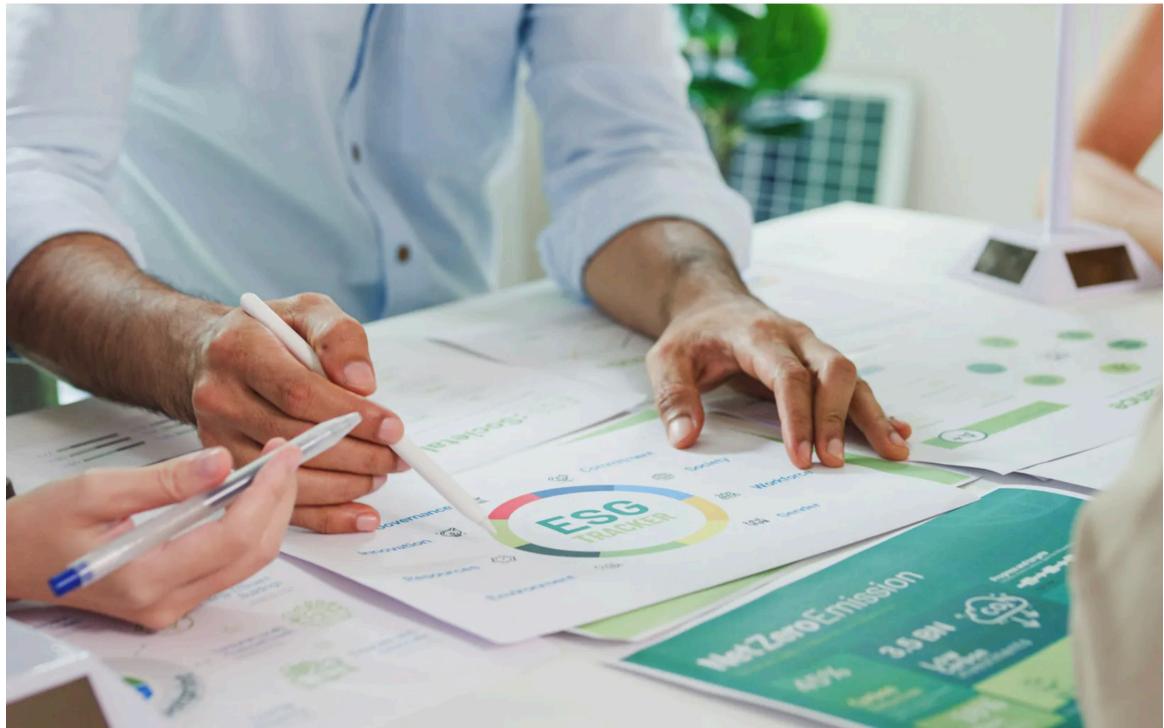


California's New Climate Laws: Why Small Businesses Need an Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Strategy Now



Above: Employees meet in an office to review ESG reports.

Why ESG Matters for Small or Medium-Sized Businesses (SMBs)

If you run an SMB, it might be tempting to view ESG concerns as something reserved for large enterprises. But here's the truth: ESG principles are becoming essential for organizations of all sizes. Customers, suppliers, and community partners increasingly expect companies to demonstrate responsible practices, transparent operations, and measurable contributions to environmental and social well-being.

For instance, new California state laws—SB 253 and SB 261—require large companies to publicly disclose greenhouse gas emissions and climate-related financial risks beginning in 2026. While these laws directly apply to businesses with revenues over \$500 million, small and medium-sized businesses in their supply chains will increasingly be asked to provide emissions data to help larger partners meet compliance requirements. Getting ahead of these expectations now positions your business as a prepared and preferred partner. *Continues on page 2.*



Continued from page 1

Key ESG Concepts Every SMB Needs to Know

Understanding the basics of ESG makes it easier to determine where to begin.

- 1. Carbon Footprint:** The total greenhouse gas emissions generated by your business activities, including energy use (electricity, heating, cooling), transportation, the production of goods or services, and waste.
- 2. Net Zero:** A goal to balance the amount of greenhouse gases your company emits with the amount it removes or offsets.
- 3. Sustainability:** Practices that conserve resources and reduce environmental impact, such as recycling, energy-efficient equipment, or water conservation.
- 4. Social Impact:** How your company affects employees, customers, and the broader community, including fair labor practices, inclusive hiring, and community engagement.
- 5. Governance:** Policies and processes that guide how your business operates internally, including leadership ethics, financial reporting, compliance with laws, and transparency with stakeholders.

