

BOARD MEETING DATE: January 8, 2021

AGENDA NO. 11

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the November 2020 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

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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; 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, South Coast AQMD 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, improving air quality and the economy.

No major events were held or sponsored in November.

COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS

Each year, South Coast AQMD 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 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.

South Coast AQMD staff attended and/or provided information and updates at the following November events and meetings:

San Gabriel Valley City Managers' Association

Staff participated in the San Gabriel Valley City Managers' Association virtual monthly meeting on November 4. Staff reported on South Coast AQMD programs including the Clean Air Furnace Rebate and Check Before You Burn.

San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA)

Staff represented South Coast AQMD at the SBCTA City Manager Technical Advisory Committee on November 5. Staff updated the committee on Check Before You Burn and current incentive programs.

Orange County Business Council (OCBC)

Staff provided an update on South Coast AQMD programs at the OCBC Government Affairs virtual meeting on November 6. The update focused on Check Before You Burn, the mobile App for iPhone and Android, and air alerts.

California Contract Cities Association

Staff attended the California Contract Cities Association Board of Directors virtual meeting on November 18. During public comments, staff provided information on the Prop 1B incentive funding program.

Inland Action

On November 18, staff participated in the Inland Action virtual meeting which is attended by businesses and government representatives. The meeting attendees were

interested in incentive programs for mobile sources to reduce air pollution. Staff provided an update on Prop 1B and the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee.

South Bay Fiber Network Celebration

On November 17, staff attended the South Bay Fiber Network Celebration. The event celebrated completion of the South Bay Cities Council of Governments fiber-optic network which will provide high-speed, low-cost broadband connectivity to South Bay cities and local public agencies. It is estimated that traffic and greenhouse gases will decrease as cities and local businesses utilize this network for teleworking.

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.

Inter-Agency Task Force (Task Force) Meeting

On November 4, staff hosted the quarterly virtual Task Force meeting. Updates were provided on the August 2020 Task Force staff training, the Los Angeles Department of Public Works online service locator, and the Who to Call guide government and community resource guide. A representative from the Liberty Hill Foundation presented on the emPower Program, which focuses on providing resources for disadvantaged and economically vulnerable populations.

City of Moreno Valley Community Listening Session

On November 10, staff participated in a Virtual Listening Session as part of Moreno Valley's general plan update. To guide the city's efforts, a poll was conducted to find out which environmental topic is the most important. Participants expressed concern about air pollution exposure and warehouses being built close to homes. The draft general plan is expected to be released for public review in May 2021.

Mobilizing Public Health to Achieve Environmental Justice

Staff participated in the American Public Health Organization's Mobilizing Public Health to Achieve Environmental Justice webinar on November 17. The meeting focused on environmental justice initiatives to mitigate inequity and how public health professionals can address environmental racism.

Environmental Justice Working Group Meeting

Staff provided an update on the AB 617 program at a Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Environmental Justice working group meeting. There were presentations on the Governor's Environmental Justice Element Guidance and SCAG's environmental justice initiatives.

Interview with California State University, Northridge (CSUN) Student

Staff met with a CSUN Urban Studies and Planning graduate student on November 20. The student was interested in efforts to improve air quality in the Northeast San Fernando Valley and to help the community better understand the current state of pollution in the region.

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 (CSC), Community Air Monitoring Plans (CAMPs) and Community Emissions Reduction Plans (CERPs).

Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma (LBACA)

On November 4, staff met with LBACA to discuss collaborative AB 617 outreach on the Wilmington, West Long Beach, Carson CERP and air filtration projects in schools. Staff discussed inter-agency coordination, as well as an updated outreach project timeline.

Southeast Los Angeles (SELA) CSC

Staff held a Question & Answer meeting for the SELA CSC on November 5. Discussions focused on responding to CSC questions on the draft CERP and CAMP documents. There were approximately 41 attendees, including community members, government representatives, staff from elected officials' offices, businesses, and other stakeholders.

2020 Community Recommendations and Selection Process

On November 6, staff attended a virtual CARB meeting to discuss the 2020 community recommendations and selection process. CARB outlined their draft Board recommendations, including background on their approach for developing the recommendations.

Eastern Coachella Valley (ECV) CSC

ECV CSC met on November 12. Discussion focused on responding to CSC comments on the draft CERP and CAMP documents. Approximately 55 people participated, including community members, government representatives, staff from elected officials' offices, businesses, and other stakeholders.

SELA CSC Meeting

On November 18, approximately 65 people participated in a SELA CSC meeting co-hosted by a committee member and attended by several South Coast AQMD Board Members. Staff summarized the timeline and updates to the draft CERP and CAMP documents and provided an overview of the upcoming Stationary Source Committee and Board meetings. Committee members requested clarification on emission reduction

targets for metals, best management practices at metal processing facilities to reduce fugitive emissions, and overall estimated emission reduction targets for the CERP.

