

BOARD MEETING DATE: March 5, 2021

AGENDA NO. 13

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the January 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

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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; Business Assistance; Media Relations; and Outreach to Community Groups and Governments.

MAJOR EVENTS (HOSTED AND SPONSORED)

Eighth Annual “Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service”

Staff hosted South Coast AQMD’s Eighth Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service “The Dream Continues: Working Together to Clean the Air,” on January 16. The event was attended by more than 300 participants virtually on Zoom and Facebook Live, including members of the public, community groups, elected officials and other special guests.

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 January events and meetings:

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce Legislative Affairs Committee

Staff represented South Coast AQMD at the virtual South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce Legislative Affairs Committee on January 13 to provide updates on current funding opportunities, including the Volkswagen Settlement. Staff also shared California Energy Commission's (CEC) announcement to invest \$115 million to expand the State's hydrogen fueling infrastructure.

San Fernando Valley Council of Governments

Staff participated in the San Fernando Valley Council of Governments virtual meeting on January 20. Staff provided information on South Coast AQMD's Emergency Order related to crematoriums, Proposition 1B Goods Movement Emission Reduction program, and Volkswagen Light Duty Electric Vehicle Infrastructure opportunities.

San Gabriel Valley City Managers' Association

Staff attended the San Gabriel Valley City Managers' Association virtual meeting on January 20. Staff announced South Coast AQMD's Emergency Order related to crematorium operations. There were approximately 45 city managers and others in attendance.

Mountain Transit Board

Staff participated in the virtual Mountain Transit Board Meeting on January 20 to present an update on South Coast AQMD programs and the CEC announcement to

invest \$115 million in hydrogen fueling infrastructure. The meeting was attended by elected officials, community members and business representatives.

Western Riverside County Clean Cities Coalition

Staff attended the virtual quarterly Western Riverside County Clean Cities Coalition meeting on January 27. Staff provided information on South Coast AQMD programs and current incentives for mobile sources including, Proposition 1B Goods Movement Emission Reduction program and Volkswagen Light Duty Electric Vehicle Infrastructure opportunities.

Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG)

On January 28, staff supported Council Member Rodriguez during the virtual OCCOG Board meeting and presented updates on South Coast AQMD programs. Presentations included an overview of the AB 2766 Subvention Fund Annual Report and Check Before You Burn program.

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.

South LA Climate Commons Celebration and Report Meeting

Staff attended a virtual meeting on January 13 hosted by Strategic Concepts in Organizing Policy Education and community partners on the “South LA Climate Commons.” The South LA Climate Commons is a yearlong participatory planning process designed to strengthen community climate resilience through a collaborative process. There were approximately 105 attendees.

Ask the Scientists: EJ Conversation for Kids Meeting

Staff participated in a virtual meeting hosted by the Academy of Natural Sciences at Drexel University on January 16. Children ages 8-11 led a conversation about EJ through a question and answer session with scientists.

Riverside County Health Coalition General Membership Meeting

Staff participated in the virtual quarterly Riverside County Health Coalition general membership meeting on January 20, with approximately 90 attendees. The meeting focused on the COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan for Riverside County. Breakout sessions were held to facilitate small group discussions on public messaging to communities.

Vision 2022: Climate and Clean Air Zoomposium

Staff participated in a webinar on January 21, entitled, “Vision 2022: Climate and Clean Air Zoomposium, #3,” hosted by Climate & Clean Air Initiative and co-presented by

Move CA and the San Francisco Bay Area Planning and Urban Research Association. Panelists discussed what is needed from the transportation sector to achieve California's climate and air quality goals.

World Environmental Education Day Webinar

Staff attended a webinar hosted by EARTHDAY.ORG to observe World Environmental Education Day on January 26. Panelists discussed interdisciplinary educational opportunities for environment and climate change issues. There was an emphasis on the use of civic engagement, to inspire students to act in support of environmental causes for their community and globally.

City of Riverside

Staff attended a virtual workshop on January 27 hosted by the City of Riverside on housing, public safety, and EJ policies. Presentations focused on the status of the current economy, zoning, and the need to evaluate equitable land-use options for housing. Additionally, there was discussion on the City's General Plan.

AB 617 UPDATE

The following are key AB 617 related activities in which staff participated during January. 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).

"No Idling" Signs in AB 617 Communities

Staff met virtually with representatives from CARB and Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment on January 21. The discussion focused on strategies and processes for installing "No Idling" signs in AB 617 communities.

San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD)

Staff met virtually on January 12 with SDAPCD to discuss the AB 617 CSC structure in Portside, San Diego and to share CERP development experiences. The meeting served as a briefing for SDAPCD's upcoming presentation at South Coast AQMD's AB 617 Year 3 community kick-off meeting.

