

Go Green In Lacey

The city of Lacey, Washington, about five miles east of Olympia, will stage its Alternative Energy Fair for the thirteenth consecutive year on Saturday, May 1, 2010. The event will run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Huntamer Park on the corner of Seventh Avenue and Woodland Square Loop in Lacey. The family friendly festival offers everyone an opportunity to learn about alternative energy solutions and energy saving tips in a fun, family friendly atmosphere. Attendees can also take in unique races as electric and other fuel-sipping vehicles compete in the Lacey Grand Prix and Lacey MPG Rally.

While the event focuses on the uses of alternative energy and other energy saving technologies, Lacey's Alternative Energy Fair offers a day of fun and relaxation for everyone. Area vendors, performers, and other groups will be on hand to round out the Alternative Energy Fair experience. Sean Finney, Recreation Coordinator for the Lacey Parks and Recreation Department, explains, "People interested in alternative energy are our main draw, but ... we have things for all ages including educational booths, display vehicles, and fun activities for the kids."

Beyond the typical fair experience, Lacey's Alternative Energy Fair offers an opportunity to witness the fair's marquee event, the Lacey Grand Prix. This race highlights low power, single-person electric cars, built by teams of high school students and electric vehicle hobbyists, in a race around Huntamer Park. Organizers expect approximately 45 teams, which will be split into high school and open divisions, to compete against each other in the annual endurance race. These teams come to Lacey's Alternative Energy Fair from across the US to see how their custom electric vehicles perform against other designs. In addition to the electric vehicle portion of the Lacey Grand Prix, the fair also hosts a fuel-economy focused race.

The Lacey MPG Rally also features participants from across the United States. The rally aims to demonstrate and explain how to maximize the fuel efficiency of everyday automobiles. Last year's winner, a 2002 Saturn SL1, reached an impressive sixty-six miles per gallon, which is twice the Environmental Protection Agency's mpg estimate. While the MPG Rally is not a competitive event, officials record statistics during the 100-mile journey and the participant with the best improvement in fuel economy at the end garners bragging rights until next year's MPG Rally.

The Lacey Alternative Energy Fair has been growing since starting in 1998; the May 1st event now draws up to 3,000 visitors and attracts alternative energy advocates and enthusiasts from across the country.