CARB Consultation Group Subcommittee

On November 18, staff participated in a CARB Consultation Group Subcommittee meeting regarding revisions to the state “People’s Blueprint for Community Air Protection.” Topics discussed included land use planning and air quality, agency collaboration, the conflict resolution process and conflict of interest forms for CSC members.

Coachella Valley Environmental Justice Task Force

Staff attended a Coachella Valley Environmental Justice Task Force virtual monthly meeting on November 18. California Department of Pesticides Regulation staff reported that they will be working with the Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner to meet with field workers in the Coachella Valley for potential collaboration for AB 617.

ECV CSC Meeting

On November 19, approximately 70 people participated in an ECV CSC meeting, including several South Coast AQMD Board members. Staff presented an overview of the CERP’s estimated emission reductions and guidance on how to participate in upcoming Board meetings. CSC members expressed concern about the collaboration required to address the Salton Sea and pesticides, due to South Coast AQMD’s limited jurisdiction. They suggested conducting regular public stakeholder meetings, encouraged interagency participation in CSC meetings and expediting timelines for CERP actions. Additionally, committee members inquired about the methodology used to quantify CERP emission reductions, the timeline to amend the CERP in 2021, pesticide monitoring and developing specific collaborations with academic researchers and other agencies.

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.

California State University, Northridge (CSUN) Students

Staff virtually presented a general overview of the AB 617 program and environmental issues in ECV to seven CSUN students on November 9. The discussion included questions and comments on AB 617 outreach to local organizations, tribal involvement, and how both community and business concerns are addressed.

Mission Hospital

On November 12, staff virtually presented to the Mission Hospital Pulmonary Rehabilitation Group. The presentation focused on South Coast AQMD programs and air quality, including the mobile apps for iPhone and Android. There were approximately 15 participants.

Los Angeles Environmental Forum

On November 14, staff presented at a webinar hosted by the Southern California Chinese American Environmental Protection Association. The presentation focused on potential air quality impacts related to COVID-19. There were approximately 50 participants.

COMMUNICATION CENTER STATISTICS

The Communication Center handles calls on South Coast AQMD'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 November were:

Calls to South Coast AQMD's Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG® Line	2,275
Calls to South Coast AQMD's Spanish-language Line	20
Clean Air Connections	0
Total Calls	2,295

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS

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

Calls Received by PIC Staff	6
Calls to Automated System	577
Total Calls	583

Email Advisories Sent	102,706
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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 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 virtual on-site consultation, as summarized below for November.

- Provided permit application assistance to 214 companies;
- Processed 50 Air Quality Permit Checklists; and
- Provided assistance in filing 15 variance requests.

Types of businesses assisted:

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

November reports are listed below:

Major Media Interactions	115
Press Releases	19
News Carousel	1

Major Media Topics:

- **China Shipping Lawsuit:** Random Lengths News and Law360 inquired regarding the China Shipping lawsuit. A written statement was provided for both. California Environmental Insider requested a copy of the lawsuit which was provided. The reporter was added to our press distribution list.
- **Flaring Events:** Random Lengths News inquired about notices for planned and unplanned flare events and how to put them in context for readers. A written response was provided.
- **EV Technology:** Staff participated in a one-hour interview with the Jehu Garcia Podcast on EV technologies and improving air quality. The podcast is expected to air in December or January.
- **Check Before You Burn:** A reporter with NBC requested to be added to the No-Burn Alert distribution list. The reporter was added.

- **All American Asphalt:** Voice of Orange County requested the latest information regarding the All American Asphalt investigation. The reporter was referred to our website.
- **PM 2.5 and Ozone:** CalMatters requested historical data on PM 2.5 and ozone levels and requested a potential interview on changes in air quality for a piece on CARB Board Chair Mary Nichols. A link to South Coast AQMD's historical AQI data was provided and staff requested specific questions from the reporter for the interview.
- **Windblown Dust and Ash Advisories:** Pitches were sent to local news outlets for windblown dust advisories on November 6 and 25.
- **No-Burn Alerts:** Pitches were sent to local news outlets for seven No-Burn Alerts during the month of November.

News Releases:

- **No-Burn Days - Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban in Effect for Residents of the South Coast Air Basin (English and Spanish):** Seven No-Burn Days were declared during the month of November. Press releases were issued to notify residents on November 1-3, 13, 19, and 22-23.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for Portions of Riverside County (English and Spanish) - November 6, 2020:** Informed residents of wind and dust conditions in the Coachella Valley and San Geronio Pass.
- **Volvo Group Wins CALSTART 2020 Blue Sky Award for Innovative Volvo LIGHTS Project - November 19, 2020:** Announced the 2020 Blue Sky Award provided to Volvo LIGHTS and a quote from Board Member Mitchell.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for Portions of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties (English and Spanish) - November 25, 2020:** Informed residents of wind and dust conditions in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

News Carousel:

- **Flare Event Notification System Updated to Include New Features:** Directs users to the Advisor story outlining FENS new features.

