

BOARD MEETING DATE: January 7, 2022

AGENDA NO. 8

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the November 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

DJA:AL:bel:lam:ar

---

## **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; 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, and improving air quality and the economy.

No major events were hosted or sponsored.

## **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 to 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 November events and meetings:

### Gateway Cities Council of Governments

Staff participated in a virtual meeting on November 3. Staff presented updates on the Air Quality Sensor Performance Evaluation Center program and Volkswagen (VW) Environmental Mitigation Trust funds.

### Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Meeting

Staff participated in an agency and stakeholder virtual meeting regarding AllenCo Energy in University Park on November 3. Staff provided updates on monthly compliance activities including surveillance and air monitoring, which did not detect elevated levels. Staff also reported that no complaints had been received related to AllenCo Energy since the last meeting on October 6.

### San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA)

On November 4, staff attended the SBCTA City Manager Technical Advisory Committee meeting and provided updates on Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions (WAIRE) workshops and VW Environmental Mitigation Trust funds.

### Torrance Refinery Action Committee

On November 10, staff attended a virtual meeting, which featured speaker Dr. Lyou, President of the Coalition for Clean Air and former South Coast AQMD Board Member. There were approximately 24 people in attendance including U.S. Congressman Maxine Waters, who discussed issues related to hydrofluoric acid.

#### South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

Staff participated in the virtual Chamber meeting on November 18. Updates were shared on the Check Before You Burn (CBYB) program, Commercial Lawn and Garden Equipment Incentive Program, new application cycle for Replace Your Ride, and VW funding for combustion freight and marine projects.

#### San Gabriel Valley City Managers' Association

On November 17, staff participated in a meeting with approximately 65 participants. Staff provided updates on CBYB, the Commercial Lawn & Garden Equipment Incentive Program, Clean Air Awards, and WAIRE.

#### Dominguez Channel Virtual Town Hall

Staff participated the City of Carson's Town Hall meeting on November 18. Los Angeles County Public Works, Los Angeles County Public Health, and provided updates on the ongoing odor remediation efforts and related issues.

### **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.

#### Pacoima Community Initiative (PCI)

On November 5, staff participated in PCI's monthly stakeholder virtual meeting on November 5 to provide updates on the Clean Air Program for Elementary Students and the Clean Air Awards. Members discussed upcoming events, shared needs and collaboration ideas.

#### U.S. EPA Training

On November 16, staff attended part one of U.S. EPA's virtual training on the Proposed Rule to Reduce Methane and Other Harmful Pollutants from the Oil and Natural Gas Industry. The training included background information on the oil and gas production process, an overview of the proposed rules, and information on how to effectively engage in the regulatory process.

#### Los Angeles Environmental Justice Network

Staff participated in the Los Angeles Environmental Justice Network's series "Policy, Capacity Building and Environmental Justice Enforcement," webinar on November 17. Panel members discussed the need to think collaboratively to ensure environmental justice plans and policies include a process for implementation and enforcement.

### **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 (CSCs), Community Air Monitoring Plans (CAMPs), and Community Emissions Reduction Plans (CERPs).

#### South Los Angeles Community Steering Committee Meeting

On November 16, approximately 60 people participated in the virtual meeting, including Board Member Kracov. Staff addressed the AB 617 program pause. A committee member provided an overview on oil and gas concerns and led discussions on potential actions to address air quality priorities. Another committee member presented case studies for metal facilities and auto body shops. Co-leads led discussions on no-idling signs, air filtration systems, outreach to independent owner operators, enforcement for mobile sources, mobile monitoring near oil drilling sites, more enforcement information regarding oil wells, accountability for oil and gas operators to inform the community of modifications to operations and chemicals used, and proximity of oil and gas sites to residential dwellings. Committee members requested collaboration with other responsible agencies such as CalGEM, City of Los Angeles, and the County of Los Angeles to address community concerns.

