



For Immediate Release

Wald, Ruhnke & Dost Architects Designs Modern Monterey County Health Department Facility

Hi-tech headquarters features open floor plan and encourages workplace collaboration

Monterey, CA – July 29, 2010 – The County of Monterey issued clear directives when it commissioned the design of its new Health Department headquarters in Salinas: build on a parking lot adjacent to its current facility; create an open, free-flowing floor plan that encourages collaboration and improved communication; and, complete the construction process while ensuring that no programs ceased operation for even one day. Wald, Ruhnke & Dost Architects worked closely with the County to meet these goals and the result is a sleek, highly functional facility built to efficiently accommodate four Bureaus – Administration, Public Health, Behavioral Health, and Environmental Health – as well as the Public Health Laboratory.

The construction process for the 47,000-square-foot facility lasted approximately 18 months, and was conducted in phases so that the entire Department remained open during that time period. When construction was completed, employees walked a short distance into their new workplace and the older facility was demolished to make way for the new headquarters' parking lots. Materials were recycled during the demolition process – wood, plastics, steel, metal studs, concrete, aluminum door facings – and the existing asphalt was ground up and used as the foundation for the new parking lots. This recycling effort supports the County's Environmental Health tenets and dovetails with Wald, Ruhnke & Dost Architects' focus on sustainability and support of the larger community. To view the final result, visit <http://wrdarch.com/public/monterey-county-health-department/>.

“The design for this building evolved from the project's available land, which is an angled lot that presented a unique set of challenges as well as possibilities. We worked with Monterey County to optimize the site and create a contemporary structure that provides the maximum ability to reconfigure office space as programs expand or shift due to ongoing projects,” said Henry Ruhnke, a principal with Wald, Ruhnke & Dost Architects.

The facility's designer and project manager, Matt Nohr of Wald, Ruhnke & Dost Architects, had a personal connection to the building before he created the first set of drawings for the County's review. “My dad actually worked in Health Department Administration as a budget analyst for years. While growing up, I would spend afternoons after school in the original building, and essentially considered it my home away from home,” explained Matt. “I got to know many of the people working there, which really inspired me to design a facility that served their needs.”

The former Health Department headquarters consisted of small compartmentalized offices that limited interoffice communication. For its new Health Department home, the County requested a high-tech, contemporary building that brings employees together through collaboration and creative interaction.

The new environment enhances the work culture and dynamic due to its floor plan, which features 70% of open office space and an abundant use of natural light throughout the building.

About WR&D

Wald, Ruhnke & Dost Architects, LLP is a full-service architectural firm with an extensive portfolio of commercial, healthcare, education, public works, residential, construction management, and commercial interior design projects developed over more than 45 years. Our design experience, project management skills and client referrals have made us one of the largest firms on the Central Coast, with offices in Monterey and Santa Cruz. For more information, visit www.wrdarch.com.

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