How to Get Started

You don't need a large budget or team to take meaningful ESG action. Begin with a simple baseline: review how your business uses energy and water, how waste is managed, and how you support employees and customers. Identify areas to improve and set realistic goals for the next 6–12 months. Small steps such as switching to LED lighting, reducing paper use, or tracking workforce metrics, can make a measurable difference.

Communicate your progress. Share updates on your website, in proposals, and with partners evaluating suppliers for responsible practices. Clear communication reinforces credibility and helps stakeholders understand the value you bring.

The Bottom Line for SMBs

By understanding key ESG concepts, you can position your business not only to meet today's expectations but also to thrive as values-driven decision-making becomes the standard. No matter where you are in your ESG journey, the most important step is the first one. Start small, stay consistent, and remember that the path toward ESG alignment is ultimately about building a stronger, more resilient business for the years ahead.

Article courtesy of Laisar Management Group, LLC. To learn more visit the Laisar website (laisar.com).

Construction

Latest Information: construction-bids.ebmud.com

Wastewater projects are identified by a Specification Number bearing an "SD" designation. These specifications are available from the Wastewater Department at 510-287-1754. Bid documents without the "SD" designation are available from the Specifications Section at 510-287-1040. Bid documents are generally available at least 30 days before the estimated bid due date.

Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Effluent Meters and Large Customer Meters Improvements and Circle Regulator Replacement - Spec. 2182

\$TBD • Bid Date: 1/27/26 • 510-287-1040

Construct metering improvements at the District's WTP effluent meters and large customer meters at Lafayette, Sobrante, Orinda and Walnut Creek WTPs and various other large customer meters in Crockett, Rodeo and Richmond.

San Leandro Channel Pipeline Crossing - Spec. 2188

\$18M • Bid Date: 2/4/26 • 510-287-1040

Construct approximately 3,600 feet of 24 inch steel pipeline primarily underlying San Jose Avenue and Peach Street on Alameda Island and Island Drive on Bay Farm Island and 2,100 feet of 30-inch HDPE pipeline crossing under the San Leandro Channel by horizontal directional drilling (HDD) method.

Adeline Maintenance Center (AMC) Campus Security Improvements Phase 1 - Spec. 2205

\$5.8M • Bid Date: 4/15/26 • 510-287-1040

Install additional site lighting and upgrade security systems at AMC Campus including security cameras, access monitoring devices and wiring.

Pardee Chemical Plant Improvements - Spec. 2142

\$52M • Bid Date: 5/13/26 • 510-287-1040

Install a new lime system (modern lime slaker and CO2 storage and injection facilities) at Pardee Chemical Facility in Valley Springs.

Walnut Creek Water Treatment Plant (WCWTP) Filters Improvements - Spec. 2189

\$25M • Bid Date: 5/27/26 • 510-287-1040

Improve the filters and blower building, such as replacing troughs, media, valves, piping, and motors. Also includes general site civil work such as access road and drainage improvements.

Alameda and South Interceptor Rehabilitation - SD456

\$10M • Bid Date: 6/1/26 • 510-287-7186

Rehabilitate 42" to 63" diameter sewer interceptor pipelines on the South and Alameda Interceptors (in Oakland and Alameda respectively).

Main Wastewater Treatment Plant (MWWT) Hypo Piping Phase 3 - SD414

\$4.6M • Bid Date: 6/24/26 • 510-287-1609

Replace small diameter sodium hypochlorite piping and appurtenances at the MWWT.

Main Wastewater Treatment Plant (MWWT) Secondary Reactor Rehabilitation Phase 2 - SD462

\$16.3M • Bid Date: 9/23/26 • 510-287-1280

Rehabilitate the Secondary Reactors at the MWWT. This work includes piping rehabilitation, concrete resurfacing, and equipment replacement.

**All dates subject to change. All values are approximate.*

Please visit our website to update and/or register in our database: ebmud.com/business

Upcoming Contract Opportunities

Materials and Supplies

Latest information: ebmud.com/business-center/materials-and-supplies-bids

Two 6-Inch Centrifugal Pumps with Tandem Axle Trailers

\$150K • Bid Date: 1/14/26 • 510-287-0454

Two 6-inch self-priming centrifugal pumps with D.O.T. highway tandem axle trailers.

Backfill Material (Pool)

\$9M/yr • Bid Date: 3/1/26 • 510-287-0454

Class I backfill and Class II aggregate base material required by the District.

Butterfly Valves

\$450K • Bid Date: TBD • 510-287-0454

Butterfly valves for Reactor Phase 2 Project.

Heavy Equipment Forklift

\$318K • Bid Date: TBD • 510-287-0454

Kalmar Forklift DCG160-12.

6 Wheel Drive Motor Grader

\$460K • Bid Date: TBD • 510-287-0454

John Deere 672G Motor Grader.

