

## NONPROFIT



NAJIB JOE HAKIM

**Catching rays:** KQED is committed to being carbon neutral, Derheim says. Solar panels go on the roof this month.

## KQED embraces sustainability, on camera and off

BY LIZETTE WILSON

San Francisco Business Times Contributor

**C**arbon neutral and solar powered, KQED is turning a darker shade of green.

The public station, which broadcasts on the radio, TV and Internet throughout Northern California, produces programs ranging from changes in the Amazon River to achieving energy independence.

While the \$60 million-a-year nonprofit has always helped educate people about the environment, it increasingly practices the sustainability it preaches.

### WINNER

KQED

"Being sustainable and being aware of your environment is such a big part of doing business in Northern California," said Donald Derheim,

KQED's executive vice president of marketing and communications, who oversees the station's green agenda.

With the help of Foster City-based SolarCity, KQED will install a solar system on its roof in June. The system will generate 30 kilowatt-hours immediately, with KQED planning to add panels delivering another 15 kwh next year.

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KQED has also committed to being carbon neutral.

The station spent \$12,000 last year to buy carbon credits from the Chicago Climate Exchange and offset its footprint. This year, due largely to the rising cost of carbon credits, the station is spending \$24,000 to have a zero footprint.

KQED's 300 employees are also encouraged to be mindful. New hires are actually handed a recycling bin along with their security badge and welcome packet. The Green Team — an ad-hoc group of about a dozen employees — helps set green goals and suggests new programs to leadership.

These moves, along with providing a BART shuttle for employees and composting lunch waste, further underscore KQED's push toward sustainability.

Along with boosting internal sustainability efforts, KQED has intensified its focus on environmental education and action.

Its newest program, dubbed QUEST, focuses on science, nature and the environment in the Bay Area. The largest multiple-media project in KQED's history, QUEST includes a weekly half-hour HD television program, weekly radio segments, an interactive web site, and educational guides.

From shows on the invasive Humboldt squid and declining frog populations to web site links teaching green home improvement tips and green event listings, the QUEST initiative is geared to educate Bay Area residents about environmental issues and encourage them to take action.

Said Derheim: "Taking action is really what KQED culture is about."

KQED's national series "Jean Michel Cousteau: Ocean Adventures," which the San Francisco station produced, influenced President George W. Bush to act.

After watching the series in 2006, Bush declared the area where the film took place — the Northwest Hawaiian Islands — a national monument. It is now the largest marine sanctuary in the world.

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**KQED**

**Green executive:** Donald Derheim, executive VP of marketing and communications.

**Green shows:** New program QUEST focuses on Bay Area science, nature and the environment.

**Green initiatives:** New solar panel system; \$12,000 in carbon credits; employees' Green Team.



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**KQED aggressively pushes** sustainability as employees recycle, use BART shuttles and compost lunch waste.