

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 5, 2017

AGENDA NO. 7

**PROPOSAL:** Extend Contract for Media, Advertising and Public Outreach for the 2017-18 Check Before You Burn Program

**SYNOPSIS:** On July 8, 2016, the Board awarded a contract to Westbound Communications for \$246,000 to plan and execute a comprehensive media, advertising and public outreach campaign for the 2016-17 Check Before You Burn program. The existing contract with the firm will expire on June 30, 2017. This action is to extend the contract with Westbound Communications for \$246,000 for one additional year. The contract will be executed from the Rule 1309.1 Priority Reserve Fund (36). A separate contract will be proposed at a later date for advertising with Google, Inc. to promote the 2017-18 Check Before You Burn campaign.

**COMMITTEE:** Administrative, April 14, 2017; Less than a quorum was present; the Committee Members concurred that this item be approved by the Board.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

Authorize the Executive Officer to extend the contract for Media, Advertising and Public Outreach for the Check Before You Burn program with Westbound Communications for one year in an amount not to exceed \$246,000 from the Rule 1309.1 Priority Reserve Funds (Fund 36) to plan and implement the 2017-18 Check Before You Burn outreach campaign.

Wayne Nastri  
Executive Officer

**Background**

SCAQMD's Check Before You Burn program and its regulatory framework, Rule 445, are key measures in the agency's Air Quality Management Plan to achieve the federal health-based air quality standard for PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Check Before You Burn and Rule 445 seek to reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from wood burning in residential fireplaces from November 1 through the end of February on days when unhealthy air quality is forecast.

On April 1, 2016, the Board approved release of an RFP to solicit proposals from firms with the necessary expertise to plan and execute a comprehensive media, advertising and public outreach campaign to promote awareness of and compliance with the Check Before You Burn program during the 2016-17 fall/winter season. The Board approved funding for this outreach effort from the Rule 1309.1 Priority Reserve Funds in an amount not to exceed \$250,000.

Based on the overall quality of their proposed campaign and their presentation to the Administrative Committee, the committee recommended awarding a contract to Westbound Communications. The Board approved the contract on July 8, 2016 in an amount not to exceed \$246,000, with an option to extend the contract for two additional one-year contracts.

**Proposal**

For the 2016-17 Check Before You Burn program, Westbound Communications developed and implemented a comprehensive media, advertising and public outreach campaign to:

- Increase awareness of and support for SCAQMD's Check Before You Burn program;
- Promote awareness of and compliance with no-burn days; and
- Increase signups to AirAlerts.org.

The campaign achieved more than 465,000 impressions through paid advertising on radio, cable TV and social media. In addition, program information was also distributed at 15 community events. During this year's campaign, subscriptions to AirAlerts increased by about 92 percent compared to the previous year.

The Southland experienced a substantial amount of rainfall during the 2016/17 winter season which brought cleaner air to the region and contributed to a lower number of no-burn days – eight this year compared to 14 no-burn days in 2015/16. Although fewer no-burn days were forecast this past winter season, there remains a strong need to continue to increase awareness of the Check Before You Burn program and build on the outreach momentum gained over the past four years of program outreach.

Based on the overall quality and comprehensive design of the campaign developed and implemented by Westbound Communications, and to ensure an outreach campaign is in place before the 2017/18 Check Before You Burn season begins, staff recommends that the contract with Westbound Communications be extended for one additional year in an amount not to exceed \$246,000.

**Proposed Budget**

The proposed budget is \$246,000 to be allocated for a one-year contract extension with Westbound Communications.

**Resource Impacts**

Funding will be provided from Rule 1309.1 Priority Reserve Funds (Fund 36) to implement the 2017-18 Check Before You Burn outreach program.