

BOARD MEETING DATE: November 2, 2018

AGENDA NO. 14

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the September 2018 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 Government.

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 September 2018. The report 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 Governments.

## **MAJOR EVENTS (HOSTED AND SPONSORED)**

Each year SCAQMD staff engage in holding and sponsoring a number of major events throughout the SCAQMD's four county area to promote, educate and provide important information to the public regarding reducing air pollution, protecting public health, and improving the air quality and the economy.

### **September 12**

SCAQMD hosted the “Seniors Celebrating Healthy Living & Clean Air Fair” at the Riverside Convention Center. The event provided information on SCAQMD, air quality issues and health. The event was attended by more than 350 seniors from the Inland Empire.

### **September 26**

Staff organized the Fourth Annual Environmental Justice Community Partnership Conference entitled “Technology’s Role in the Future of Environmental Justice” at the Huffington Center at the St. Sophia Cathedral in Los Angeles. The half-day conference was attended by approximately 250 participants. The conference breakout sessions provided attendees with tools and information to address environmental justice issues, as well as a plenary session titled “Green Transportation and Beyond.” Attendees consisted of individuals from non-profits, community groups, academia, health care, government agencies, private sector, and other stakeholders throughout the Basin.

## **COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Each year SCAQMD staff engage with thousands of residents, providing valuable information about the agency, incentive programs and ways individuals can help reduce air pollution through events and meetings sponsored solely by SCAQMD 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 or notices of conferences, seminars, workshops and other public events;
- SCAQMD incentive programs;
- Ways to participate in SCAQMD’s rule and policy development; and
- Assistance in resolving air pollution-related problems.

SCAQMD staff attended and/or provided information and updates at the following events:

### **September 16**

- National Electric Drive Week Event, Colton/Riverside Public Utilities & University of California, Riverside – CE-CERT Bourns, Riverside

### **September 19**

- CalTrans District 8, Innovation Fair, San Bernardino
- 2018 Anaheim Public Works Transportation Fair, Anaheim

### **September 20**

- 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Senior Appreciation Luncheon Event, Los Angeles Convention Center

### **September 22**

- SCAQMD Refinery Committee Meeting, Wilmington Middle School, Wilmington

### **September 28**

- International Trade Education Programs (ITEP) Student Conference, California State University Dominguez Hills, Carson

## **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE UPDATE**

The following are key environmental justice-related activities in which staff participated throughout the month of September 2018. These events involve communities affected disproportionately from adverse air quality impacts.

### **September 4**

Staff participated in a meeting with Mojave and Imperial County Air Pollution Control Officers and their staff at SCAQMD in Diamond Bar. SCAQMD staff shared expertise and experience in issue areas including environmental justice and technology advancement. Some of the environmental justice topics shared in the presentation included: AB 617 outreach, experience and partnership with Environmental Justice Groups, and techniques on capacity building.

### **September 13**

Staff participated in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) scoping meeting for Quemetco Inc., at the Hacienda Heights Community Center. There were about 150 attendees including local government, residents, stakeholders, and environmental justice organizations.

### **September 18**

Staff attended the Clean Air Coalition of North Whittier and Avocado Heights Community meeting to provide information on the CEQA scoping process for Quemetco, Inc. There were approximately 150 people in attendance at the meeting.

### **September 27**

Staff attended the MASH Neighborhood Watch meeting in Montebello to provide an overview of SCAQMD and a presentation on air quality issues, incentive programs for residents, and environmental justice initiatives.

## **SPEAKERS BUREAU/VISITOR SERVICES**

SCAQMD 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. SCAQMD also hosts visitors from around the world who meet with staff on a wide range of air quality issues.

### **September 6**

- Staff provided a tour of SCAQMD's Photochemical Assessment Monitoring Station in Rubidoux to a graduate architecture student from the University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

### **September 14**

- Staff hosted 16 officials from the Environmental Protection Agency in China at SCAQMD. Staff presented information on air pollution sources in the Basin, air monitoring, rules, air pollution controls, and the Clean Fuels program.

### **September 20**

- Staff presented information to 50 members of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange on air quality issues and provided tips to avoid unhealthful air related to recent wildfires.

### **September 26**

- Staff hosted a representative from the University of Seoul, Korea, Department of Environmental Engagement at SCAQMD. Staff met with the representative to discuss sources of air pollution and air monitoring strategies and technology.

## **COMMUNICATION CENTER STATISTICS**

The Communication Center handles calls on SCAQMD's main line, the 1-800-CUT-SMOG® line, the Spanish line, and after-hours calls to each of those lines. Total calls received in the month of September were:

Calls to SCAQMD's Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG® Line	3,497
Calls to SCAQMD's Spanish-language Line	<u>32</u>
Total Calls	3,529

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS**

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls and walk-in requests for general information. Information for the month of September is summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC Staff	141
<u>Calls to Automated System</u>	<u>815</u>
Total Calls	956

  

Visitor Transactions	198
Email Advisories Sent	17,880

## **BUSINESS ASSISTANCE**

SCAQMD notifies local businesses of proposed regulations so they can participate in the agency's rule development process. SCAQMD also 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 on-site consultation. The information is summarized below:

- Provided permit application assistance to 215 companies
- Processed 68 Air Quality Permit Checklists
- Conducted 6 free on-site consultations

### **Types of businesses assisted**

Auto Body Shops	Furniture Refinishing Facilities	Printing Facilities
Auto Repair Centers	Gas Stations	Manufacturing Facilities
Dry Cleaners	Plating Facilities	Restaurants
Engineering, Construction, & Architecture Firms		

## **MEDIA RELATIONS**

The Media Office handles all SCAQMD outreach and communications with television, radio, newspapers and all other publications and media operations.

