BOARD MEETING DATE: May 3, 2024 AGENDA NO. 12

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the March 2024 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

DA:LTO:PC:DS:bel:cb:mc

#### **BACKGROUND**

This report summarizes the activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office for March. The report includes Major Events, Community Events/Public Meetings, Environmental Justice (EJ) 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 hosting 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.

There were no major events hosted or sponsored in March.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS

Staff engaged 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 negative 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/grant 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 March events and meetings:

# San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

On March 5, staff provided updates at the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Energy, Environment & Natural Resources and Transportation Committee meetings about our Climate Pollution Reduction Grant proposal on goods movement, South Coast AQMD's Governing Board Student Intern Program, and Why Healthy Air Matters Education Program (WHAM) and Clean Air Program for Elementary Students (CAPES) Virtual Earth Day events.

## Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce

On March 5, staff attended the Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce Legislative Committee meeting and shared South Coast AQMD's press release on U.S. EPA's proposed disapproval of the 1997 Ozone Contingency Measure Plan.

#### Reach Out

On March 5, staff attended Reach Out's monthly meeting and invited members to register for the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Clean Air Awards and provided information on how to file an air quality complaint.

## South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce

On March 5, staff attended the monthly meeting of the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce and provided information regarding the upcoming hearing for Rule 1118: Control of Emissions from Refinery Flares, CAPES, WHAM, virtual Earth Day events and the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Clean Air Awards.

# Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass' Office of Community Engagement

On March 5, staff provided an overview of South Coast AQMD's mission and current regulatory initiatives to Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass' Office of Community Engagement. Staff shared information regarding the Replace Your Ride program, Proposed Rule 2306: Indirect Source Rule for Rail Yards and the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards.

# Inland Empire Commuter 2024 Earth Day Marketing Workshop

On March 6, staff hosted a booth at the Inland Empire Commuter 2024 Earth Day Workshop in Riverside. Information was provided regarding rideshare, residential Electric Lawn Mower Rebate program and how to file air quality complaints.

# San Bernardino County Transportation Authority

On March 7, staff attended the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority City Manager Technical Advisory Committee meeting to share information on Rule 2305: Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions and the Commercial Electric Lawn & Garden Equipment program.

# Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce

On March 8, staff attended the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting to share that the University of California, Riverside's CE-CERT program would be recognized for a Leadership in Clean Air at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Clean Air Awards.

# City of Bell Gardens

On March 9, staff attended the City of Bell Gardens 5K Run and Walk event to share information with residents regarding South Coast AQMD's mobile app, Replace Your Ride, and how to file air quality complaints.

## Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce

On March 12, staff participated in a Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting to promote funding opportunities on South Coast AQMD's Grants and Bids webpage.

## Riverside County

On March 12, staff attended the Riverside County Board of Supervisors meeting to inform the Board that the University of California, Riverside's CE-CERT program would be recognized for Leadership in Clean Air, at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Clean Air Awards and invited the Board and public to register for the virtual event.

#### Redondo Beach

On March 12, staff provided updates to the Redondo Beach City Council regarding the upcoming hearing for Rule 1118: Control of Emissions from Refinery Flares, CAPES and WHAM virtual Earth Day events, and the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards.

# South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

On March 13, staff attended the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Affairs Committee meeting and provided updates regarding the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards, CAPES, WHAM and virtual Earth Day events.

# <u>Inland Empire Resource Conservation District</u>

On March 14, staff participated in the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District Board meeting to share information on the Commercial Electric Lawn & Garden Equipment program.

# Fountain Valley Chamber of Commerce

On March 14, staff attended the Fountain Valley Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide information on how to report an air quality complaint.

## Pasadena Unified School District

On March 16, staff participated in the Pasadena Unified School District Science Fest. Staff demonstrated how smog is formed in the South Coast Air Basin using dry ice and other materials. Staff also participated in a panel discussion entitled, "Science Communications to the Public."

# Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce

On March 21, staff attended a Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting and invited attendees to register for the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Clean Air Awards and provided program updates regarding the Carl Moyer Program.

## Orange County Water District's Children's Water Education Festival

On March 27 and 28, South Coast AQMD hosted an interactive booth at the Orange County Water District's Children's Water Education Festival at UC Irvine. Staff presented the CAPES and WHAM curriculum to educate students on air quality.

#### Baldwin Park

On March 30, staff participated in the Baldwin Park Arbor Day event to provide community members information on air quality programs, including the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards, CAPES, WHAM, virtual Earth Day events, the Residential Electric Lawn Mower Rebate program and Replace Your Ride.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE UPDATE

The following are key EJ related activities that staff participated in during March. These events and meetings involve communities affected disproportionately by adverse air quality impacts.

