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News - Friday, April 21, 2006

## A reality check for Earth Day

### Restoring nature, but polluting the Bay

by Jon Wiener

This Earth Day, a number of public works projects throughout the city continue to draw Mountain View residents closer to the defining characteristic of the region.

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The Stevens Creek Trail is growing and will soon link the salt marshes of Shoreline Park with the southernmost tip of the city. A bridge over Highway 101 along Permanente Creek will bring the same benefit for the north side of Mountain View.

Meanwhile, the city's efforts to restore the old Lesley Salt Co. ponds to wetlands continue to meet with success, and NASA and the Navy are cooperating in a massive clean-up project of the ponds and drainage channels at Moffett Field.

"Mountain View is a great example of a community that's rediscovering the Bay [and] the fact that it is a shoreline community," said David Lewis, director of Oakland-based Save the Bay.

But residents may be doing more to harm the ecology of the Bay than they realize, according to the results of an Internet survey released this week by Lewis's group.

According to the survey of 1,700 people, 95 percent of Bay Area residents are polluting the Bay nearly every day. Many wash their cars in driveways, flush unused medicines down the drain and throw batteries in the trash. Ultimately, the chemicals and other contaminants from those processes make their way to the Bay.

"We don't expect people to be perfect or make every change, but we do think if every person makes a few changes, we probably can have a pretty big impact," said Felicia Madsen.

To take the survey and learn more about how everyday activities can affect the Bay, go to [www.ikeepitclean.org](http://www.ikeepitclean.org).

E-mail Jon Wiener at [jwiener@mv-voice.com](mailto:jwiener@mv-voice.com)[Send this story](#)  
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