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Wilder Solutions

“I hate gassers!” laughs Dr. Rob Wilder as he burns rubber across the parking lot of his favorite sushi restaurant in Encinitas. He means cars that run on gasoline and rock oil like the cars most of the rest of us drive.

Wilder rods around SoCal in a pumpkin orange, all-electric Tesla convertible He and his wife bought a Nissan Leaf more recently too, which they love as well. Nearly just about the only thing with more torque than the Tesla, he says, is a turbocharged Porsche.

It’s strange to “scream” around a parking lot in a car that makes no noise, no scream at all, since it has no real grinding gears or throttle. It’s just the sound of rubber on pavement as we smooth up the road to Wilder’s house in Encinitas. The roof of the house is covered with solar panels, and the panels are the things that charge the car. Wilder takes great and mischievous anti-gasser delight in this fact.

“We’re running in essence off the sun,” he explains.

Wilder, 51, has an encyclopedic mind for all things alternative — solar, wind, geothermal, transport and energy — both in the U.S. and worldwide. He is CEO and founder of Encinitas-based WilderShares, whose Indexes are tracked by funds,

Wilder’s focus is to help select the companies that may go into his indexes.

Wilder helps select companies for Indexes, but is not a stock picker, not the money guy. There’s a self-imposed firewall between what he

does in Indexing in Encinitas, and ... the Wall Street side, which is handled including out of London and Arizona with his partners.

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In the early '80s, Wilder wanted to change the world. He had a law degree and a doctorate in environmental policy. He'd written a very decent book called "Listening to the Sea," and as an activist helped to influence some of California's ocean policies.

He also felt an intense drive to help find better, green solutions. He tried working for the Nature Conservancy, and had worked in marine conservation in Maui. Yet the change he wished to see in the world wasn't happening fast enough for him.

.... Teaming with a partner in the late 1990s they felt indexes were at last possible and wise, for smart green solutions.

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The time for green Indexing was then barely just beginning, but "I'd advise, Don't let perfect be the enemy of the good — or the great. That's my advice to entrepreneurs. Get it done. Get it out there and try. The initial concept will change, I guarantee you. You should see my 'no' pile. It's high. Very high. But when people turn me down and I think the idea's a good one, it makes me angry. Let me clarify that. Doesn't make me angry. Makes me motivated. In my experience, it's not the people into money, money, money that make the real money. It's the ones who understand the technology, and they form their company around that. If they're right, the money follows.

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