# U.S. EPA Community Change Grants Community Plans

On March 5, staff participated in U.S. EPA's Community Change Grants Community Plans: Engagement, Governance, and Strength webinar. The presentation included requirements of federal grants, including Build America, Buy America, Davis Bacon, and post-award requirements.

#### **CARB**

On March 19, staff participated in CARB's Implementation Workgroup on the statewide Clean Cars 4 All (CC4A) and Financing Assistance programs. These programs will expand the CC4A Program to air districts that do not implement it locally and provide a statewide financing program.

## **CARB**

On March 26, staff participated in CARB's workgroup on implementation of the fiscal year (FY) 2023-2024 policy for the Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Project. Topics covered included funding updates and an implementation timeline.

#### 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 speaking engagements nor visitors in March.

## **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 March are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD's Main Line and	2005
1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2897
Calls to South Coast AQMD's Spanish Line	
	25
Clean Air Connections	6
Total Calls	
	2928

## PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS

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

Calls Received by PIC	64
Calls to Automated System	163
Total Calls	227
Visitor Transactions	168
Email Advisories Sent	35,850

## 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 March.

- Provided permit application assistance to 180 companies, and
- Processed 114 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

# Types of businesses assisted:

Architecture Firms Dry Cleaners Restaurants
Auto Body Shops Engineering Firms Warehouses

Beauty Salons Manufacturing Facilities

Construction Firms Offices

#### 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 March report is listed below:

Major Media Interactions	83
Press Releases	8
News Carousel	3

# **Major Media Topics:**

- **Vehicle Emission Standards**: Staff participated in an interview with ABC7 to discuss how U.S. EPA's new vehicle emission standards could affect our air quality locally.
- **AB 617 Air Filtration School Event:** Staff organized a media availability event at School of Santa Isabel to highlight the installation of air filtration systems. Event was attended by Spectrum, KTLA, ABC7, CBS/KCAL, Univision and Channel 35.
- Applied Medical Warehouse Violation: Los Angeles Times (LA Times) requested confirmation on whether Applied Medical received a notice of violation (NOV) for not complying with the Warehouse Indirect Source Rule. Response was provided.
- Ecobat/Quemetco Notice of Violations: National Public Radio requested information on two NOVs issued on February 29, 2024, follow up information on settlement procedures and timing, and disposition of penalties for 23 NOVs issued since 2005. Response was provided.
- Volkswagen (VW) Program: FreightWaves inquired about the VW program, where this funding fits in the range of other zero emission vehicle funding and tax breaks that are available. Response was provided.
- **Tesla:** TechCrunch requested a copy of our Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Funding application. Reporter was instructed to submit a public records request.
- **Air Quality in Inland Empire**: CalMatters requested information regarding air quality issues in the Inland Empire, and active or upcoming programs in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Response was provided.
- **Air Quality and Pollen:** LA Times requested information on how high winds can affect the air quality and pollen in the air. Referred reporter to other agencies.
- **PhibroTech**: LA Times requested copies of NOVs and Notices to Comply issued to the PhibroTech facility in Santa Fe Springs from 2014 to the present. Reporter was instructed to submit a Public Records Request.
- **Disneyland Emissions**: LA Times requested comments on complaints on emissions from the Autopia ride at Disneyland. Response was provided.
- Ethylene Oxide (EtO): Grist had questions regarding the tiered approach to EtO Rule (Rule 1405), as well as the reason behind inclusion of warehouses and the finalization of the rule. Response was provided.
- **Remote Sensors**: The New York Times requested to speak with an expert on remote sensors and/or satellite imagery that tracks pollution from animal waste in farms. Referred reporter to San Joaquin and Imperial County Air Pollution Control Districts.
- **Hyperion:** The Argonaut requested information regarding Hyperion wastewater treatment station. Response was provided.

- Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL): The Signal inquired whether any of the violations issued to CCL have resulted in fines. Response was provided.
- U.S. EPA Emission Standards: Press-Telegram requested a statement on U.S. EPA's new emission standards for trucks and other heavy-duty vehicles. Response was provided.
- Windblown Dust Advisory: CalMatters requested information regarding the advisory and had follow-up questions. Responses were provided.
- Windblown Dust Advisory and Extension (3/2, 3/12 & 3/13): Pitched advisories to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- Clean Air Awards Winners Press Release: Pitched to local media outlets.

