Rascon, Concepcion Rivera, Theresa D. Snider  
**MEDICAL EXAMINER-CORONER:** Solomon L. Riley Jr.  
**MENTAL HEALTH:** Thomas Klotz  
**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Esther Contreras, Lynne E. Cu, Olivia Hunter  
**PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Mary V. Altamirano, E Clotilda O. Cua, Shan-Ru Huang, Lily Ngo, Jorge C. Yamzon  
**PUBLIC WORKS:** Bibiana O. Bacor, Joseph L. Baker, Jose L. Mora  
**SHERIFF:** James R. Lawrence Jr., Bernadette T. Simpson, Edward F. Stewart  
**SUPERIOR COURT:** Karen P. Franklin, Stanley Genser, Barbara A. Gibbons, Barry D. Kohn

## L.A. County Rings in a Green New Year

Beginning January 1, residents have the opportunity to help celebrate a plastic bag free L.A. County as more than 700 stores throughout unincorporated L.A. County will no longer provide single-use carryout plastic bags. Customers are encouraged to bring their reusable bags when they shop to avoid paying 10 cents for a paper bag.

In July 2011, a similar ban went into effect at larger supermarkets and pharmacies in L.A. County unincorporated areas. The plastic bag ban was approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2010 to help substantially reduce litter, protect wildlife and marine habitats, and improve water quality throughout the County.

Shoppers are encouraged to bring their reusable bags every time they shop to help prevent plastic bag litter and pollution in their communities.

To learn more about the County’s single-use plastic bag ban and for a list of affected stores, visit [www.aboutthebag.com](http://www.aboutthebag.com) and follow them on [twitter@CleanLA](https://twitter.com/CleanLA).

WeTip  
**WELFARE FRAUD**  
**1 (800) 87-FRAUD**

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# Share It

## New Laws You Need to Know in the New Year

*Consumer Affairs Highlights 10 Top Consumer Laws for 2012*

At the beginning of each year, hundreds of new local, state and federal laws go into effect. As we enter 2012, consumers like you might be affected by several of these new laws.

Here is a brief rundown of 10 of the top new consumer laws in California for 2012. For a full overview of the [new consumer laws](#), go to the Department of Consumer Affairs website at [dca.lacounty.gov](http://dca.lacounty.gov).

1. **New restrictions on alcohol purchases**
2. **Get insurance for portable electronics after you buy them**
3. **Internet sellers must include sales tax**
4. **Marriage and Family Therapists must say if they're unlicensed**
5. **Self-storage ads must come closer to home**
6. **Small Claims Court limits increasing**
7. **Insurance must include maternity services**
8. **Minors cannot go to tanning salons**
9. **Renters can display political signs**
10. **Apartments must offer recycling services**

### Alcohol sales

There are two new laws restricting alcohol sales. First, caffeinated beer—which has been popular with young adults and children in recent years—is now illegal. Second, you can no longer buy alcohol at self-checkout counters. You'll have to go to the cashier if you have alcohol in your shopping cart.

### Insurance for portable electronics

Often when you buy a new cell phone or laptop, you'll have to decide if you also want to buy insurance for the product. With this new law, vendors can sell that insurance at times other than at the time of purchase of the product or wireless service plan.

### Online sales tax

This was a well-publicized debate in 2011. California wants big online retailers from out of state (such as Amazon) to collect sales tax. There wound up being a compromise where big online retailers must collect sales tax starting on September 15 of this year if the federal government does not act to create a national standard. If there is a federal law, the California law is not implemented until January 1, 2013.

### Marriage and Family Therapists

Many misleading and deceptive online advertisements are offering mental health services and marriage and family

counseling services by unqualified individuals. They are usually interns who can only legally provide services to the public as an employee or volunteer of a licensed professional under appropriate supervision. The new law means these individuals must disclose their qualifications and other information to their clients.

### Self-storage sales advertising

Attention “Storage Wars” fans: self-storage lien sales just got easier to find. Previously, these sales could be advertised anywhere in the county. Now, they must be advertised within the judicial district of the self-storage facility so they are more likely to be noticed.

### Small Claims Court limits

Now a “natural person” can sue for up to \$10,000 in Small Claims Court, up from the previous limit of \$7,500. For bodily injury from vehicle accidents when the defendant has insurance, the increase does not take effect until January 1, 2015. Call Consumer Affairs’ Small Claims Court Advisors at (213) 974-9759 for more information.

### Maternity services

Starting on July 1, two new laws go into effect which state that every group and individual insurance policy must provide coverage for maternity services.

### No tanning for minors

It's bad news if your kid wants to become the next Snooki or The Situation. People under the age of 18 can no longer use ultraviolet tanning devices.

### Tenants can display political signs

Just in time for this year's presidential elections: landlords cannot stop renters from displaying political signs. There are some restrictions; signs must be of a respectable size, pertain to current elections and be taken down shortly after the election.

### Apartments must offer recycling services

If an apartment has five or more units, the owners must arrange for recycling services. Currently, fewer than 40 percent of apartment renters have access to recycling.

For more details on new consumer laws or any consumer questions, contact the Department of Consumer Affairs at (800) 593-8222 or [dca.lacounty.gov](http://dca.lacounty.gov).