REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the November 2021 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, 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

BACKGROUND
This report summarizes the activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office for November. The report includes: Major Events; Community Events/Public Meetings; Environmental Justice Update; AB 617; Speakers Bureau/Visitor Services; Communications Center; Public Information Center; 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 and the economy.

No major events were hosted or sponsored.
COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS
Each year, staff engage with thousands of residents and stakeholders, providing valuable information about the agency, incentive programs, and ways individuals can help reduce air pollution through events and meetings sponsored solely 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 November events and meetings:

**Gateway Cities Council of Governments**
Staff participated in a virtual meeting on November 3. Staff presented updates on the Air Quality Sensor Performance Evaluation Center program and Volkswagen (VW) Environmental Mitigation Trust funds.

**Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Meeting**
Staff participated in an agency and stakeholder virtual meeting regarding AllenCo Energy in University Park on November 3. Staff provided updates on monthly compliance activities including surveillance and air monitoring, which did not detect elevated levels. Staff also reported that no complaints had been received related to AllenCo Energy since the last meeting on October 6.

**San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA)**
On November 4, staff attended the SBCTA City Manager Technical Advisory Committee meeting and provided updates on Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions (WAIRE) workshops and VW Environmental Mitigation Trust funds.

**Torrance Refinery Action Committee**
On November 10, staff attended a virtual meeting, which featured speaker Dr. Lyou, President of the Coalition for Clean Air and former South Coast AQMD Board Member. There were approximately 24 people in attendance including U.S. Congressmember Maxine Waters, who discussed issues related to hydrofluoric acid.
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Staff participated in the virtual Chamber meeting on November 18. Updates were shared on the Check Before You Burn (CBYB) program, Commercial Lawn and Garden Equipment Incentive Program, new application cycle for Replace Your Ride, and VW funding for combustion freight and marine projects.

San Gabriel Valley City Managers’ Association
On November 17, staff participated in a meeting with approximately 65 participants. Staff provided updates on CBYB, the Commercial Lawn & Garden Equipment Incentive Program, Clean Air Awards, and WAIRE.

Dominguez Channel Virtual Town Hall
Staff participated the City of Carson’s Town Hall meeting on November 18. Los Angeles County Public Works, Los Angeles County Public Health, and provided updates on the ongoing odor remediation efforts and related issues.

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

Pacoima Community Initiative (PCI)
On November 5, staff participated in PCI’s monthly stakeholder virtual meeting on November 5 to provide updates on the Clean Air Program for Elementary Students and the Clean Air Awards. Members discussed upcoming events, shared needs and collaboration ideas.

U.S. EPA Training
On November 16, staff attended part one of U.S. EPA’s virtual training on the Proposed Rule to Reduce Methane and Other Harmful Pollutants from the Oil and Natural Gas Industry. The training included background information on the oil and gas production process, an overview of the proposed rules, and information on how to effectively engage in the regulatory process.

Los Angeles Environmental Justice Network
Staff participated in the Los Angeles Environmental Justice Network’s series “Policy, Capacity Building and Environmental Justice Enforcement,” webinar on November 17. Panel members discussed the need to think collaboratively to ensure environmental justice plans and polices include a process for implementation and enforcement.

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

South Los Angeles Community Steering Committee Meeting
On November 16, approximately 60 people participated in the virtual meeting, including Board Member Kracov. Staff addressed the AB 617 program pause. A committee member provided an overview on oil and gas concerns and led discussions on potential actions to address air quality priorities. Another committee member presented case studies for metal facilities and auto body shops. Co-leads led discussions on no-idling signs, air filtration systems, outreach to independent owner operators, enforcement for mobile sources, mobile monitoring near oil drilling sites, more enforcement information regarding oil wells, accountability for oil and gas operators to inform the community of modifications to operations and chemicals used, and proximity of oil and gas sites to residential dwellings. Committee members requested collaboration with other responsible agencies such as CalGEM, City of Los Angeles, and the County of Los Angeles to address community concerns.

