

# **The Rio Grande Mexican Restaurant**

## *“Spicing up Sustainability”*

The Rio Grande Mexican Restaurant has served Fort Collins since 1986 and their famous margaritas are not the only thing packing a punch. After joining the Climate Wise program, Rio Grande employees raised the bar on sustainable restaurant management. This locally owned and operated business continues to implement sustainable programs that give people something to talk about.

### **EMPLOYEE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

#### **The “Riocyclers” Green Team**

In 2007, employees formed a green team to help educate staff about water and energy conservation, waste stream management and alternative transportation. Information is shared at staff meetings and on bi-lingual employee bulletin boards and signage, creating a common focus towards sustainability.

### **WATER QUALITY & CONSERVATION**

#### **Water Conservation Upgrades**

To conserve water, The Rio placed aerators on faucets and water displacement devices on toilets, saving approximately \$10,000 in utility costs.

#### **Green Cleaning**

The Rio switched their cleaning materials to more environmentally friendly products. They use Bio-clean enzyme cleaner for the floors, citrus degreaser in the kitchen and Green Seal certified hand soap in bathrooms.

### **ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION**

#### **Bike to Work Program**

The Rio started an incentive program to encourage employees to bike to work. In the first month alone, employees biked 314 miles!



#### **Facility**

*The Rio Grande Mexican Restaurant  
Fort Collins, Colorado*

#### **Size**

*15,715 square feet*

**Climate Wise Partner**  
*Since 2006*

**Partner Level**  
**SILVER** level partner  
*2007 award*

#### **Web**

[www.riograndemexican.com](http://www.riograndemexican.com)

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*The*  
**RIO GRANDE**  
*Mexican Restaurant*



# Climate Wise Partner Profile

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## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

### Green Energy Program

To ensure that their energy was coming from a clean, renewable resource, The Rio joined the City's Green Energy Program.

## SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING

### Vermi-Composting

In 2007, The Rio began composting post consumer waste. John Anderson and his "wormbulance" pick up 800 lbs of compost per week. The compost includes paper towel waste from the restrooms and wait staff order tickets



### Single Stream Recycling Program

Every week, employees recycle approximately 60 cubic yards of glass, plastic and cardboard and other recyclables through Waste Management.

### Recycled Cooking Oil

Rio employees collect discarded cooking oil for use as fuel by Exodus Moving Company.

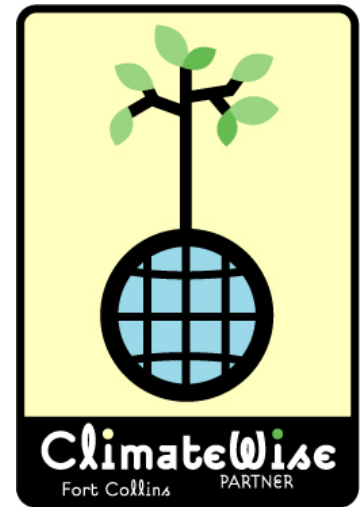
### Rechargeable Gift Cards

To further reduce waste, the Rio is switching to rechargeable gift cards for guests.

## COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

### Adopt-an-Open Space-Program

The Riocyclers, a group of eco-minded employees, volunteers once a month to clean up trash from Magpie Meander. Since November 2007, the Riocyclers have logged over 60 volunteer hours!



#### Climate Wise

Climate Wise is a voluntary City of Fort Collins program that recognizes and assists businesses in quantifying and reducing their environmental impact. Climate Wise provides free assessments to business partners and includes expert staff from the City of Fort Collins Utilities, Natural Resources, and Transportation departments.

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