

BOARD MEETING DATE: October 1, 2021

AGENDA NO. 9

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the August 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 Natri
Executive Officer

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BACKGROUND

This report summarizes the activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office for August. The report includes: Major Events; Community Events/Public Meetings; Environmental Justice Update; AB 617; 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, 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 hosted or sponsored in August.

COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS

Each year, 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.

Staff attended and/or provided information and updates at the following August events and meetings:

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

On August 11, staff participated in the virtual South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce Legislative Committee meeting to provide information on South Coast AQMD's statement on the U.S. EPA Clean Trucks Plan, the Green Painter's Guide, and new interactive MATES V tools.

Big Bear Chamber of Commerce

On August 12, staff attended the virtual Big Bear Chamber Government Affairs Committee to provide information on the ACT Expo and opportunities to apply for incentive funds through the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust.

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG)

Staff participated in the virtual SGVCOG Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee meeting on August 18. Updates were provided on South Coast AQMD's WAIRE portal, Green Painter's Guide and MATES V.

Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce (HAIC)

On August 26, staff attended a virtual HAIC Government Affairs Committee meeting to announce the upcoming public workshop on the RECLAIM transition, Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions (WAIRE) portal and other updates.

Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG)

On August 26, staff attended the OCCOG virtual Board meeting with Mayor Pro Tempore Carlos Rodriguez and provided an update on the WAIRE program, including the online portal.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) UPDATE

The following are key EJ activities in which staff participated during August. These events and meetings involve communities affected disproportionately from adverse air quality impacts.

Pacoima Community Initiative (PCI) Meeting

On August 11, staff participated in the monthly PCI meeting to plan for the upcoming Resource Fair for families. Staff provided informational materials on the Clean Air Program for Elementary Students (CAPES).

Young Leaders Advisory Council (YLAC)

YLAC convened on August 18 for a virtual meeting, which included a presentation on CAPES and a discussion on future topics of interest. Members requested presentations on hydrogen fuel cell technology and the Indirect Source Rule for Rail Yards and Intermodal Facilities.

7th Annual EJ Enforcement Symposium

On August 18, staff attended the virtual 7th Annual EJ Enforcement Symposium hosted by the Los Angeles Environmental Justice Network. This session was one of five that will be hosted throughout the remainder of the year. The session was entitled, “New Avenues of Enforcement,” with a panel discussion on better cooperation and communication between regulators, prosecutors, and the community.

Coachella Valley EJ Task Force

Staff participated in the Coachella Valley EJ Enforcement Task Force virtual meeting on August 25. Members discussed the Identifying Violations Affecting Neighborhoods (IVAN) environmental monitoring system and issues related to the Salton Sea. Staff from California Department of Food and Agriculture presented on the Fertilizing Materials Inspection Program, an industry-funded initiative that ensures consumer products are safe and effective.

Environmental Justice Advisory Group (EJAG)

A virtual quarterly EJAG meeting was held on August 27. Staff provided updates on school air filtration projects and the EJ Community Partnership. Members informed the group about environmental matters in their communities.

AB 617 UPDATE

The following are key AB 617 related activities in which staff participated during August. These events, workshops and meetings involve AB 617 communities to support the Community Steering Committees (CSCs), Community Air Monitoring Plans (CAMPs) and Community Emissions Reduction Plans (CERP).

South Los Angeles (SLA) CSC

Approximately 60 people participated in the SLA CSC virtual meeting on August 5. A CSC co-lead provided a summary of the July meeting, highlighting the finalization of the charter. Staff presented information on the AB 617 SLA community website. Staff and co-leads facilitated an activity to gather more information about air quality concerns. The CSC finalized the following air quality priorities for the SLA Community Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP): mobile sources, auto body shops, oil and gas, toxics, and other industrial facilities. Staff provided an overview of potential CERP strategies and polled for interest in subcommittees to develop actions for each air quality priority. CARB gave an overview of mobile source emission trends, regulatory measures, CERP strategies and other tools for mobile sources.