## **News Releases:**

- South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for Coachella Valley, the San Gorgonio Pass area, and Eastern Riverside County – March 2, 2024 (English and Spanish) – Informed the public of a PM10 Dust Advisory caused by high winds.
- South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for the San Gorgonio Pass area and the Coachella Valley March 12, 2024 (English and Spanish) Informed the public of a PM10 Dust Advisory caused by high winds.
- South Coast AQMD Expands Windblown Dust Advisory in Effect to Include East San Bernardino Valley and Metropolitan Riverside County March 13, 2024 (English and Spanish) Informed the public of an expanded PM10 Dust Advisory caused by high winds.
- South Coast AQMD to Host 34th Annual Clean Air Awards to Celebrate the Leaders Improving the Health of Our Communities and Environment March 27, 2024 (English and Spanish) Released information on the winners of this year's virtual Clean Air Awards.

#### **Social Media Posts:**

- <u>Windblown Dust Advisory (3/2):</u> 7,904 Twitter Impressions --RT by @NWSSanDiego, @CodeRed001Blue
- Windblown Dust Advisory (3/13): 4,194 Twitter Impressions -- RT by @NWSSanDiego, @RivCoReady
- AQ Forecast (3/15): 775 Twitter Impressions
- Windblown Dust Advisory (3/22): 5,435 Twitter Impressions
   --RT by @NWSSanDiego, @StewartTVNews

## **News Carousel:**

- Apply today for South Coast AQMD's Governing Board Summer Student Internship program. Apply through 3/8 linked to application webpage.
- Attend U.S. EPA's Community Meeting on Chiquita Canyon Landfill Th., 3/21, 6:00 p.m. Linked to U.S. EPA's community meeting webpage.
- Attend a Webinar on 4/4 to learn about statewide funding for Combustion Freight & Marine, and Zero-Emission Class 8 trucks Linked to webinar webpage.

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

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

U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler Senator Nancy Skinner U.S. Senator Alex Padilla Senator Scott Wilk

U.S. Representative Pete Aguilar Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan

U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán
U.S. Representative Ken Calvert

Assemblymember Wendy Carillo
Assemblymember Sabrina Cervantes

U.S. Representative Judy Chu
U.S. Representative Mike Garcia
Assemblymember Bill Essayli
Assemblymember Heath Flora

U.S. Representative Robert Garcia Assemblymember Mike Fong
U.S. Representative Jay Obernolte Assemblymember Laura Friedman

U.S. Representative Michelle Steel

Assemblymember Josh Hoover

U.S. Representative Mark Takano
Assemblymember Corey Jackson

Senator Bob Archuleta Assemblymember Tom Lackey Senator Maria Elena Durazo Assemblymember Devon Mathis

Senator Lena Gonzalez Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi Senator Melissa Hurtado Assemblymember Gail Pellerin Senator Caroline Menjivar Assemblymember Pilar Schiavo

Senator Janet Nguyen Assemblymember Tri Ta

Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh Assemblymember Avelino Valencia

Senator Richard Roth Assemblymember Jim Wood Senator Kelly Seyarto

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

Agoura Hills Downey Loma Linda Alhambra Duarte Lomita Aliso Viejo Eastvale Long Beach Anaheim El Monte Los Alamitos Arcadia El Segundo Los Angeles Artesia Fontana Lynwood Azusa Fountain Valley Malibu

Baldwin Park Fullerton Manhattan Beach

Banning Garden Grove Menifee Beaumont Gardena Mission Viejo Bell Glendora Monrovia Bell Gardens **Grand Terrace** Montclair Hawaiian Gardens Bellflower Montebello **Beverly Hills** Hawthorne Monterey Park Big Bear Lake Hemet Moreno Valley **Bradbury** Hesperia Murrieta

Brea Hidden Hills Newport Beach

Norco Buena Park Highland Calimesa **Huntington Beach** Norwalk Canyon Lake **Huntington Park** Ontario Carson **Indian Wells** Orange Indio Cathedral City Palm Desert Palm Springs Cerritos Inglewood

Chino Irvine Palos Verdes Estates

Paramount Chino Hills Irwindale City of Industry Jurupa Valley Pasadena Claremont La Cañada Flintridge Perris Coachella La Habrá Heights Pico Rivera Colton La Mirada Placentia Commerce La Palma Pomona

ComptonLa PuenteRancho CucamongaCoronaLa QuintaRancho Mirage

Costa Mesa La Verne Rancho Palos Verdes Covina Laguna Hills Rancho Santa Margarita

