

BOARD MEETING DATE: August 5, 2022

AGENDA NO. 9

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the May and June 2022 outreach activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office, which includes Major Events, Community Events/Public Meetings, Environmental Justice Update, Speakers Bureau/Visitor Services, Communications Center, Public Information Center, Small Business Assistance, Media Relations, and Outreach to Community Groups and Federal, State and Local Governments.

COMMITTEE: No Committee Review

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Receive and file.

Wayne Nastri
Executive Officer

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BACKGROUND

This report summarizes the activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office for May and June. The report includes Major Events Community Events/Public Meetings; Environmental Justice Update; AB 617; Speakers Bureau/Visitor Services; Communications Center; Public Information Center; Small Business Assistance; Media Relations; and Outreach to Community Groups and Governments.

MAJOR EVENTS (HOSTED AND SPONSORED)

Each year, staff engage in holding and sponsoring several major events throughout South Coast AQMD's four-county jurisdiction to promote, educate, and provide important information to the public regarding reducing air pollution, protecting public health, and improving air quality while minimizing economic impacts. No major events were hosted or sponsored in May and June.

COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS

Each year, staff engage with thousands of residents and stakeholders to provide information about the agency, incentive programs, and ways individuals can help reduce air pollution through events and meetings sponsored by South Coast AQMD or in partnership with others. Attendees typically receive the following information:

- Tips on reducing their exposure to smog and its health effects;
- Clean air technologies and their deployment;
- Invitations to or notices of conferences, seminars, workshops, and other public events;
- South Coast AQMD incentive programs;
- Ways to participate in South Coast AQMD's rules and policy development; and
- Assistance in resolving air pollution-related problems.

Staff attended and/or provided information and updates at the following May and June events and meetings:

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

Staff participated in the virtual Legislative Affairs Committee meeting on May 11. Information was shared on the 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) workshops, and current funding opportunities through Proposition 1B and Carl Moyer programs.

San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce

On May 18, staff attended the Government Affairs Committee meeting to share updates on MSRC application deadlines to apply for the Major Event Center Transportation Programs.

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

On May 18, staff participated in a virtual Energy Environment & Natural Resources Committee meeting and provided updates on Proposition 1B and Carl Moyer funding opportunities, 2022 AQMP public workshops, and the Governing Board Summer Internship Program.

San Fernando Valley Council of Governments

On May 19, staff attended a virtual meeting to provide updates on Prop 1B and Carl Moyer funding opportunities, 2022 AQMP public workshops and the Governing Board Summer Internship Program.

Orange County Council of Governments

On May 26, staff presented on the 2022 AQMP at the Board of Directors meeting.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LA DPH)

On June 1, staff participated in an agency stakeholder virtual meeting hosted by LA DPH related to AllenCo Energy in Los Angeles. Staff provided an update on monthly compliance activities, including surveillance and air monitoring.

Big Bear Chamber of Commerce

Staff participated in a virtual Government Affairs/Regional Transportation Advisory Committee meeting on June 9. Staff provided information on funding opportunities for zero-emission trucks and buses under the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust and safety tips for wildfire smoke.

San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership

On June 22, staff attended a virtual Legislative Action Committee meeting to provide updates on the CLEANair Furnace Rebate Program, EPA's Clean School Bus Program, and funding opportunities through Prop 1B and Carl Moyer programs.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE UPDATE

The following are key environmental justice (EJ) related activities in which staff participated during May and June. These events and meetings involve communities affected disproportionately from adverse air quality impacts.

Young Leaders Advisory Council

On May 26, the Advisory Council held their quarterly meeting. Agenda topics included updates on proposed Rule 2306: Indirect Source Rule for New Internodal Facilities and South Coast AQMD Sponsored and High-Priority State Legislation.

Pacoima Community Initiative

Staff participated in the virtual Pacoima Community Initiative monthly meeting on June 3. South Coast AQMD provided updates on Clean Air Program for Elementary Students, Why Healthy Air Matters, and other Environmental Justice Community Partnership (EJCP) initiatives.

Environmental Justice Community Partnership Advisory Council

On June 1, the Advisory Council held their virtual quarterly meeting. Agenda topics included an update on the 2022 AQMP, a live demonstration on major enhancements to the South Coast Mobile App and an update on EJ efforts.

AB 617 UPDATE

The following are key AB 617-related activities in which staff participated during May and June. These events, workshops, and meetings involve AB 617 communities and support the Community Steering Committees (CSCs), Community Air Monitoring Plans (CAMPs), and Community Emissions Reduction Plans (CERPs).