Wilmington/Carson/West Long Beach Community Steering Committee Meeting
Approximately 85 people participated in the virtual meeting on November 17. A committee member provided updates regarding their work and outreach events with STEM students in the community. Staff presented an overview of mobile measurements near oil wells in the community and monitoring efforts related to the Dominguez Channel odor event. Additionally, there was a staff overview of Rule 1109.1, highlighting the 8 tons per day NOx reduction, which achieves the target listed in the CERP. Committee members asked about implementation of the rule and stated the importance of reducing air toxics. CARB shared information regarding an air filtration project with Los Angeles Unified School District and a committee member expressed concern with increased emissions resulting from the back log at the ports.

San Bernardino/Muscoy Community Steering Committee Meeting
Approximately 40 people participated in a virtual meeting on November 17. A committee member presented on air quality and social issues in the community and ongoing efforts to address these concerns. Staff provided an update on Proposed Rule 2306 - Indirect Source Rule (ISR) for New Intermodal Facilities, and CARB provided an update on the draft In-Use Locomotive Regulation. Staff also presented information and sought feedback on how to improve the Aeroqual sensor network and data dashboard, including a video tutorial on how to use and access the data. Aclima presented on the mobile monitoring campaign results and interactive mapping. Committee members asked about the proposed Colton intermodal facility, the status of the proposed ISR rule, and the technology expected to be used on-site. Committee members also asked about sensors in the community, pollutants of concern and air quality standards.
East LA/Boyle Heights/West Commerce Community Steering Committee Meeting
Approximately 70 people participated in a virtual meeting on November 18. Staff presented information about home air filtration units, toxics rules for metal processing facilities, and provided an update on Proposed Rule 2306 - ISR for New Intermodal Facilities. CARB provided an update on the draft In-Use Locomotive Regulation, and Aclima presented results of their mobile monitoring campaign and associated interactive mapping tool. Committee members asked about Proposed Rule 2306 and how it would impact the community. Committee members also asked questions about home air filtration systems, such as the number of units to be distributed and restrictions on who would be able to apply for a filter.

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 November.

COMMUNICATION CENTER STATISTICS
The Communication Center handles calls on South Coast AQMD’s main line, 1-800-CUT-SMOG®, the Spanish line, and after-hours calls to those lines. Total calls received in the month of November:

| Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG® | 2,351 |
| Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Spanish-language Line | 76 |
| **Total Calls** | **2,427** |

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS
The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls for general information. The PIC did not take walk-in requests in November 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 month of November is summarized below:

| Calls Received by PIC | 9 |
| Calls to Automated System | 323 |
| **Total Calls** | **332** |
| Email Advisories Sent | 46,559 |
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 November.

- Provided permit application assistance to 170 companies; and
- Processed 47 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

Types of businesses assisted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Architecture Firms</th>
<th>Engineering Firms</th>
<th>Restaurants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auto Body Shops</td>
<td>Gas Stations</td>
<td>Retail Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Firms</td>
<td>Manufacturing Facilities</td>
<td>Warehouses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Cleaners</td>
<td>Offices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 November reports are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Media Interactions</th>
<th>321</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Press Releases</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Major Media Topics:

- **Odors:** Staff participated in an interview with Associated Press on the challenge of reducing odors from industrial facilities and how Rule 445 has affected odors in Vernon.
- **Inland Empire Air Quality:** Staff participated in an interview with The Center for Health Reporting on MATES V and the Inland Empire air quality issues.
- **Auto Shops:** KCRW inquired about air quality near auto body facilities and the regulations facilities are required to meet. A written response was sent.
- **Port Terminal Project Suit:** Law 360 requested comment on the South Coast AQMD lawsuit on a terminal project at the Port of Los Angeles. Staff was unable to comment on ongoing litigation.
- **Gas-Powered Lawn Equipment:** Board Member Cacciotti and staff participated in an interview with CalMatters/Mercury News on the new regulations for gas-powered lawn equipment and the lawn and garden incentive program. Follow up questions were received and written responses were provided.
• **Air Quality Conditions:** Staff participated in an interview with LA Times on the forecast and hazy sky conditions and factors that contribute to poor visibility. Follow up questions were received and written responses were provided.