AB 617 South LA (SLA) Year 3 Community Meeting

Staff held a virtual AB 617 kick-off meeting on January 14 for SLA with approximately 90 attendees. Staff introduced South Coast AQMD, presented a general overview of the AB 617 program, summarized the process to develop a CERP and CAMP, explained the process to establish a CSC, and identified potential models for the CSC structure. CARB staff presented an overview of their role in the AB 617 program. CSC members from Year 1 AB 617 communities shared their experiences with the program. Meeting participants inquired about CSC membership and requested that some industries not be

allowed on the CSC. They also inquired about the availability of air monitoring and other resources for the program.

Eastern Coachella Valley Area (ECV) CSC

Staff held a virtual AB 617 ECV CSC meeting on January 21 with approximately 70 participants. The meeting focused on the continued development of the CERP and CAMP. The CSC discussed forming working teams to focus on elements of the CERP. A CSC member presented on an online survey to collect input on potential issues in the community and potential locations for air sensors. Additional topics discussed included the incentives budget and collaborations with other agencies.

Coachella Valley EJ Enforcement Task Force

Staff participated in a Coachella Valley EJ Enforcement Task Force virtual meeting on January 27. Staff reported on the formation of ECV CSC working teams to continue work on the CERP and CAMP and announced the upcoming meeting in February.

Southeast Los Angeles (SELA) CSC

Staff held a virtual AB 617 SELA CSC meeting on January 28 with approximately 65 attendees, including two Board Members. Staff introduced three new committee members, discussed CERP implementation, and presented an overview of industrial facilities in the community. Incentives strategies for Year 3 incentives and a CAMP implementation update was provided. CARB staff asked for community input on truck idling CERP actions and a catalytic converter theft deterrent program. Committee members inquired about the AB 617 program budget, incentives outreach to independent truck owners and operators, the process to inform the community of new industrial facilities and the process to fund school air filtration systems.

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.

Industrial Environmental Coalition of Orange County

On January 21, staff gave a presentation on proposed rules, including Warehouse Indirect Sources and RECLAIM transition. There were more than 40 participants.

Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council

Staff participated in a virtual panel on sustainability and transportation on January 27 with approximately 20 community members. Residents were interested in learning more about South Coast AQMD and mobile source issues, as well as how to file complaints and incentive programs.

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 January were:

Calls to South Coast AQMD's Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG® Line	2,062
Calls to South Coast AQMD's Spanish-language Line	28
Clean Air Connections	4
Total Calls	2,094

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls, email advisories and walk-in requests for general information. The PIC did not take walk-in requests in January because of the COVID pandemic. Email advisories provide 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 Staff	164
Calls to Automated System	516
Total Calls	680

Email Advisories Sent	29,808
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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 January.

- Provided permit application assistance to 226 companies;
- Processed 70 Air Quality Permit Checklists; and
- Provided assistance in filing three 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. January reports are listed below:

Major Media Interactions	141
Press Releases	26
News Carousel	3

Major Media Topics:

- **Ozone Levels:** The Alpine Mountaineer requested information regarding high ozone levels at the Crestline air monitoring station. A written response was provided.
- **Trucking Emissions:** Freightwaves interviewed staff regarding the proposal to regulate truck traffic to and from warehouses.
- **All American Asphalt:** Voice of OC interviewed staff on measures South Coast AQMD plans to take regarding this facility. The reporter submitted follow-up questions and written responses were sent.
- **Tesoro:** Capital and Main had questions about public comment for the Tesoro LARIC project. Written responses were provided.
- **Valley Generating Station:** LA Times, So Cal News Group, City News Service and Natural Gas Intelligence inquired regarding the VGS action. Written responses were sent.
- **Capture and Control** – Random Lengths requested documentation related to the capture and control system for oil tankers. Sent information.
- **Refinery Tank Applications:** Capital and Main submitted a list of questions regarding permitting, oil storage, and emissions. Reporter also requested information on refinery tank applications. Written responses were provided.
- **Emergency Order for Crematoriums/Extension to Emergency Order:** Los Angeles Times, LA Daily News, the Guardian, the Orange County Register, SCV Signal, Vox, Lusa (Portuguese publication), and Agencia EFE inquired regarding the Emergency Order and permitting limits for crematoriums. Written responses were sent to each. Staff participated in interviews with the Los Angeles Times and NBC4. Univision requested an interview with a Spanish speaker. Staff provided recorded responses in Spanish.
- **Air Toxics Rule:** CalMatters inquired how South Coast AQMD will be impacted by the Trump Administration's change to the "once-in, always in" air toxics rule. Written responses were provided.
- **Updates to AQI Map:** CityWatchLA asked how the new AQI map incorporates PurpleAir data. Copies of current press releases were

provided.