Eastern Coachella Valley CSC Budget Working Team Meeting

On May 3, staff hosted a virtual meeting to discuss the paving project plan and incentives for air filtration.

South Los Angeles CSC Virtual Office Hours

On May 4, virtual office hours were held to answer questions and take comments on the draft CERP and CAMP.

South Los Angeles CSC Meeting

On May 5, approximately 80 people participated in a virtual CSC meeting. Staff presented an update on the Monitoring Working Team meetings, the draft CAMP and the revised CERP language.

South Los Angeles CSC Meet and Greet

On May 10, staff hosted an in-person outdoor meet and greet with the CSC to answer questions and receive comments on the draft CERP and CAMP.

San Bernardino, Muscoy CSC

On May 12, approximately 10 people participated in a virtual CSC meeting. Staff provided a CAMP implementation update and an overview of South Coast AQMD programs and services. SoCalGas and Southern California Edison presented on their respective community assistance programs.

Wilmington, Carson, West Long Beach CSC

On May 19, approximately 100 people participated in a virtual CSC meeting. Staff presented an update on the CAMP and CERP implementation for oil and gas monitoring and enforcement, and CARB presented on the installation of their “No Idling” signs. CSC members expressed concerns regarding enforcement, leak detection and investigation, as well as truck traffic and idling restrictions.

East Los Angeles, Boyle Heights, West Commerce CSC

On May 26, approximately 60 people participated in a virtual Quarterly CSC meeting. South Coast AQMD staff presented enforcement updates for auto body shops, rendering facilities and the ethylene oxide air monitoring efforts at the Sterigenics facility in Vernon. Representatives from Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Southern California Gas Company, and Southern California Edison presented on their customer home energy efficiency and weatherization programs.

CARB AB 617 Funding 101 Webinar

On June 7 and 9, staff presented at the AB 617 Funding 101 Webinar hosted by the Community Air Protection Program at CARB. The webinar shared information about AB 617 funding, including the allocation process, funding categories, accountability, examples of how funds are used, and opportunities for community participation.

Salton Sea Long-Range Plan Community Workshop

On June 7, staff participated in a virtual Salton Sea Management Program's public workshop on the development of the Long-Range Plan to revitalize the sea. This workshop provided an opportunity to learn about the process, timeline, and key building blocks of the plan and concepts being proposed.

Eastern Coachella Valley CSC Working Teams

On June 15, 21 and 22, staff hosted virtual CSC Outreach, Budget, and Monitoring Working Team meetings. Discussions included finalizing AB 617 outreach materials, a community events calendar, air filtration incentives, paving project plan and a CARB update on pesticide monitoring.

Eastern Coachella Valley CSC

On June 23, approximately 45 people participated in the second 2022 quarterly virtual CSC meeting. Southern California Gas Company and Imperial Irrigation District presented on their customer assistance and energy efficiency programs. CSC members provided updates on community activities, available resources, and working teams (i.e., Budget, Monitoring, and Outreach). U.S. EPA discussed compliance issues with Greenleaf Desert View Power Plant.

SPEAKERS BUREAU/VISITOR SERVICES

South Coast AQMD regularly receives requests for staff to speak on air quality-related issues from a wide variety of organizations, such as trade associations, chambers of commerce, community-based groups, schools, hospitals, and health-based organizations. South Coast AQMD also hosts visitors from around the world who meet with staff on a wide range of air quality issues.

There were no Speakers Bureau/Visitor Service requests in May and June.

COMMUNICATION CENTER STATISTICS

The Communication Center handles calls on South Coast AQMD's main line, 1-800-CUT-SMOG®, the Spanish language line, and after-hours calls to those lines. Total calls received in the months of May and June are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD's Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	4,702
Calls to South Coast AQMD's Spanish Language Line	85
Clean Air Connection	16
Total Calls	4,803

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls for general information. The PIC did not take walk-in requests in May and June because of the COVID pandemic. Email advisories provided information on upcoming meetings and events, program announcements and alerts on time-sensitive issues. Information for the months of May and June are summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC	13
Calls to Automated System	504
Total Calls	517
Email Advisories Sent	86,447

SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

South Coast AQMD notifies local businesses of proposed regulations so they can participate in the agency's rule development process. South Coast AQMD works with other agencies and governments to identify efficient, cost-effective ways to reduce air pollution and shares that information broadly. Staff provides personalized assistance to small businesses both over the telephone and via virtual on-site consultation, as summarized below for May and June.