CARB Community Air Protection Consultation Group

Staff participated in a virtual AB 617 Community Air Protection Consultation Group meeting on August 12. Members of the Consultation Group include individuals representing EJ organizations, industry, academia, public health organizations, local government, and air districts. Community members asked for clarification of the role of the group, and made suggestions to resolve questions of authority and scope of the program.

Wilmington, Carson, West Long Beach (WCWLB) CSC

Approximately 95 people participated in a virtual WCWLB CSC meeting on August 18. Committee members provided updates on the Draft Harbor Community Plan, upcoming Port of Los Angeles workshops for Low-NOx trucks and the spending plan, and a CARB air grant awarded to Coalition for Clean Air. Electrify America gave a presentation on the Green City Initiative. Staff provided an overview of outreach efforts in this community, the AB 617 2020-2021 Annual Progress Report, the implementation budget, Rule 1180 refinery monitoring results, refinery baseline measurements, and the Community Oil Wells Pilot Sampling Initiative. CARB presented the Advanced Clean Fleet and Transport Refrigeration Unit regulations under development.

San Bernardino/Muscoy (SBM) CSC

Approximately 30 people participated in an SBM CSC meeting on August 19. CARB staff provided updates on truck idling sweeps and the Automated License Plate Reader system pilot study. Staff presented an update on “No Idling” signs, conducted a Jamboard activity to gather input on sign locations, and announced truck incentives workshops. Staff also provided an overview of the Annual Progress Report, details of

the AB 617 implementation budget and presented an update on the community air monitoring plan. Committee members discussed responsibility for installing “No Idling” signs and efforts to establish truck routes, and emission reductions from mobile source incentive projects and statewide measures.

East LA, Boyle Heights, West Commerce (ELBHWC) CSC

Approximately 67 people attended the AB 617 CSC virtual meeting for the ELBHWC community on August 26. Staff provided an overview of the AB 617 2020-2021 Annual Progress Report, the implementation budget, and CERP and CAMP progress on the air quality priority for truck traffic. CARB gave a presentation on the Portable Emission Acquisition System/Automated License Plate Recognition Pilot Study and the Advanced Clean Fleet and Transport Refrigeration Unit regulations under development. Committee members asked questions about a recent Notice of Violation issued to a rendering facility, air monitoring in the community, staff’s joint efforts with CARB to install no-idling signs, and recommended locations for CARB’s automated license plate pilot study.

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 Speaker’s Bureau requests or visits in August.

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 August:

Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2,972
Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Spanish-language Line	52
Total Calls	3,024

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls for general information. The PIC did not take walk-in requests in August because of the COVID pandemic. Email advisories provided information on upcoming meetings and events, program

announcements and alerts on time sensitive issues. Information for the month of August is summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC Staff	9
Calls to Automated System	822
Total Calls	831

Email Advisories Sent	29,137
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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 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 August.

- Provided permit application assistance to 184 companies; and
- Processed 68 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

Types of businesses assisted:

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Architecture Firms | Engineering Firms | Restaurants |
| Auto Body Shops | Gas Stations | Retail Operations |
| Construction Firms | Manufacturing Facilities | Warehouses |
| Dry Cleaners | 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 August reports are listed below:

Major Media Interactions	210
Press Releases	18
News Carousel	4

Major Media Topics:

- **Wildfire Preparedness:** Los Angeles Times and Spectrum News 1 interviewed staff regarding wildfire preparedness.
- **Special Air Quality Advisory:** Pitches were sent to local news outlets for the special air quality advisory due to northern wildfires, resulting in TV, radio, and print coverage. Univision, KCBS/CAL, KESQ, KCRW, KVCR and KPCC requested interviews to discuss smoke impacts and health effects. Staff participated, resulting in wide coverage among TV, radio, and print outlets. Newsweek requested a statement on the air quality impacts. A copy of the advisory was provided.
- **Smoke Advisories:** Pitches were sent to local news outlets regarding smoke conditions due to the South Fire and the Chaparral Fire, resulting in TV, radio, and print coverage. Southern California News Group inquired about smoke impacts due to the South Fire. The reporter was referred to the Mojave Desert AQMD. KPCC interviewed staff regarding the Chaparral Fire smoke advisory.
- **JETSI Project Press Release:** Pitches were sent to local news outlets for the announcement of 100 zero emission trucks near ports (known as JETSI). Pitching included a press release and event conducted during the ACT Expo, resulting in TV, radio, and print coverage. Copies of the press release were provided to FOX 11 and ABC7.
- **Hyperion Leak:** Southern California News Group submitted two inquiries regarding air quality measurements and health impacts from the Hyperion sewage leak. Written responses were provided. ABC inquired about complaint numbers and information regarding the Hyperion sewage leak. Written responses were provided.
- **Modified Hydrofluoric Acid (MHF):** Grist submitted questions regarding MHF for a video being produced. Written responses were provided.
- **Salton Sea:** NPR sent follow-up questions for an ongoing inquiry regarding AB 617 efforts in Eastern Coachella Valley near the Salton Sea. Written responses were provided.
- **Diesel Emissions:** California Current requested information on the tracking of diesel emissions in light of the Governor's proclamation regarding the power grid. Written responses were provided.
- **Hexavalent Chromium:** ProPublica inquired about reporting requirements for hexavalent chromium. Written responses are being prepared.
- **All American Asphalt:** Voice of OC inquired about complaint and inspection numbers near All American Asphalt in the past year. The reporter was asked to submit a Public Records Request. LA Weekly asked for clarification on the CEQA Notice of Exemption for All American Asphalt crumb rubber system. A written response was provided.
- **White House Executive Order:** News pitches were sent to local news outlets including the Executive Officer's statement on the White House Executive Order for electric vehicles.

- **Ports MOU:** The Los Angeles Times interviewed staff regarding a potential Memorandum of Understanding with the Ports. The Los Angeles Times submitted follow-up questions regarding attainment deadlines. A written response was provided. IWP News and KPCC requested information on the recent Ports MOU resolution approved by the Board. Written responses were provided.
- **CIO 100:** Staff participated in a panel discussion on “Making IT Innovations Meaningful” that aired at the CIO 100 Symposium.
- **Rulemaking:** Reuters inquired about rulemaking for particulate matter emissions at refineries. Requested additional information.
- **Air Quality Forecasts:** Spectrum News 1 requested updated KML mapping files for use during the evening weather forecast. The files were provided. A twice-daily transfer of files was arranged.
- **South Coast AQMD Employment Numbers:** Inland Empire Magazine inquired regarding the total number of South Coast AQMD employees living in the Inland Empire. A written response was provided.
- **Ozone Plan:** Reuters requested comment on a court ruling regarding the San Joaquin Valley state-level ozone. A written response was provided.

News Releases

- **South Coast AQMD Statement on White House Electric Vehicle Targets, August 6, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of Executive Officer’s statement regarding President Biden’s Executive Order for EV targets.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues/Continues Advisory Due to Smoke from California Wildfires, August 23-25, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of a special air quality advisory due to smoke from Northern and Central California wildfires.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues/Continues Smoke Advisory Due to South Fire Near Lytle Creek, August 25-26, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of smoke impacts in San Bernardino County due to the South Fire.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues/Continues Smoke Advisory Due to Chaparral Fire - August 28-29, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of a smoke advisory issued due to the Chaparral Fire.
- **South Coast AQMD Leads North America’s Largest Deployment of Class 8 Battery-Electric Trucks - August 31, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Posted information regarding the JETSI project.