- **WAIRE Program:** Supply Chain Drive submitted a list of written questions about the WAIRE program. Written responses were provided.
- **Coastal Air Quality:** Los Angeles Times inquired about the recent decline in air quality at night in the coastal region. Reporter was provided information on air quality data and maps.
- **Benzene Monitoring:** Capital & Main inquired if South Coast AQMD regularly tests for benzene at refineries. Confirmed both the community and fenceline monitoring regularly measure for benzene levels.
- **Creosote Treated Wood:** NBC News submitted questions about the use of creosote treated railroad ties on residential property. Referred the reporter to DTSC.
- **Chevron Refinery Flaring:** Bloomberg News submitted questions regarding the unplanned flaring event. Written responses were provided.
- **No-Burn Alerts:** Pitches were sent to local news outlets regarding No-Burn Alerts on January 2-3, 6 and 17 that resulted in television, radio and print coverage.
- **VGS NOV Press Release (1/7):** Pitches were sent to local news outlets containing the release on the NOV for Valley Generating Station resulting in local radio and print coverage.
- **Board Member Kuehl Press Release (1/8):** Pitches were sent to local news outlets regarding the re-appointment of Board Member Kuehl resulting in radio and print coverage.
- **DEIO Press Release (1/12) -** Pitches were sent to local news outlets announcing the addition of South Coast AQMD's new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer with coverage in the LA Sentinel.
- **EPA App Award Press Release (1/13) -** Pitches were sent to local news outlets on U.S. EPA's Clean Air Excellence award for the South Coast AQMD app.
- **Smoke Advisory (1/15):** Pitches were sent to local news media outlets on the smoke advisory for the Bonita Fire near Mountain Center with coverage on local radio and television and online outlets.
- **Emergency Order for Crematoriums (1/17):** Pitches were sent to local news media outlets with information about the Emergency Order resulting in national and international coverage on all major local television networks, Associated Press, all local radio stations, all major newspaper outlets and international coverage.
- **Expansion of Emergency Order (1/25):** Pitches were sent to news outlets announcing the extension of the EO and expansion to Orange County resulting in additional local radio and newspaper coverage.

News Releases:

- **No-Burn Day - Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban In Effect For Residents Of The South Coast Air Basin - January 2-3, 6, and 17, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of the No-Burn Days.
- **\$5 million Volkswagen Light Duty Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program to open in February - January 5, 2021:** Informed residents of Volkswagen's upcoming EV infrastructure program.
- **South Coast AQMD issues violation for methane leaks at LADWP - January 7, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of enforcement actions regarding LADWP.
- **Supervisor Sheila Kuehl Returns to South Coast AQMD Governing Board - January 8, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of the re-appointment of Sheila Kuehl to the Board.
- **South Coast AQMD Hires Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer to Elevate Programs and Initiatives - January 12, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of the hiring of the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer.
- **South Coast AQMD Mobile App Wins US EPA's Clean Air Excellence Award - January 13, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of the Clean Air Excellence Award given to the South Coast AQMD app.
- **"Volvo Trucks' Customer Dependable Highway Express Reduces Carbon Footprint by Electrifying Southern California Distribution Facility" - January 14, 2021:** Shared the Volvo press release on green upgrades to their customer facility.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Smoke Advisory Due to Bonita Fire - January 15, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of smoke conditions due to the Bonita fire.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Emergency Order for Crematoriums due to COVID-19- January 17, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of the Emergency Order going into effect regarding crematoriums.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust and Ash Advisory - January 17, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of the dust and ash event.
- **South Coast AQMD Expands Emergency Order for Crematoriums to Orange County – January 25, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of the Emergency Order extension for crematoriums and the expansion to include Orange County facilities.

Social Media Notable posts:

- AQ Forecast (1/4): 6,403 Twitter Impressions
- Governing Board Meeting Live Stream (1/8): 4,447 Twitter Impressions
- Windblown Dust Advisory (1/17): 56,228 Twitter Impressions
- Bonita Fire Smoke Advisory (1/15): 26,135 Twitter Impressions
- AQ Forecast (1/23): 3,541 Twitter Impressions

News Carousel:

- Keep up with the Latest News from South Coast AQMD - January 21, 2021: Shared the latest edition of the Advisor newsletter.
- CLEANAIR Furnace Rebate Program - January 27, 2021: Provided information on the rebate program.
- Prob 1B funding availability - January 29, 2021: Provided information on available funding for clean heavy-duty trucks.