Security Control Panel Upgrade Project

\$100K • Bid Date: TBD • 510-287-0454

GSTAR-PRO-SE16:iSTAR Pro-to-iSTAR Ultra G2 SE Upgrade Kit, 16 rdr support, includes GCM, two ACM SE, and door.

Orinda Water Treatment Plant Filter to Waste Valves

\$100K • Bid Date: TBD • 510-287-0454

8" DeZurik AWWA Butterfly Valve Model BAW cast iron body.

Upcoming EBMUD Paving RFQs

Various Paving in Public Right of Way

\$250K - \$1.2M • Due Date: Varies • 510-287-7187

- Lester/Melrose, Oakland
- Barner/Foothill, Oakland
- Oak Park/Reliez Valeey/Tice, Pleasant Hill & Lafayette
- Glorietta/Camino Sobrante/Dolores, Orinda

**All dates subject to change. All values are approximate.*

Please visit our website to update and/or register in our database: ebmud.com/business

Professional and General Services

Latest information: ebmud.com/rfp

Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for the projects listed are generally available at least 30 days before the estimated proposal due date.

Alameda Channel Crossing Improvements Environmental Documentation

\$250K • Due Date: 1/25/26 • 510-287-1681

Preparation of environmental documentation for the installation of a sewer pipeline crossing the San Leandro Channel to serve Bay Farm Island.

Biosolids Long-Term Planning

\$150K • Due Date: 2/1/26 • 510-287-1251

Provide consulting services related to biosolids storage and permitting, rural real estate, carbon markets, agronomy, and transportation.

Main Wastewater Treatment Plant Space Requirements Study

\$200K • Due Date: 2/1/26 • 510-287-0577

Space programming for personnel, storage, staging, and all other non-wastewater treatment process needs.

Sobrante Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Restroom Renovations

\$200K • Due Date: 2/1/26 • 510-287-1023

Design and prepare construction documents for improvements to both the men's and women's locker rooms/restrooms at the Sobrante WTP.

Administration Building 2nd Floor Restroom Repairs

\$180K • Due Date: 2/1/26 • 510-287-0568

Remove and replace 35-foot length of four-inch sewer lateral in the wall of the men's restroom. Work includes wall and tile demolition and restoration.

As-Needed Engineering Design Services

\$5M • Bid Date: 2/9/26 • 510-287-1040

Develop a short list of pre-qualified respondents willing to provide various engineering design services for water facilities on an as-needed basis.

As-Needed Interceptor System Inspection Services

\$300K • Bid Date: 2/14/26 • 510-287-0214

Provide inspection services for large diameter gravity sewers, maintenance holes, force mains, and pump stations. Methods could include CCTV, human entry, multisensor inspections or other.

Upper San Leandro (USL) Reservoir Blowoff Reconfiguration

\$300K • Bid Date: 3/1/26 • 510-287-1187

Contract that will include planning tasks such as support for CEQA. Design will commence with a sediment study to determine how high the blowoff valve needs to be to protect it from further corrosion.

Terminal Reservoir Emergency Drain Tunnels

\$300K • Due Date: 3/1/26 • 510-287-0520

Inspect the emergency drainage tunnels for several terminal reservoir dams. The project will also prepare a tunnel repair strategy document for any observed failure locations or areas of concern.

Civil Design for Drainage and Grading of Almond Reservoir Site

\$100K • Bid Date: 4/1/26 • 510-287-0675

Design of drainage, grading calculations for cut and fill, bio retention basins etc.

Design Review Services for Security Improvements

\$1.5M • Bid Date: 4/1/26 • 510-287-2099

Contract for security consultant to develop security design guide, provide as-needed design review, maintain security specs and typical details, and security programming.

**All dates subject to change. All values are approximate.*

Please visit our website to update and/or register in our database: ebmud.com/business

Upcoming Contract Opportunities

Professional and General Services *CONTINUED*

Latest information: ebmud.com/rfp

Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for the projects listed are generally available at least 30 days before the estimated proposal due date.

Engineering Services During Construction (ESDC) for Pardee Powerhouse Powerline Safety Upgrade Project

\$800K • Bid Date: 11/2/26 • 510-287-2124

ESDC support through construction for consultant designed project.

Planning Study for Moraga Pumping Plant and Walnut Creek Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) Project

\$2M • Bid Date: 12/1/26 • 510-287-2099

Facility evaluation of Moraga and Walnut Creek Raw Water Pumping Plant (RWPP) No. 3 and development of basis of design reports for Moraga RWPP and Walnut Creek RWPP No. 3 rehabilitation.