• **Flaring:** Red Canary Magazine requested an interview regarding flaring and monitoring techniques. Written responses were provided. Bloomberg News submitted questions regarding a flaring incident at the Phillips 66 refinery. Response is in progress.

• **Port Emissions:** Crosstown LA requested clarification on the increase in port emissions with 24/7 operations. Written responses were provided. NBC News Radio and LA Times requested interviews regarding gridlock at the ports and increased air pollution. Staff participated in an interview with LA Times.

• **South Coast AQMD Meetings:** Grist requested comment on the frequency of South Coast AQMD meetings with oil industry leaders. Written responses were provided.

• **WAIRE Rule Requirements:** Consumer Reports inquired about WAIRE rule requirements. A written response was provided.

• **AB 617:** CalMatters inquired regarding how to assess whether AB 617 has improved air quality. Response is in progress.

• **Smoke Conditions:** Staff participated in an interview with KESQ regarding smoky conditions and the impact on local air quality.

• **Replace your Ride:** Univision requested an interview with a Spanish speaker regarding the Replace Your Ride program. Recorded responses were provided.

• **The Future of Greentech:** An event representative requested a speaker/panelist to discuss air quality in Los Angeles as part of a clean cities topic. The Executive Officer will participate.

• **Clean Air Awards:** Pitches were sent to news outlets announcing the 32nd Annual Clean Air Awards.

• **Windblown Dust Advisory:** Pitches were sent to news outlets regarding two windblown dust advisories. This resulted in coverage from local tv, radio, and print outlets.

**Special Topics:**

**Rule 1109.1**

- Pitches were sent to news outlets with the November 5 press release on Rule 1109.1 resulting in large scale coverage on radio, television and online. Random Length News requested a copy of the presentation to the Board. A copy of the presentation was sent. Oil Price Information Service and Argus Media inquired about the Board’s adoption of the rule.

**Carson Odors**

- **Carson Odors:** Staff participated in interviews with LA Times and KCRW on odors from the Dominguez Channel. The Long Beach Post and LA Times requested updates on the Carson response. Written responses were provided.
A second reporter with the LA Times also requested updates. Written responses were provided.

**Check Before You Burn:**
- The 2021 Check Before You Burn Season began on November 1. There were 17 No-Burn Days in November. Pitches were sent to local media outlets for each No Burn Day, which resulted in extensive coverage from local television, radio and print outlets.
- Staff participated in interviews with KPCC and KNX on the launch of Check Before You Burn season. Staff participated in an interview with LA Newsletter on no-burn alerts and other types of South Coast AQMD alerts.

**News Releases:**
- **No-Burn Days – Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban in Effect for Residents of The South Coast Air Basin (English and Spanish):** In November, 17 No-Burn Days were declared. Press releases were issued on November 3-8, 14-15, 17-19, 22, and 26-30.
- **South Coast AQMD Governing Board Adopts Rules Establishing Emission Limits on Combustion Equipment at Petroleum Refineries (English and Spanish) – November 5, 2021:** Informed residents about the Board adoption of Rule 1109.1.
- **South Coast AQMD to Honor Clean Air Heroes – November 24, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents about the upcoming Clean Air Awards in December.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for the entire South Coast AQMD Jurisdiction – November 20, 24 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of windblown dust conditions on November 20 and 24.

**Social Media Notable posts:**
- **AQ Forecast (11/1):** 6,537 Twitter Impressions
- **Check Before You Burn (11/6):** 7,345 Twitter Impressions
- **Check Before You Burn Advisory (11/15):** 7,345 Twitter Impressions
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (11/20):** 21,476 Twitter Impressions
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (11/24):** 21,039 Twitter Impressions
OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY GROUPS AND FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Outreach was conducted in-person and virtually in November utilizing web-based and other technologies to communicate with elected officials or staff from the following cities:

