

BOARD MEETING DATE: March 3, 2023

AGENDA NO. 8

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the January 2023 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 January. The report 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 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.

On January 6, South Coast AQMD virtually hosted the 33rd Annual Clean Air Awards to honor community leaders, organizations and businesses who have made momentous strides in the fight for cleaner air and a better quality of life. FOX 11 Meteorologist Maria Quiban served as the emcee. This year's awardees included:

- S. Roy Wilson Memorial Award for Leadership in Government – U.S. Senator Alex Padilla
- Robert M. Zweig, M.D. Memorial Award – Congressman Alan Lowenthal
- Dr. William A. Burke Award for Leadership in Environmental Justice – Angelica “Angie” Balderas
- Innovative Clean Air Technology Award – Orange County Transportation Authority
- Leadership in Air Quality Award – Watts Clean Air & Energy Committee
- Youth Leadership in Air Quality Award – Andy Fung, Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement.

COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS

Staff engage with residents and stakeholders of diverse communities 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 information regarding the following:

- Tips on reducing their exposure to smog and its health effects;
- How to file a complaint;
- Clean air technologies and their deployment;
- Invitations to or notices of conferences, seminars, workshops, and other public events;
- South Coast AQMD incentive programs;
- Funding/grants opportunities by South Coast AQMD and partner agencies;
- 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 January events and meetings:

AllenCo Energy

On January 4, staff participated in a virtual stakeholder meeting hosted by Los Angeles County Department of Public Health related to AllenCo Energy. Staff provided an update on monthly compliance activities and air monitoring.

Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance

On January 11, staff participated in the bi-monthly Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance meeting to provide updates on the Carl Moyer program including funding opportunities for on-road public utility vehicles.

San Fernando Valley Council of Governments

On January 18, staff attended the Board of Directors meeting to provide updates on the Carl Moyer and upcoming Commercial Electric Lawn and Garden Equipment Incentive programs. Staff also highlighted that Vice Chair Cacciotti will be presenting air quality updates at City Council meetings over the next several months.

Mountain Transit

On January 18, staff shared information at the Mountain Transit Board meeting on the Carl Moyer program and Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee's request for micro transit project proposals.

Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce

On January 19, staff participated virtually in the Government Affairs Committee to provide updates on the Carl Moyer program focusing on zero-emission cargo handling equipment and shore power projects.

Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority

On January 25, staff attended the Foothill Extension Construction Authority meeting to provide information on the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee's request for proposals on micro transit projects.

South Bay Cities Council of Governments Board of Directors Meeting

On January 26, staff provided the Board of Directors an update on the Carl Moyer program focusing on local government eligibility to apply for projects such as electric vehicle charging stations.

Orange County Council of Governments

On January 26, staff participated in the Board of Directors meeting to provide an update on current South Coast AQMD programs and the latest Advisor newsletter.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE UPDATE

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

U.S. EPA

On January 10, staff attended a press briefing held by U.S. EPA on two new Inflation Reduction Act programs for EJ. The EJ Collaborative program will provide a total of

\$30 million to community-based organizations (CBO) for projects to address environmental and/or public health issues, including air quality. The Government-to-Government (EJG2G) program will provide grants totaling \$70 million to States, local government (including air agencies), Tribes, and Territories. The EJG2G program supports and/or creates activities to lead to measurable environmental or public health improvements in communities and must be conducted in partnership with CBO(s).

Future of Cities: Mayors Forum

On January 19, staff attended the Future of Cities Mayors Forum. The discussion centered on the future of cities, especially disadvantaged communities, and how they are modernizing transportation systems and driving climate innovation with co-benefits for air quality.

Habitat for Humanity Partnership

On January 21, South Coast AQMD's volunteer program "Working with Communities," partnered with Habitat for Humanity San Bernardino Area and Habitat for Humanity Greater Los Angeles to collaborate on volunteer service projects in EJ communities throughout the four-county region. In the City of Highland, volunteers painted the exterior of a home with a fresh coat of low-VOC compliant paint. In South Los Angeles, volunteers helped make home ownership a reality for eight low-income families in the Watts-Willowbrook community. The project included painting and installing electrical wiring and constructing sections of a home. The homes will have drought tolerant landscaping, energy efficient heating systems, insulation made of recycled content, low flow plumbing fixtures, and solar energy systems installed.