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

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

Agoura Hills	Colton	Hidden Hills
Alhambra	Commerce	Huntington Beach
Aliso Viejo	Covina	Huntington Park
Anaheim	Cudahy	Industry
Arcadia	Culver City	Inglewood
Artesia	Cypress	Irvine
Azusa	Dana Point	Irwindale
Baldwin Park	Diamond Bar	La Cañada Flintridge
Banning	Downey	La Habra
Bell	Duarte	La Habra Heights
Bell Gardens	Eastvale	La Puente
Bellflower	El Monte	La Verne
Big Bear Lake	El Segundo	Laguna Niguel
Bradbury	Fontana	Lawndale
Brea	Fullerton	Lomita
Buena Park	Garden Grove	Long Beach
Burbank	Gardena	Los Alamitos
Calabasas	Glendale	Los Angeles
Carson	Glendora	Malibu
Cerritos	Hawaiian Gardens	Manhattan Beach
Claremont	Hawthorne	Maywood
Coachella	Hermosa Beach	Mission Viejo

Monrovia	Rolling Hills	South El Monte
Monterey Park	Rolling Hills Estates	South Gate
Newport Beach	Rosemead	South Pasadena
Norwalk	San Bernardino	Stanton
Ontario	San Clemente	Temple City
Orange	San Dimas	Torrance
Palos Verdes Estates	San Fernando	Tustin
Pasadena	San Gabriel	Upland
Pico Rivera	San Juan Capistrano	Vernon
Placentia	San Marino	Villa Park
Pomona	San Pedro	Walnut
Rancho Cucamonga	Santa Clarita	West Covina
Rancho Palos Verdes	Santa Fe Springs	Westlake Village
Rancho Santa Margarita	Seal Beach	Westminster
Redondo Beach	Sierra Madre	Whittier
Riverside	Signal Hill	Yorba Linda

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

- U.S. Senator Kamala Harris
- U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein
- U.S. Senator Alex Padilla
- U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán
- U.S. Representative Tony Cardenas
- U.S. Representative Judy Chu
- U.S. Representative Mike Garcia
- U.S. Representative Young Kim
- U.S. Representative Ted Lieu
- U.S. Representative Grace Napolitano
- U.S. Representative Adam Schiff
- U.S. Representative Brad Sherman
- U.S. Representative Norma Torres
- Senator Ben Allen
- Senator Bob Archuleta
- Senator Steven Bradford
- Senator Robert Hertzberg
- Senator Connie Leyva
- Senator Josh Newman
- Senator Anthony Portantino
- Senator Susan Rubio
- Senator Scott Wilk
- Assembly Member Autumn Burke
- Assembly Member Lisa Calderon
- Assembly Member Ed Chau
- Assembly Member Philip Chen
- Assembly Member Laura Friedman
- Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia
- Assembly Member Mike Gipson
- Assembly Member Eloise Gómez Reyes
- Assembly Member Chris Holden
- Assembly Member Suzette Martinez Valladares
- Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi
- Assembly Member Patrick O'Donnell
- Assembly Member Luz Rivas
- Assembly Member Blanca Rubio
- Assembly Member Thurston Smith

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

Association of California Cities, Orange County
Baldwin Hills Community Standards District Community Advisory Panel
California Contract Cities Association
California Fuel Cell Partnership
California Air Resources Board
City of Pasadena Neighborhood Connections
Clean Power Alliance
Coachella Valley Association of Governments
Community Choice Aggregation, Orange County
Department of Toxic Substances Control
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Imperial Irrigation District
Inland Action
Inland Empire Chamber Alliance
Inland Empire Regional Chamber of Commerce
Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance
Inland Valley Development Agency
LA Metro
Las Virgenes-Malibu Council of Governments
League of California Cities
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Los Angeles County Department of Health
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
Los Angeles World Airports
Mountain Transit Board
Move CA
North Orange County Chamber of Commerce
Omnitrans
Ontario International Airport
Orange County Board of Supervisors
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Council of Governments
Orange County Transportation Authority
Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Pasadena Human Services & Recreation, Neighborhood Connections
Port of Long Beach
Rancho Cucamonga Municipal Utility
Riverside County Board of Supervisors
Riverside County Health Coalition
Riverside County Transportation Commission

San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Bernardino International Airport
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley City Managers' Association
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Southern California Association of Governments
Speak Up Newport
Sunline Transit Agency
Sunshine Canyon Landfill Advisory Committee
U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Green Building council
Western Community Energy
Western Riverside Council of Governments

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

Asian Pacific Islanders Forward Movement
Belvedere Middle School, Los Angeles
California State University, Fullerton
Clean Healthy Air, Clean Healthy Altadena
Clean Air Coalition of North Whittier and Avocado Heights
Coalition for Clean Air
Esperanza Community Housing
Highland Park Neighborhood Council
John W. North High School, Riverside
League of Women Voters, San Gabriel Valley
Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma
Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator
Pasadena Sierra Club
Residents for a Better Alhambra
Saint John Bosco High School, Bellflower
San Gabriel Rotary Club
Santa Ana College
South Gate High School
Taking Responsibility and Control Neighborhood Watch Group, La Puente
United Way
University of California, Irvine

University of California, Riverside
Visual Artists Guild, Los Angeles
West Covina Beautiful
Youth Science Center, Hacienda Heights