Social Media Notable posts:

- **AQ Forecast (8/9):** 7,704 Twitter Impressions
- **AQ Forecast (8/16):** 13,144 Twitter Impressions
- **AQ Forecast (8/17):** 10,178 Twitter Impressions
- **Special AQ Advisory (8/23):** 25,026 Twitter Impressions
- **Advisory Update (8/25):** 23,838 Twitter Impressions
- **Advisory Update (8/24):** 19,510 Twitter Impressions
- **Wildfire Tips (8/25):** 11,981 Twitter Impressions
- **Chaparral Fire Smoke Advisory (8/28):** 22,032 Twitter Impressions
- **Chaparral Fire Smoke Advisory Extension (8/29):** 11,203 Twitter Impressions

News Carousel:

- **Choose a Low-VOC paint for your summer home projects, August 4, 2021:** Provided a link to the Green Painter's Guide.
- **South Coast AQMD's 2020 Annual Report is now Available, August 11, 2021:** Provided a link to the 2020 Annual Report.
- **Keep Up With the Latest News From South Coast AQMD:** Provides a link to latest edition of the Advisor newsletter.
- **The new WAIRE Program Online Portal is now live, August 12, 2021:** Provided a link with information on the new WAIRE POP portal for warehouse owners.

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

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

Alhambra	Glendora	Rancho Cucamonga
Anaheim	Industry	Riverside
Arcadia	Inglewood	Rosemead
Avalon	Irvine	San Dimas
Azusa	Irwindale	San Fernando
Baldwin Park	La Cañada Flintridge	San Gabriel
Big Bear Lake	La Habra	San Marino
Bradbury	La Puente	Santa Ana
Brea	La Verne	Santa Clarita
Buena Park	Laguna Niguel	Santa Fe Springs
Burbank	Lake Forest	Seal Beach
Carson	Long Beach	Sierra Madre
Claremont	Los Angeles	South El Monte
Colton	Mission Viejo	South Pasadena
Commerce	Monrovia	Stanton
Covina	Monterey Park	Temple City
Diamond Bar	Moreno Valley	Tustin
Duarte	Newport Beach	Walnut
El Monte	Pasadena	West Covina
Garden Grove	Perris	Yorba Linda
Glendale	Pomona	Yucaipa

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

- U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein
- U.S. Senator Alex Padilla
- U.S. Representative Nanette Diaz Barragán
- U.S. Representative Tony Cárdenas
- U.S. Representative Judy Chu
- U.S. Representative Jimmy Gomez
- U.S. Representative Raul Ruiz
- Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins
- Senator Dave Min
- Senator Nancy Skinner
- Senator Bob Wieckowski
- Assembly Member Richard Bloom
- Assembly Member Adam Gray
- Assembly Member Jacqui Irwin

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

America Green Zone Alliance
Avalon Chamber of Commerce
Avalon Planning Commission
Baldwin Hills Community Advisory Panel
Big Bear Chamber of Commerce
Burbank Chamber of Commerce
California Department of Transportation
California Fuel Cell Partnership
California High-Speed Rail Authority
California Hydrogen Coalition
California School Board Association
CARB
Department of Toxic Substances Control
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Glendale Chamber of Commerce
Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce
Industry Business Council, Los Angeles
Inland Action
Inland Valley Development Agency
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Mountain Transit Board
National Park Service
Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce
Omnitrans
Ontario International Airport Board
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Council of Governments
Regional Chamber of Commerce - San Gabriel Valley
Riverside County Board of Supervisors
Riverside Transit Agency
Rosemead Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Bernardino International Airport Authority
San Fernando Chamber of Commerce
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce
Santa Clarita Chamber of Commerce

Santa Fe Springs Chamber of Commerce
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Southern California Association of Governments
Western Riverside Council of Governments

In August, 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
American Lung Association
Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement
California for New Communities Education Fund
Center for Asian Americans United for Self-Empowerment
Clean Air Coalition of North Whittier and Avocado Heights
Clean Healthy Air, Clean Healthy Altadena
Habitat for Humanity
Hacienda Heights Improvement Association
Mujeres de la Tierra
North Whittier Neighborhood Watch & Avocado Heights Association
Orange County Interfaith Coalition for Environment
Pasadena City College
Pasadena Forward
Pomona College
San Gabriel Mountain Forever, Nature for All
San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps
Sierra Club
Taking Responsibility and Control, La Puente
The Energy Coalition
University of California, Riverside