Social Media Notable posts:

- **Smoke Advisory Update (11/8):** 32,255 Twitter Impressions
- **CBYB Reminder (11/14):** 12,246 Twitter Impressions
- **Dust Advisory (11/25):** 10,492 Twitter Impressions

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

In light of COVID-19, outreach was conducted virtually in November, utilizing web based and other technologies to communicate with elected officials or staff from the following cities:

Alhambra	Hermosa Beach	Placentia
Arcadia	Huntington Beach	Pomona
Azusa	Indio	Rancho Cucamonga
Baldwin Park	Industry	Rancho Palos Verdes
Banning	Inglewood	Redondo Beach
Big Bear	Irvine	Riverside
Bradbury	Irwindale	Rolling Hills
Brea	Jurupa Valley	Rolling Hills Estates
Burbank	La Cañada Flintridge	Rosemead
Calimesa	La Habra	San Bernardino
Canyon Lake	La Quinta	San Dimas
Carson	La Puente	San Fernando
Chino	La Verne	San Gabriel
Claremont	Lawndale	San Jacinto
Colton	Lomita	San Marino
Covina	Los Angeles	Santa Clarita
Diamond Bar	Manhattan Beach	Sierra Madre
Duarte	Menifee	South El Monte
El Monte	Monrovia	South Pasadena
El Segundo	Monterey Park	Temple City
Fullerton	Murrieta	Torrance
Gardena	Norco	Walnut
Glendale	Ontario	West Covina
Glendora	Palos Verdes Estates	Yorba Linda
Hawthorne	Pasadena	

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 Kamala Harris
- U.S. Representative Alan Lowenthal
- U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán
- U.S. Representative Tony Cardenas
- U.S. Representative Judy Chu
- U.S. Representative Gil Cisneros
- U.S. Representative Grace Napolitano
- U.S. Representative Adam Schiff
- U.S. Representative Brad Sherman
- U.S. Representative Norma Torres
- Senator Ling Ling Chang
- Senator Bill Emmerson
- Senator Robert Hertzberg
- Senator Anthony Portantino
- Senator Susan Rubio
- Senator Scott Wilk
- Assembly Member Ed Chau
- Assembly Member Philip Chen
- Assembly Member Laura Friedman
- Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia
- Assembly Member Anthony Rendon
- Assembly Member Luz Rivas
- Assembly Member Blanca Rubio
- Assembly Member Sharon Quick-Silva

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

29 Palms Band of Mission Indians
Banning Public Utility
Bear Valley Electric Service, Inc.
Cabazon Band of Mission Indians
California Contract Cities Association
California Geologic Energy Management Division
California High Speed Rail
California Hydrogen Business Coalition
California Office of Attorney General
California State Water Resources Control Board
CARB
City of Colton Electric Utility
Clean Cities Coachella Valley
Coachella Valley Association of Governments
Coachella Valley Economic Partnership
Coachella Valley Mosquito & Vector Control
Department of Toxic Substances Control
Foothill Transit
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce
Greater Ontario Business Council
Healthy Chino Coalition

Healthy Jurupa Valley
Hollywood Burbank Airport
Imperial Irrigation District
Inland Action, San Bernardino
Inland Empire Health Plan
League of California Cities, Los Angeles
Lomita Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Los Angeles County Department of Health
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Los Angeles World Affairs Council
Las Virgenes Malibu Council of Governments
Mountain Transit
Move LA / Move CA
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
Omnitrans
Ontario Chamber of Commerce
Orange Chamber of Commerce
Orange County Board of Supervisors
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Transportation Authority
Orange County Waste and Recycling
Orange EV
Rancho Cucamonga Municipal Utility
Riverside County Board of Supervisors
Riverside County Transportation Commission
Riverside Public Utilities
Riverside Transit Agency
San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley City Managers' Association
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Southern California Association of Governments
Sunline Transit
Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce
Valley Industry and Commerce Association
Western Riverside Council of Governments
Western State Petroleum Association

Staff represented South Coast AQMD in November and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following community and educational groups and organizations:

Active San Gabriel Valley
Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement / Clean Air San Gabriel Valley
Ban Single Use Plastics, San Gabriel Valley
Bassett Unified School District
Breathe Southern California
California Safe Schools
California School Board Association
California State University, Northridge
California State University, San Bernardino
Castaic Union School District
CHA CHA Altadenians for Clean, Healthy Air
Clean Air Coalition of North Whittier and Avocado Heights
Coachella Valley Environmental Justice Task Force
Eaton Canyon Nature Center
Esperanza Community Housing
Foothill Unity Center
Habitat for Humanity
Hacienda Heights Improvement Association
Huntington Beach Union High School District
Invisible Alta Pasadena
League of Women Voters, San Gabriel Valley
Pasadena Neighborhood Connection
Pasadena Sierra Club
People Not Pozos
Reach Out, Jurupa Valley
Riverside Unified School District
Taking Responsibility and Control Neighborhood Watch, La Puente
Youth Science Center, San Gabriel Valley