Free Training for Small Businesses with Associated General Contractors of California

Associated General Contractors of California (AGC) of California believes that Small and Underrepresented businesses are essential to the future of the construction industry and has built a strong support system to help those businesses thrive. In 2025, their programs served 801 individuals from 242 companies and completed just under 600 hours of technical assistance for small businesses throughout California. AGC is offering an exciting new opportunity for California small businesses to access free, state-funded training through its Employment Training Panel (ETP) grant.

This program helps eligible companies upskill their teams at no cost, covering topics like leadership, safety, project management, and more. As an example, they offer three yearlong leadership development programs for different levels in your organization that are up to \$10,000 of value – for free! For more information about the program, visit the website at agc-ca.org/sites/discover-the-power-of-leadership-to-build-a-healthy-culture-and-profitable-business. It's a great way to invest in your workforce without adding to your budget.

You can learn more by completing the short ETP Free Training application found online at tinyurl.com/mjp9d3j5. AGC's team will follow up to confirm eligibility, acceptance, and next steps.

For more information see flyer on the next page or visit agc-ca.org.

POWER-UP YOUR PEOPLE WITH NO BUDGET REQUIRED.

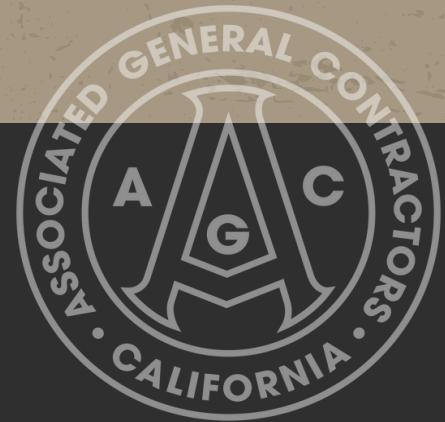
UNLOCK FREE TRAINING FOR YOUR ENTIRE TEAM

AGC's Training and Education team has secured a State of California Employment Training Panel (ETP) grant, making it easier than ever to deliver high-quality leadership and technical training without the red tape.

We know you wear multiple hats. So we make training seamless, efficient, and effective.

WHY WORKFORCE AND TRAINING MANAGERS WORK WITH US

- Fully funded by the State of California - no approvals or reimbursements
- Construction-specific programs built for real-world impact
- We handle compliance and logistics, so you can focus on outcomes
- Boost retention and performance while building your internal talent pipeline



AVAILABLE TRAINING PROGRAMS

- Bluebeam Baseline Basics and Revu
- Confined Space Competent Person Training
- Construction Quality Management (CQM)
- Leadership Academies
- OSHA 10 and 30
- Prevailing Wage Certification
- And more

LET'S LAUNCH YOUR FIRST SESSION.

Contact our staff today to learn more.



Mary Alyssa Rancier
Training and Education Manager
RancierM@agc-ca.org
916-371-2422 x1027

Above: Flyer for Associated General Contractors of California trainings. See previous page for more information.

Upcoming Calendar Events

January 2026

- 20 National Day of Racial Healing. Information: dayofracialhealing.org
- 23 Women's Business Enterprise Council (WBEC) Pacific: **4th Friday WBE/Leadership Forum Connection.** Registration: wbenc.org/calendar
- 23 San Ramon Chamber of Commerce: **2026 Employment Law Changes in California.** Registration: sanramon.org/events/calendar/
- 26 Women's Business Enterprise Council (WBEC) Pacific: **Leveraging Your Certification held every 4th Monday.** Registration: wbenc.org/calendar
- 30 Alameda County Public Works Agency: **Building Opportunities for Business (BOB).** Details: businessoutreach@acpwa.org
- 31 Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce: **Oakland Chinatown 34th Lunar New Year Bazaar.** Information: oaklandchinatownchamber.org

February 2026

- 23 Women's Business Enterprise Council (WBEC) Pacific: **Leveraging Your Certification held every 4th Monday.** Registration: wbenc.org/calendar
- 27 Women's Business Enterprise Council (WBEC) Pacific: **4th Friday WBE/Leadership Forum Connection.** Registration: wbenc.org/calendar

March 2026

- 3 Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau: **21st Annual East Bay Women's Conference, Lesher Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek.** Registration: walnut-creek.com/ebwc2026/
- 27 Women's Business Enterprise Council (WBEC) Pacific: **4th Friday WBE/Leadership Forum Connection.** Registration: wbenc.org/calendar
- 30 Women's Business Enterprise Council (WBEC) Pacific: **Why Certify?** Registration: wbenc.org/calendar

April 2026

- 19-21 Women Construction Owners & Executives (WCOE): **2026 National WCOE Leadership Conference, Willard Hotel, 1401 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, DC.** Registration: womenbuildamerica.com