Agoura Hills  Fountain Valley  Long Beach
Alhambra  Fullerton  Los Alamitos
Aliso Viejo  Garden Grove  Los Angeles
Anaheim  Gardena  Lynwood
Arcadia  Glendale  Manhattan Beach
Avalon  Glendora  Maywood
Azusa  Hawaiian Gardens  Menifee
Baldwin Park  Hawthorne  Mission Viejo
Banning  Hemet  Monrovia
Beaumont  Hermosa Beach  Montebello
Beverly Hills  Hidden Hills  Moreno Valley
Bradbury  Huntington Beach  Murrieta
Brea  Huntington Park  Newport Beach
Buena Park  Indian Wells  Norco
Burbank  Indio  Norwalk
Calabasas  Industry  Orange
Calimesa  Inglewood  Palm Desert
Canyon Lake  Irvine  Palm Springs
Carson  Irwindale  Palos Verdes Estates
Cathedral City  Jurupa Valley  Paramount
Chino  La Cañada Flintridge  Pasadena
Claremont  La Habra  Perris
Coachella  La Habra Heights  Pico Rivera
Corona  La Mirada  Placentia
Costa Mesa  La Palma  Pomona
Covina  La Puente  Rancho Mirage
Culver City  La Quinta  Rancho Palos Verdes
Cypress  La Verne  Rancho Santa Margarita
Dana Point  Laguna Beach  San Clemente
Desert Hot Springs  Laguna Hills  Redondo Beach
Diamond Bar  Laguna Niguel  Riverside
Downey  Laguna Woods  Rolling Hills
Duarte  Lake Elsinore  Rolling Hills Estates
Eastvale  Lake Forest  Rosemead
El Monte  Lakewood  San Dimas
El Segundo  Lawndale  San Fernando
Fontana  Lomita
San Gabriel  Signal Hill          Villa Park
San Jacinto     South El Monte      Walnut
San Juan Capistrano  South Gate       West Covina
San Marino       South Pasadena      West Hollywood
Santa Ana       Stanton               Westlake Village
Santa Clarita   Temecula             Westminster
Santa Fe Springs Temple City         Whittier
Santa Monica    Torrance             Wildomar
Seal Beach       Tustin               Yorba Linda
Sierra Madre    Vernon               }

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

- U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein
- U.S. Senator Alex Padilla
- Representative Nanette Barragán
- Representative Karen Bass
- Representative Judy Chu
- Representative Grace Napolitano
- Representative Katie Porter
- Representative Raul Ruiz
- Representative Maxine Waters
- Senator Bob Archuleta
- Senator Steven Bradford
- Senator Anthony Portantino
- Senator Susan Rubio
- Assembly Member Lisa Calderon
- Assembly Member Cristina Garcia
- Assembly Member Mike Gipson
- Assembly Member Chris Holden

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

Beach Cities Health District
Big Bear Chamber of Commerce
Black Chamber of Orange County
California High Speed Rail Authority
CARB
Coachella Valley Association of Governments
Desert Valley Builders Association
Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority
Foothill Transit
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce
Healthy Chino
Hollywood Burbank Airport
Industry Business Council
Irwindale Chamber of Commerce
Las Virgenes-Malibu Council of Governments
League of California Cities, Los Angeles, Orange County and Riverside Divisions
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Los Angeles County Department of Planning
Los Angeles Metro
Mountain Transit
Omnitrans
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Council of Governments
Riverside County Transportation Commission
Riverside Transit Agency
Riverside University Health System-Public Health
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
San Gabriel Valley City Managers Association
San Gabriel Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
South Orange County Economic Coalition
Southern California Association of Governments
SunLine Transit Agency
Twenty-nine Palms Band of Mission Indians
U.S. EPA
Valley Industry and Commerce Association
Western Pallet Association
Western Riverside Council of Governments
In November, staff represented South Coast AQMD and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following community and educational groups and organizations:

Bassett Unified School District
California Fire Safe Council
California School Boards Association
Center for Sustainable Energy
Clean Air Coalition of North Whittier and Avocado Heights
Clean Healthy Air, Clean Healthy Altadena
Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo, Inc.
Coachella Valley Unified School District
Coachella Valley Waterkeeper
Growing Coachella Valley
Hacienda La Puente School District
Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability
League of Women Voters, East San Gabriel Valley
Lideres Campesinas
OneFuture Coachella Valley
Pasadena City College
Taking Responsibility and Control, La Puente