Total Media Inquiries: 114  
Press Releases Issued: 4

### **Major Media Topics for September**

#### **All inquiries closed unless noted as pending**

- **Compliance Trends:** L.A. Times interviewed staff on SCAQMD's compliance activity trends over the past 10 years, as well as the number of cases heard by the Hearing Board.
- **Air Quality and Regulation in the Inland Empire:** The Cal State San Bernardino Coyote Chronicle did an on-camera interview with staff to discuss air quality, smog, and regulation in the Inland Empire.
- **Odors in Orange County:** KNX, CBS, NBC, Fullerton Observer and Sun News requested further information regarding odors in Orange County.
- **Odors from Cannabis Operations:** The OC Register requested information regarding inspection and permitting of marijuana dispensaries. An interview was conducted with the reporter from the OC Register regarding odor complaints and permit requirements.
- **Summer Ozone Exceedances:** L.A. Times conducted telephone interviews with staff regarding ozone exceedances during the summer smog season. In response to an article released by L.A. Times citing 87 straight days of poor air quality, staff conducted interviews with KNX, The Daily Caller, Westwood One News, KFI, and ABC7.

- **Coastal Odors:** Staff conducted an interview with KNX Radio regarding coastal odors in the Orange County area.
- **Clean Trucks:** Staff conducted an interview with Trucks.com regarding how clean truck programs at the ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach have influenced other ports around the country.
- **Mira Costa High School:** KNBC and The Beach Reporter inquired about the status of the asbestos cleanup at the school.
- **Flaring:** KNX, KPCC, The Daily Breeze, Bloomberg News and Easy Reader newspaper inquired about flaring events at the Chevron refinery in El Segundo and the release of catalyst dust from the refinery. Staff provided confirmation on the number of complaints received. Easy Reader asked about SCAQMD test results of catalyst dust samples.
- **ExxonMobil:** The Daily Breeze requested a copy of a letter which threatened litigation against SCAQMD. Staff provided a copy of the document and responded to follow-up questions.
- **Idling Buses NOV:** The Daily News asked about the idling buses news release, including the amount of penalty sought by SCAQMD.
- **Refinery Committee:** Bloomberg News, lbreport.com and Torrance Daily Breeze requested details before, during and after the September 22 Refinery Committee meeting. Questions included what might be discussed, what action would be taken, and when the Board would consider Proposed Rule 1410.
- **Dust from Farm Tractors:** Interchurch News asked about regulations pertaining to dust generated by farm tractors.

## **Media Campaigns**

### **Check Before You Burn:**

- Contractor conducted three community events this month obtaining a total of 1,662 pledges and 933 Air Alerts signups to date.

### **The Right to Breathe**

- The film was shown at the 2018 Environmental Justice Conference
- The Google AdWords campaign received 4,602 clicks, 4.798 million impressions, and 2.18 million views during September.

### **News Releases & Media Advisories Issued**

- Riverside County Supervisor V. Manuel Perez Joins SCAQMD Board - September 7, 2018
- Refinery Committee Directs Development of Measure to Phase Out Toxic Chemical at Two Refineries - September 22, 2018
- SCAQMD Curbs Excess Emissions from Idling Coach Buses - September 25, 2018
- SCAQMD Hosts 4th Annual Environmental Justice Conference - September 26, 2018

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

Field visits and/or communications were conducted with elected officials or staff from the following cities:

Alhambra	Irvine	Rialto
Anaheim	Irwindale	Riverside
Arcadia	La Cañada Flintridge	Redlands
Azusa	La Puente	Rosemead
Baldwin Park	La Verne	San Bernardino
Bradbury	Laguna Niguel	Santa Ana
Buena Park	Lake Forest	San Dimas
Carson	Long Beach	San Gabriel
Claremont	Los Angeles	San Marino
Covina	Mission Viejo	Seal Beach
Cypress	Monrovia	South Pasadena
Diamond Bar	Monterey Park	Temple City
Duarte	Newport Beach	Tustin
El Monte	Norco	Walnut
Glendora	Pasadena	West Covina
Huntington Beach	Perris	Westminster
Industry	Pomona	

Visits and/or communications were conducted with elected officials or staff from the following state and federal offices:

- U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein
- U.S. Senator Kamala Harris
- U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán
- U.S. Representative Ken Calvert
- U.S. Representative Ted Lieu
- U.S. Representative Grace Napolitano
- U.S. Representative Dana Rohrabacher
- Senator Steven Bradford
- Senator Ed Hernandez
- Senator Kevin de León
- Assembly Majority Floor Leader Ian Calderon
- Assembly Member Autumn Burke
- Assembly Member Ed Chau
- Assembly Member Mike Gipson
- Assembly Member Matt Harper
- Assembly Member Chris Holden
- Assembly Member Patrick O'Donnell
- Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn

Staff represented SCAQMD and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following governmental agencies and business organizations:

Costa Mesa Chamber of Chamber of Commerce  
GRID Alternatives Inland Empire  
Jiangsu Environmental Protection Department  
Metrolink  
Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce  
Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council  
Orange County Business Council  
Orange County Council of Governments  
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce  
South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce

Staff represented SCAQMD and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following community and educational groups and organizations:

California State University, Los Angeles  
Clean Air Coalition of North Whittier & Avocado Heights  
MASH Neighborhood Watch Group, Montebello  
Wilmington Neighborhood Council