On January 28, South Coast AQMD's volunteer program "Working with Communities," partnered with Habitat for Humanity San Bernardino Area and completed painting the exterior of a one-story home for a family. Volunteers completed painting a one-story home that had not been updated since 1999 and the family greatly appreciated the volunteers' efforts.

Environmental Justice Advisory Group (EJAG)

The quarterly virtual EJAG meeting was held on January 27. Agenda items included an overview of 2022 EJAG Accomplishments, summary of 2022 State and Federal Legislation, and an update on the Clean Air Program for Elementary Students and the Why Healthy Air Matters program.

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 presentations in January.

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 January are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2,248
Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Spanish Line	38
Clean Air Connection	1
Total Calls	2,287

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls and assists individuals who walk-in for general information. Email advisories provided information on upcoming meetings and events, program announcements and alerts on time-sensitive issues. Information for the month of January is summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC	67
Calls to Automated System	76
Total Calls	143
Visitor Transactions	94
Email Advisories Sent	10,010

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 provided personalized assistance to small businesses over the telephone, at South Coast AQMD headquarters and via virtual on-site consultation, as summarized below for January.

- Provided permit application assistance to 147 companies, and
- Processed 60 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	Telecommunication
Construction Firms	Facilities	Centers
Dry Cleaners	Manufacturing Facilities	Warehouses

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 January report is listed below:

Major Media Interactions	61
Press Releases	5
News Carousel	2

Major Media Topics:

- **Emcee for Clean Air Awards:** Coordinated the participation of Meteorologist Maria Quiban as emcee the event.
- **2022 AQMP:** E&E News reached out with questions regarding the 2022 AQMP, including clarifications on the phasing out of gas appliances. Responses were provided.
- **Air Quality:** PBS’s weekly news show, “Sustaining US” is working on a story about the state of air quality in Southern California and requested an interview. Working on scheduling interviews.
- **EtO Investigation:** Capital and Main reached out for follow up information on our regulatory authority under the Health and Safety Code. Reporter also reached out to the Chair with questions. Responses were provided.
- **South Coast AQMD Incentive Programs:** Working on developing script and talking points for a public service announcement on the Replace your Ride, Residential Lawn Mower Rebate, and the Residential Charger Incentive programs to be featured on Channel 35.
- **Indirect Source Rule:** The Los Angeles Times requested information on air quality as well as questions about the Warehouse Indirect Source Rule.
- **Working with Communities:** Pitched the announcement of South Coast AQMD’s partnership with Habitat for Humanity to local outlets.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (1/22 and 1/25):** Pitched windblown dust advisories to local media outlets resulting in coverage.
- **Clean Air Awards:** A reminder was pitched to local media outlets inviting them to the virtual event and requesting for details to be shared on their community calendars.

News Releases:

- **South Coast AQMD Issues a Windblown Dust Advisory for Portions of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties** (English and Spanish) – January 22, 2023: Informed residents of dust caused by high winds.
- **South Coast AQMD Launches New Partnership with Habitat for Humanity International** (English and Spanish) – January 24, 2023: Announced the first events to take place with Habitat for Humanity in Los Angeles and San Bernardino.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues a Windblown Dust Advisory for Portions of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties** (English and Spanish) – January 25, 2023: Informed residents of dust caused by high winds.

Social Media Posts:

- [Clean Air Awards Remind \(1/3\)](#): 1,929 Twitter Impressions -- Liked by @UCLA, @UCLAINTL, @UCLAIoES
- [No Burn Day Advisory \(1/6\)](#): 12,439 Twitter Impressions -- Liked by @ReadyLACounty, @805Weather, @CityofRPV, @CityofRHE, @NWSSanDiego, @NWSLosAngeles +Paid Ad Support on Facebook/Instagram
- [Clean Air Awards Livestream](#): 39 FB Live Viewers, 30 YouTube Viewers
- [AQ Forecast \(1/12\)](#): 1,122 Twitter Impressions -- RT by @LAFDtalk, @805weather
- [Windblown Dust Advisory \(1/22\)](#): 20,031 Twitter Impressions --RT by @BelenNBCLA, @NWSLosAngeles, @OEHHA, @LAFDtalk, @NWSSanDiego, @OurSantaMonica, @ReadyLACounty, @RubyGonzales2, @PasadenaGov

News Carousel:

- **Keep Your New Year's Resolution to Reduce Air Pollution – January 12, 2023**: Provided link to infographic outlining environmental ways the public can continue to help reduce air pollution.
- **The Carl Moyer Program is now accepting funding applications! - January 18, 2023**: Provided link to the Carl Moyer Program webpage.

OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY GROUPS AND FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Outreach was conducted personally and virtually in January to communicate with elected officials or staff from the following cities:

Artesia	Hermosa Beach	Pico Rivera
Banning	Huntington Park	Pomona
Beaumont	Industry	Rancho Palos Verdes
Bell	Inglewood	Redondo Beach
Bell Gardens	Irwindale	Riverside
Bellflower	Jurupa Valley	Rolling Hills
Bradbury	La Cañada Flintridge	Rolling Hills Estates
Burbank	La Habra Heights	Rosemead
Calimesa	La Mirada	San Dimas
Canyon Lake	La Puente	San Fernando
Carson	La Verne	San Gabriel
Cerritos	Lake Elsinore	San Jacinto
Claremont	Lakewood	San Marino
Commerce	Lawndale	Santa Ana
Compton	Lomita	Santa Clarita
Corona	Long Beach	Santa Fe Springs
Covina	Los Angeles	Sierra Madre
Cudahy	Lynwood	Signal Hill
Diamond Bar	Manhattan Beach	South El Monte
Downey	Maywood	South Gate
Duarte	Menifee	South Pasadena
Eastvale	Monrovia	Temecula
El Monte	Monterey Park	Temple City
El Segundo	Moreno Valley	Torrance
Gardena	Murrieta	Vernon
Glendale	Norco	Walnut
Glendora	Norwalk	West Covina
Hawaiian Gardens	Paramount	Whittier
Hawthorne	Pasadena	Wildomar
Hemet	Perris	

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

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein	Senator Josh Newman
U.S. Senator Alex Padilla	Senator Anthony Portantino
U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán	Senator Susan Rubio
U.S. Representative Tony Cardenás	Assembly Member Mike Fong
U.S. Representative Judy Chu	Assembly Member Mike Gipson
U.S. Representative Ted Lieu	Assembly Member Chris Holden
U.S. Representative Katie Porter	Assembly Member Tina McKinnor
Senator Ben Allen	Assembly Member Freddie Rodriguez
Senator Steven Bradford	Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi
Senator Lola Smallwood Cuevas	Assembly Member Blanca Rubio
Senator Lena Gonzalez	Assembly Member Carlos Villapudua

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

Alhambra Chamber of Commerce
Arcadia Chamber of Commerce
Big Bear Chamber of Commerce
CalFire
California Chamber of Commerce
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
California Department of Transportation
California Geologic Energy Management Division
CARB
Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce
Colton Chamber of Commerce
Crestline Chamber of Commerce
El Monte - South El Monte Chamber of Commerce
El Segundo Chamber of Commerce
Fontana Chamber of Commerce
Foothill Gold Line Extension Construction Authority
Foothill Transit
Gardena Valley Chamber of Commerce
Glendora Chamber of Commerce
Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce
Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce
Highland Area Chamber of Commerce
Inglewood Airport Area Chamber of Commerce
Inland Empire Resource Conservation District
Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance
Inland Valley Development Agency
Kaiser Permanente

Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce
League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division
Loma Linda Chamber of Commerce
Lomita Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles County Fire Department
Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation
Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce
Montclair Chamber of Commerce
Mountain Transit
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Omnitrans
Ontario Chamber of Commerce
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
Port of Long Beach
Port of Los Angeles
Rancho Cucamonga Chamber of Commerce
Redlands Chamber of Commerce
Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce
Rialto Chamber of Commerce
Riverside Transit Agency
Running Springs Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Bernardino County Fire Department
San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District
San Pedro Chamber of Commerce
Snow Valley Chamber of Commerce
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Southern California Association of Governments
Sunline Transit Agency
Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce
United States Fire Service
Upland Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. EPA
U.S. Forest Service
Yucaipa Chamber of Commerce

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

American Lung Association
Breathe Southern California
Cal Poly Pomona
California State University, Dominguez Hills
California State University, Long Beach
California State University, Los Angeles
City of Hope
Fontana Unified School District
Grades of Green
Habitat for Humanity, Los Angeles and San Bernardino
Mt. San Antonio Community College
Our Global Humanity
Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy
Red Cross
Rialto Unified School District
San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Mountains Conservancy
San Gabriel Mountains Community Collaborative
San Gabriel Valley Mountains Regional Conservancy
South Bay Parkland Conservancy
University of La Verne