#### Wilmington/Carson/West Long Beach Community Steering Committee Meeting

Approximately 85 people participated in the virtual meeting on November 17. A committee member provided updates regarding their work and outreach events with STEM students in the community. Staff presented an overview of mobile measurements near oil wells in the community and monitoring efforts related to the Dominguez Channel odor event. Additionally, there was a staff overview of Rule 1109.1, highlighting the 8 tons per day NO<sub>x</sub> reduction, which achieves the target listed in the CERP. Committee members asked about implementation of the rule and stated the importance of reducing air toxics. CARB shared information regarding an air filtration project with Los Angeles Unified School District and a committee member expressed concern with increased emissions resulting from the back log at the ports.

#### San Bernardino/Muscoy Community Steering Committee Meeting

Approximately 40 people participated in a virtual meeting on November 17. A committee member presented on air quality and social issues in the community and ongoing efforts to address these concerns. Staff provided an update on Proposed Rule 2306 - Indirect Source Rule (ISR) for New Intermodal Facilities, and CARB provided an update on the draft In-Use Locomotive Regulation. Staff also presented information and sought feedback on how to improve the Aeroqual sensor network and data dashboard, including a video tutorial on how to use and access the data. Aclima presented on the mobile monitoring campaign results and interactive mapping. Committee members asked about the proposed Colton intermodal facility, the status of the proposed ISR rule, and the technology expected to be used on-site. Committee members also asked about sensors in the community, pollutants of concern and air quality standards.

East LA/Boyle Heights/West Commerce Community Steering Committee Meeting  
Approximately 70 people participated in a virtual meeting on November 18. Staff presented information about home air filtration units, toxics rules for metal processing facilities, and provided an update on Proposed Rule 2306 - ISR for New Intermodal Facilities. CARB provided an update on the draft In-Use Locomotive Regulation, and Aclima presented results of their mobile monitoring campaign and associated interactive mapping tool. Committee members asked about Proposed Rule 2306 and how it would impact the community. Committee members also asked questions about home air filtration systems, such as the number of units to be distributed and restrictions on who would be able to apply for a filter.

### **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 Speakers Bureau/Visitor Service requests in November.

### **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 November:

Calls to South Coast AQMD's Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2,351
Calls to South Coast AQMD's Spanish-language Line	76
Total Calls	2,427

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS**

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls for general information. The PIC did not take walk-in requests in November 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 November is summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC	9
Calls to Automated System	323
Total Calls	332

Email Advisories Sent	46,559
-----------------------	--------

## 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 November.

- Provided permit application assistance to 170 companies; and
- Processed 47 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 November reports are listed below:

Major Media Interactions	321
Press Releases	41

### Major Media Topics:

- **Odors:** Staff participated in an interview with Associated Press on the challenge of reducing odors from industrial facilities and how Rule 445 has affected odors in Vernon.
- **Inland Empire Air Quality:** Staff participated in an interview with The Center for Health Reporting on MATES V and the Inland Empire air quality issues.
- **Auto Shops:** KCRW inquired about air quality near auto body facilities and the regulations facilities are required to meet. A written response was sent.
- **Port Terminal Project Suit:** Law 360 requested comment on the South Coast AQMD lawsuit on a terminal project at the Port of Los Angeles. Staff was unable to comment on ongoing litigation.
- **Gas-Powered Lawn Equipment:** Board Member Cacciotti and staff participated in an interview with CalMatters/Mercury News on the new regulations for gas-powered lawn equipment and the lawn and garden incentive program. Follow up questions were received and written responses were provided.