Cudahy Laguna Niguel Redlands

Culver City Laguna Woods Redondo Beach

CypressLake ElsinoreRialtoDana PointLake ForestRiversideDesert Hot SpringsLakewoodRosemeadDiamond BarLawndaleSan Bernardino

San Clemente Signal Hill Walnut San Dimas South El Monte West Covina San Gabriel South Gate West Hollywood San Jacinto South Pasadena Westlake Village San Juan Capistrano Stanton Westminster San Marino Temecula Whittier Santa Ana Temple City Wildomar Santa Clarita Torrance Yorba Linda Santa Fe Springs Tustin Yucaipa

Santa Monica Upland
Seal Beach Vernon
Sierra Madre Villa Park

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

Alhambra Chamber of Commerce

Arcadia Chamber of Commerce

Azusa Chamber of Commerce

**Baldwin Park Business Association** 

**Banning Chamber of Commerce** 

Beaumont Chamber of Commerce

Big Bear Chamber of Commerce

Burbank Chamber of Commerce

California Department of Transportation

Calimesa Chamber of Commerce

Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce

**CARB** 

Carson Chamber of Commerce

Claremont Chamber of Commerce

Coachella Valley Association of Governments

Corona Chamber of Commerce

Covina Chamber of Commerce

**Duarte Chamber of Commerce** 

Eastvale Chamber of Commerce

El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce

El Toro Water District

Foothill Transit

Fountain Valley Chamber of Commerce

Gardena Valley Chamber of Commerce

Gateway Council of Governments

Glendale Chamber of Commerce

Glendora Chamber of Commerce

Greater Monterey Park Chamber of Commerce

Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce

Greater San Fernando Valley Chamber of Commerce

Greater San Jacinto Valley Chamber of Commerce

Greater West Covina Business Association

Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce

Hemet San Jacinto Chamber of Commerce

Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau

Hollywood Chamber of Commerce

**Industry Business Council** 

Inglewood Airport Area Chamber of Commerce

Inland Empire Resource Conservation District

Inland Regional Energy Network

Irwindale Chamber of Commerce

Jurupa Valley Chamber of Commerce

La Cañada Flintridge Chamber of Commerce and Community Association

La Verne Chamber of Commerce

Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce

Lake Elsinore Valley Chamber of Commerce

League of California Cities – Los Angeles County Division

Lomita Chamber of Commerce

Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce

Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

Los Angeles World Airports

Love Catalina Island Tourism Authority

Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce

Menifee Valley Chamber of Commerce

Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Monrovia Chamber of Commerce

Moreno Valley Chamber of Commerce

Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce

National Park Service

Norco Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center

Ontario Area Chamber of Commerce

**Ontario International Airport** 

Orange County Council of Governments

Orange County Transportation Authority

Orange County Water District

Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce

Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce

Pomona Chamber of Commerce

Port of Long Beach

Port of Los Angeles

Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce

Regional Chamber of Commerce - San Gabriel Valley

Rosemead Chamber of Commerce

San Bernardino County Transportation Authority

San Dimas Chamber of Commerce

San Fernando Valley Council of Governments

San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy

San Gabriel Chamber of Commerce

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership

San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

San Marino Chamber of Commerce

San Pedro Chamber of Commerce

Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce

Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce

Santa Fe Springs Chamber of Commerce

Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce

Sierra Madre Chamber of Commerce

South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

Southern California Association of Governments

Southern California Edison

Southern California Gas Company

Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce

Temple City Chamber of Commerce

Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce

United States Department of Agriculture - Forest Service

United States Environmental Protection Agency

Valero Energy Corporation

Valley Industry & Commerce Association

Western Riverside Council of Governments

Westside Cities Council of Governments

Wildomar Chamber of Commerce

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

Active San Gabriel Valley

AltaMed

American Lung Association

Breathe Southern California

California State University, Dominguez Hills

Castaic Middle School

Castaic Union School District

Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice

Clean Power Alliance

Climate Mayors

Climate Resolve

Del Amo Action Committee

Discovery Cube Los Angeles

Flintridge Preparatory School

Foundation for Early Childhood Education Inc.

Grades of Green

Inland Congregations United for Change

Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance

Newhall School District

Our Global Humanity

Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy

Pasadena City College

Pasadena Unified School District

Reach Out

Rim of the World Unified School District

San Gabriel Mountains Community Collaborative

Santa Ana Unified School District

Saugus Union School District

Social Justice Humanitas Academy

South Bay Parkland Conservancy

The Energy Coalition

The People's Collective for Environmental Justice

Trust for Public Land

University of California, Irvine

University of California, Riverside

University of Redlands

Val Verde Civic Association

William S. Hart Union High School District