- Provided permit application assistance to 324 companies, and
- Processed 131 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

Types of businesses assisted:

Architecture Firms	Engineering Firms	Restaurants
Auto Body Shops	Gas Stations	Retail Facilities
Auto Repair Centers	Gasoline Dispensing Facilities	Telecommunication Center
Construction Firms	Manufacturing Facilities	Warehouses
Dry Cleaners		

MEDIA RELATIONS

The Media Office handles all South Coast AQMD outreach and communications with television, radio, newspapers and all other publications, and media operations. The May and June reports are listed below:

Major Media Interactions	209
Press Releases	22
News Carousel	5

Major Media Topics:

- **Modified Air Quality Index (AQI):** Pitches were sent to local news outlets regarding the modified AQI press release.
- **Clean Tech Showcase:** Pitches were sent to local news outlets regarding the May 6 showcase event. Staff participated in interviews with KFI and Spectrum News.
- **Sterigenics Notice of Violation (NOV):** A press release and written responses were provided to local news outlets regarding the Sterigenics press release, resulting in local coverage from radio, tv, and newspaper outlets. Capital & Main, Los Angeles Times, Southern California News Group and KPCC provided follow up questions. A press release and written responses were provided.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory:** Pitches were sent to local news outlets regarding two windblown dust advisories, resulting in local coverage from radio, tv and newspaper outlets.
- **Smoke Advisory:** Pitches were sent to local news outlets regarding smoke conditions due to the Coastal Fire resulting in local coverage from radio, tv and newspaper outlets. Los Angeles Times and KCBS/KCAL requested additional details, which was provided.
- **Ozone Attainment:** Staff participated in an interview with the Los Angeles Times on ozone attainment. Additional ozone information was requested and a written response was provided.
- **Inland Empire Air Quality:** Staff participated in an interview with Telemundo on air quality in the Inland Empire.
- **E&B Natural Resource Management:** Spectrum News requested a list of NOV's issued to E&B Natural Resource Management for their Murphy Drill site. A written response was provided.
- **Replace Your Ride:** KQED/NPR requested interviews with past program participants who used the program to purchase an EV or EV hybrid vehicle. Three participants agreed to be contacted and contact information was provided.

- **Federal Ozone Standards:** The Los Angeles Times asked for an update on the status of the Notice of Intent letter issued to U.S. EPA. Information was provided.
- **AQMP:** Staff participated in an interview with Sierra Magazine on air quality in Southern California and the AB 617 program.
- **Rule 2305/Indirect Source Rule:** Staff participated in an interview with the Wired Magazine on the Indirect Source Rule.
- **Air Quality:** University of California, Irvine students requested information on how government decisions contribute to local air quality in Southern California. A written response was provided.
- **State Implementation Plan (SIP) Contingency:** Inside EPA requested information about the EPA SIP Contingency measure. A written response was provided.
- **Hydrogen Sulfide:** Southern California News Group requested information on investigations for Hyperion and Chevron for hydrogen sulfide emissions and their thresholds. A written response was provided.
- **Marathon Refinery:** Argus Media requested information on a building closure at the Marathon refinery and its relation, if any, to Rule 1109.1 or the sunseting of the RECLAIM program. A written response was provided.
- **Sterigenics:** Pitches were sent regarding the Sterigenics press releases, resulting in print and broadcast coverage. Southern California News Group requested a copy of South Coast AQMD's communications with Cal/OSHA. A written response was provided. A reporter submitted follow-up questions regarding the NOV. Written responses were provided.
- **South Coast AQMD Mobile App:** Pitches were sent regarding improved features for the mobile app, resulting in coverage. Additional direct calls were made to reporters at local outlets and technology publications.
- **Ozone Advisory:** Pitches were sent regarding the 6/7 Ozone Advisory, resulting in print and broadcast coverage.
- **Sheep Fire Smoke Advisory:** Pitches were sent regarding the smoke advisory on 6/13, resulting in print and broadcast coverage.
- **Baker Order for Abatement:** Pitches were sent regarding the Order for Abatement sought for Baker rendering facility, resulting in print and broadcast coverage.
- **Electric Trucks:** Floodlight News/The Guardian submitted questions on the unavailability of electric trucks and a breakdown of how South Coast AQMD determines what is “cost effective” when determining whether to provide funding for electric or gas-powered vehicles. Written responses were provided.