- **Air Quality Conditions:** Staff participated in an interview with LA Times on the forecast and hazy sky conditions and factors that contribute to poor visibility. Follow up questions were received and written responses were provided.
- **Flaring:** Red Canary Magazine requested an interview regarding flaring and monitoring techniques. Written responses were provided. Bloomberg News submitted questions regarding a flaring incident at the Phillips 66 refinery. Response is in progress.
- **Port Emissions:** Crosstown LA requested clarification on the increase in port emissions with 24/7 operations. Written responses were provided. NBC News Radio and LA Times requested interviews regarding gridlock at the ports and increased air pollution. Staff participated in an interview with LA Times.
- **South Coast AQMD Meetings:** Grist requested comment on the frequency of South Coast AQMD meetings with oil industry leaders. Written responses were provided.
- **WAIRE Rule Requirements:** Consumer Reports inquired about WAIRE rule requirements. A written response was provided.
- **AB 617:** CalMatters inquired regarding how to assess whether AB 617 has improved air quality. Response is in progress.
- **Smoke Conditions:** Staff participated in an interview with KESQ regarding smoky conditions and the impact on local air quality.
- **Replace your Ride:** Univision requested an interview with a Spanish speaker regarding the Replace Your Ride program. Recorded responses were provided.
- **The Future of Greentech:** An event representative requested a speaker/panelist to discuss air quality in Los Angeles as part of a clean cities topic. The Executive Officer will participate.
- **Clean Air Awards:** Pitches were sent to news outlets announcing the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Clean Air Awards.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory:** Pitches were sent to news outlets regarding two windblown dust advisories. This resulted in coverage from local tv, radio, and print outlets.

## Special Topics:

### Rule 1109.1

- Pitches were sent to news outlets with the November 5 press release on Rule 1109.1 resulting in large scale coverage on radio, television and online. Random Length News requested a copy of the presentation to the Board. A copy of the presentation was sent. Oil Price Information Service and Argus Media inquired about the Board's adoption of the rule.

### Carson Odors

- **Carson Odors:** Staff participated in interviews with LA Times and KCRW on odors from the Dominguez Channel. The Long Beach Post and LA Times requested updates on the Carson response. Written responses were provided.

A second reporter with the LA Times also requested updates. Written responses were provided.

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

- The 2021 Check Before You Burn Season began on November 1. There were 17 No-Burn Days in November. Pitches were sent to local media outlets for each No Burn Day, which resulted in extensive coverage from local television, radio and print outlets.
- Staff participated in interviews with KPCC and KNX on the launch of Check Before You Burn season. Staff participated in an interview with LA Newsletter on no-burn alerts and other types of South Coast AQMD alerts.

#### **News Releases:**

- **No-Burn Days – Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban in Effect for Residents of The South Coast Air Basin (English and Spanish):** In November, 17 No-Burn Days were declared. Press releases were issued on November 3-8, 14-15, 17-19, 22, and 26-30.
- **South Coast AQMD Governing Board Adopts Rules Establishing Emission Limits on Combustion Equipment at Petroleum Refineries (English and Spanish) – November 5, 2021:** Informed residents about the Board adoption of Rule 1109.1.
- **South Coast AQMD to Honor Clean Air Heroes – November 24, 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents about the upcoming Clean Air Awards in December.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for the entire South Coast AQMD Jurisdiction – November 20, 24 2021 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of windblown dust conditions on November 20 and 24.

#### **Social Media Notable posts:**

- **AQ Forecast (11/1):** 6,537 Twitter Impressions
- **Check Before You Burn (11/6):** 7,345 Twitter Impressions
- **Check Before You Burn Advisory (11/15):** 7,345 Twitter Impressions
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (11/20):** 21,476 Twitter Impressions
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (11/24):** 21,039 Twitter Impressions



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

Outreach was conducted in-person and virtually in November utilizing web-based and other technologies to communicate with elected officials or staff from the following cities:

Agoura Hills	Fountain Valley	Long Beach
Alhambra	Fullerton	Los Alamitos
Aliso Viejo	Garden Grove	Los Angeles
Anaheim	Gardena	Lynwood
Arcadia	Glendale	Manhattan Beach
Avalon	Glendora	Maywood
Azusa	Hawaiian Gardens	Menifee
Baldwin Park	Hawthorne	Mission Viejo
Banning	Hemet	Monrovia
Beaumont	Hermosa Beach	Montebello
Beverly Hills	Hidden Hills	Monterey Park
Bradbury	Huntington Beach	Moreno Valley
Brea	Huntington Park	Murrieta
Buena Park	Indian Wells	Newport Beach
Burbank	Indio	Norco
Calabasas	Industry	Norwalk
Calimesa	Inglewood	Orange
Canyon Lake	Irvine	Palm Desert
Carson	Irwindale	Palm Springs
Cathedral City	Jurupa Valley	Palos Verdes Estates
Chino	La Cañada Flintridge	Paramount
Claremont	La Habra	Pasadena
Coachella	La Habra Heights	Perris
Corona	La Mirada	Pico Rivera
Costa Mesa	La Palma	Placentia
Covina	La Puente	Pomona
Culver City	La Quinta	Rancho Mirage
Cypress	La Verne	Rancho Palos Verdes
Dana Point	Laguna Beach	Rancho Santa Margarita
Desert Hot Springs	Laguna Hills	San Clemente
Diamond Bar	Laguna Niguel	Redondo Beach
Downey	Laguna Woods	Riverside
Duarte	Lake Elsinore	Rolling Hills
Eastvale	Lake Forest	Rolling Hills Estates
El Monte	Lakewood	Rosemead
El Segundo	Lawndale	San Dimas
Fontana	Lomita	San Fernando

San Gabriel  
San Jacinto  
San Juan Capistrano  
San Marino  
Santa Ana  
Santa Clarita  
Santa Fe Springs  
Santa Monica  
Seal Beach  
Sierra Madre

Signal Hill  
South El Monte  
South Gate  
South Pasadena  
Stanton  
Temecula  
Temple City  
Torrance  
Tustin  
Vernon

Villa Park  
Walnut  
West Covina  
West Hollywood  
Westlake Village  
Westminster  
Whittier  
Wildomar  
Yorba Linda

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 Alex Padilla
- Representative Nanette Barragán
- Representative Karen Bass
- Representative Judy Chu
- Representative Grace Napolitano
- Representative Katie Porter
- Representative Raul Ruiz
- Representative Maxine Waters
- Senator Bob Archuleta
- Senator Steven Bradford
- Senator Anthony Portantino
- Senator Susan Rubio
- Assembly Member Lisa Calderon
- Assembly Member Cristina Garcia
- Assembly Member Mike Gipson
- Assembly Member Chris Holden

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

Beach Cities Health District  
Big Bear Chamber of Commerce  
Black Chamber of Orange County  
California High Speed Rail Authority  
CARB  
Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
Desert Valley Builders Association  
Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority  
Foothill Transit  
Gateway Cities Council of Governments  
Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Healthy Chino  
Hollywood Burbank Airport  
Industry Business Council

Irwindale Chamber of Commerce  
Las Virgenes-Malibu Council of Governments  
League of California Cities, Los Angeles, Orange County and Riverside Divisions  
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
Los Angeles County Department of Planning  
Los Angeles Metro  
Mountain Transit  
Omnitrans  
Orange County Business Council  
Orange County Council of Governments  
Riverside County Transportation Commission  
Riverside Transit Agency  
Riverside University Health System-Public Health  
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors  
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority  
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments  
San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy  
San Gabriel Valley City Managers Association  
San Gabriel Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce  
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments  
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership  
San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District  
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians  
South Bay Cities Council of Governments  
South Orange County Economic Coalition  
Southern California Association of Governments  
SunLine Transit Agency  
Twenty-nine Palms Band of Mission Indians  
U.S. EPA  
Valley Industry and Commerce Association  
Western Pallet Association  
Western Riverside Council of Governments

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

Bassett Unified School District  
California Fire Safe Council  
California School Boards Association  
Center for Sustainable Energy  
Clean Air Coalition of North Whittier and Avocado Heights  
Clean Healthy Air, Clean Healthy Altadena  
Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo, Inc.  
Coachella Valley Unified School District  
Coachella Valley Waterkeeper  
Growing Coachella Valley  
Hacienda La Puente School District  
Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability  
League of Women Voters, East San Gabriel Valley  
Lideres Campesinas  
OneFuture Coachella Valley  
Pasadena City College  
Taking Responsibility and Control, La Puente