- **Diesel emissions:** Staff participated in an interview with Red Canary on diesel emissions in transport corridors from the Port of Los Angeles to Pasadena and San Bernadino, and the successes from monitoring the air quality. Follow up questions were provided on the specifics of air quality monitoring. A written response was provided.
- **Torrance Refinery:** Southern California News Group submitted a request for comments on the uptick in unplanned flare events and requested a copy of an NOV. The reporter submitted follow-up questions regarding emission limits at refineries, and an update on previous investigations. A written response was provided.
- **Diesel Mitigation Efforts:** A Cal State University, Fullerton student researcher requested an interview on policies addressing mitigation strategies for diesel pollution connected to warehouse development. A written response was provided.
- **Port and Rail Indirect Source Rule:** KCET requested information on ISR rules for ports and rail yards, and how staffing shortages could impact rulemaking. A written response was provided.
- **AllenCo:** BBC World Service Radio inquired about South Coast AQMD's response to resident concerns about odors. A written response was provided.
- **Environment and Sustainability:** Environmental Social Justice requested an interview on improvements to air pollution, ties to social impacts and tips on what the public can do to assist. An interview is being scheduled.
- **Sterigenics, EPA NOI, Salton Sea Dust Study:** The Los Angeles Times requested updates on South Coast AQMD actions. Staff is working on a response.
- **China Shipping Trial:** Salon requested comment on the China Shipping trial tentative ruling, hearing arguments and prospects for an appeal. Staff is working on a response.

News Releases:

- **South Coast AQMD Develops Modified AQI, Improving Accessibility for People with Color Vision Deficiencies – May 2, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of new AQI format for users with color vision deficiencies.
- **South Coast AQMD to Showcase Latest Clean Vehicles, Equipment and Monitoring Technology – May 3, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents about the vehicle and technology showcase to be held at South Coast AQMD headquarters on May 6.
- **Violations Issued to Sterilization Facility in Vernon, Release of Toxic Emissions Discovered – May 6, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Announced NOVs issued to Sterigenics in Vernon, CA.

- **South Coast AQMD Issues a Windblown Dust Advisory for Portions of Riverside County – May 6 and 27, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of windblown dust conditions.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Smoke Advisory Due to Coastal Fire in Laguna Niguel – May 11, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of smoke conditions due to fire.
- **Filing an Air Quality Complaint on Your Smart Phone is Easier – June 2, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents about the new features to the South Coast AQMD App.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Ozone Advisory Due to Heat Wave – June 7, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents about ozone conditions due to excessive heat.
- **South Coast AQMD Designates Sterigenics in Vernon as Potentially High-Risk Facility – June 8, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents on the status of the Sterigenics facility in Vernon.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Smoke Advisory Due to Sheep Fire – June 13, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents about smoke conditions due to wildfire.
- **South Coast AQMD Requests Order to Force Rendering Facility in Vernon to Complete A Building Enclosure and Reduce Odors – June 15, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of an Order for Abatement for the Baker rendering facility.

Social Media Posts:

- **AQ Forecast (5/3):** 4,920 Twitter Impressions
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (5/6):** 3,493 Twitter Impressions
- **Wildfire Tips (5/11; during Coastal Fire in OC):** 19,826 Twitter Impressions
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (5/27):** 5,615 Twitter Impressions
- **Ozone Advisory (6/8):** 8,299 Twitter Impressions
- **Sheep Fire Smoke Advisory (6/13):** 8,887 Twitter Impressions
- **AQ Forecast (6/21):** 4,660 Twitter Impressions.

News Carousel:

- **Volvo LIGHTS Project Team Wins 2022 SCAG Sustainability Award for Outstanding Achievement in Sustainability:** Linked users to the Volvo LIGHTS press release regarding the award.
- **Keep up with the Latest News from South Coast AQMD – View the current edition of the Advisor newsletter:** Posted a link to the newest edition of the Advisor.

- **College Students, Apply Now for a Summer Internship at South Coast AQMD – Applications Due by May 31, 2022:** Posted a link to the Governing Board Internship Program.
- **Replace your gas furnace with an all-electric heat pump system – Rebates up to \$1500 are now available – June 22, 2022:** Provided information on fireplace replacement programs.
- **Smog and Wildfire Seasons Are Underway. Sign up for Air Alerts for Important Air Quality Updates – June 29, 2022:** Provided a link for users to sign up for air alerts.

OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY GROUPS AND FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Outreach was conducted personally and virtually in May and June utilizing web-based and other technologies to communicate with elected officials or staff from the following cities

Alhambra	Hermosa Beach	Placentia
Anaheim	Huntington Beach	Pomona
Arcadia	Industry	Rancho Cucamonga
Artesia	Inglewood	Rancho Palos Verdes
Baldwin Park	Irvine	Redlands
Banning	Irwindale	Redondo Beach
Bell	La Cañada Flintridge	Rolling Hills
Bell Gardens	La Habra	Rolling Hills Estates
Bellflower	La Puente	Rosemead
Big Bear Lake	La Verne	San Dimas
Bradbury	Laguna Niguel	San Fernando
Brea	Lake Forest	San Gabriel
Burbank	Lawndale	San Jacinto
Carson	Lomita	San Marino
Cerritos	Long Beach	Santa Ana
Claremont	Los Angeles	Santa Clarita
Colton	Lynwood	Santa Fe Springs
Commerce	Manhattan Beach	Seal Beach
Compton	Maywood	Sierra Madre
Covina	Menifee	Signal Hill
Cudahy	Mission Viejo	South El Monte
Culver City	Monrovia	South Gate
Diamond Bar	Montebello	South Pasadena
Downey	Monterey Park	Stanton
Duarte	Moreno Valley	Temecula
El Monte	Newport Beach	Torrance
El Segundo	Norwalk	Tustin
Fullerton	Ontario	Walnut
Garden Grove	Palos Verdes Estates	West Covina
Gardena	Paramount	Yorba Linda
Glendale	Pasadena	Yucaipa
Glendora	Perris	
Hawthorne	Pico Rivera	

Communication was conducted in May and June with elected officials and/or staff from the following state and federal offices:

- U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein
- U.S. Senator Alex Padilla
- U.S. Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard
- U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán
- U.S. Representative Tony Cárdenas
- U.S. Representative Judy Chu
- U.S. Representative Lou Correa
- U.S. Representative Jimmy Gomez
- U.S. Representative Alan Lowenthal
- U.S. Representative Frank Pallone
- U.S. Representative Katie Porter
- U.S. Representative Raul Ruiz
- Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh
- Senator Anna Caballero
- Senator Maria Elena Durazo
- Senator Bob Hertzberg
- Senator Lena Gonzalez
- Senator John Laird
- Senator Connie Leyva
- Senator David Min
- Senator Josh Newman
- Senator Susan Rubio
- Senator Nancy Skinner
- Senator Henry Stern
- Senator Scott Wiener
- Assembly Member Richard Bloom
- Assembly Member Lisa Calderon
- Assembly Member Mike Fong
- Assembly Member Cristina Garcia
- Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia
- Assembly Member Chris Holden
- Assembly Member Brian Maienschein
- Assembly Member James C. Ramos
- Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
- Assembly Member Freddie Rodriguez
- Assembly Member Blanca Rubio
- Assembly Member Miguel Santiago

Staff represented South Coast AQMD in May and June and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following governmental agencies and business organizations:

Arcadia Chamber of Commerce
Big Bear Chamber of Commerce
Brea Chamber of Commerce
Burbank Chamber of Commerce
CARB
California Apartment Association
California Manufacturers & Technology Association
Carson Chamber of Commerce
Clean Power Alliance
El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce

Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority
Foothill Transit
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Glendale Chamber of Commerce
Glendora Chamber of Commerce
Industry Business Council, Los Angeles
Inland Action
Irwindale Chamber of Commerce
League of California Cities, Orange County Division
Local Government Sustainable Energy Coalition
Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
Metropolitan Water District
Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Mountain Transit
Omnitrans
Ontario International Airport Authority
Orange County Black Chamber of Commerce
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Council of Governments
Orange County Transportation Authority
Pechanga Tribal Nation
Regional Chamber of Commerce, San Gabriel Valley
San Bernardino International Airport Authority
San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Fernando City Chamber of Commerce
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel & Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
San Gabriel Mountains Community Collaborative
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce
Santa Clarita Chamber of Commerce
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Southern California Association of Governments
Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. National Park Service
Western States Petroleum Association

In May and June, staff represented South Coast AQMD and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following community and educational groups and organizations:

Avocado Heights Vaqueros
Cal Poly Pomona
California State University, San Bernardino
Clean Healthy Air, Clean Healthy Altadena
El Segundo Unified School District
Hermosa Beach City School District
Inglewood Unified School District
Lawndale Elementary School District
Manhattan Beach Unified School District
Mt SAC Community College,
Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District
Pasadena City College
Redondo Beach Unified School District
Santa Ana College
Torrance Unified School District
University of La Verne