

BOARD MEETING DATE: September 2, 2022

AGENDA NO. 12

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the July 2022 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, Small 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 July. The report includes Major Events Community Events/Public Meetings; Environmental Justice Update; AB 617; Speakers Bureau/Visitor Services; Communications Center; Public Information Center; Small 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 while minimizing economic impacts.

No major events were hosted or sponsored in July.

COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS

Staff engage with residents and stakeholders of diverse communities to provide information about the agency, incentive programs, and ways individuals can help reduce air pollution through events and meetings sponsored 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;
- Funding/grants opportunities by South Coast AQMD and partner agencies;
- 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 July events and meetings:

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

On July 7, staff participated in a Special Transportation Committee Meeting to provide updates on the 2022 AQMP, smog/wildfire season air alerts, Carl Moyer, Prop 1B and the Clean Truck and Bus Vouchers program (HVIP).

San Gabriel Valley Legislative Reception

On July 12, staff attended an annual Legislative reception hosted by San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership. Staff shared updates on the 2022 AQMP, Clean Air Awards nominations, Carl Moyer, Prop 1B and other programs.

Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance

On July 13, staff provided updates at an Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance meeting on smog and smoke advisories and other programs.

National Association for Industrial and Office Parks

On July 14, staff presented on the Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions Program and available funding programs such as Carl Moyer and HVIP.

Ascon Coordination Committee

On July 21, staff participated in a Ascon Coordination Committee meeting where the Department of Toxic Substances Control presented on review of technical documents on sitewide field investigations, analysis of potential technology and proposed plans for final clean-up phases.

San Fernando Valley Council of Governments

On July 21, staff participated in a virtual board meeting and presented updates on California HVIP Funding and the upcoming EJ Conference and Clean Air Awards.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE UPDATE

The following are key environmental justice (EJ) related activities in which staff participated during July. These events and meetings involve communities affected disproportionately from adverse air quality impacts.

Pacoima Community Initiative

On July 8, staff participated virtually in their monthly meeting. Updates were provided on community events and projects, including information on how to sign-up for the Clean Air Program for Elementary Students (CAPES) and Why Healthy Air Matters (WHAM) educational programs.

House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources

On July 19, staff participated in a webinar on Natural Resources Committee Chair Raúl M. Grijalva (D-AZ) regarding H.R. 2021, the “Environmental Justice for All Act.” Chairman Grijalva discussed a potential legislative timeline and actions for the bill which would fund small air quality grants for environmental justice communities among other provisions.

South Coast AQMD Lunch & Learn

On July 29, staff provided a virtual Lunch and Learn presentation on CAPES and WHAM to share program details, video highlights, and experiences from volunteers.

AB 617 UPDATE

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

Salton Sea Management Committee Meeting

On July 6, staff participated in a virtual meeting to discuss updates and gather feedback on the Long-Range Plan. Community members expressed concerns about project concepts and incremental funding, sustainable water resources and project scoring.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Public Meeting

On July 7, staff attended a virtual meeting to receive comments from community members and stakeholders on Salton Sea projects. The Corps released their Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and proposed Letter of Permission procedures for the State of California’s Salton Sea Management Plan Phase 1: 10-Year Plan.

U.S. EPA Guidelines for the Oil and Natural Gas Industry

On July 7, staff attended a webinar hosted by U.S. EPA on their proposed Oil and Natural Gas Industry Emissions Guidelines. The purpose was to gather feedback on how to conduct meaningful engagement during the development process.

The Legacy LA Youth Development Corporation

On July 15, staff participated in a virtual meeting and shared grant information on the AB 617 Community Air Protection program. Discussions included building a coalition of stakeholders and partnerships, action plans integrating technical reports and community member recommendations.

South Los Angeles AB 617 Community Steering Committee Co-Lead Meeting

On July 27, staff met with co-leads, Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles, Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education, and Watts Clean Air & Energy Committee to discuss next steps, member engagement and outreach plans.

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 July.

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 months of July are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD's Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2,008
Calls to South Coast AQMD's Spanish Line	51
Clean Air Connection	3
Total Calls	2,062

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS

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

Calls Received by PIC	11
Calls to Automated System	174
Total Calls	185
Email Advisories Sent	32,926

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 July.

- Provided permit application assistance to 151 companies, and
- Processed 59 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

Types of businesses assisted:

Architecture Firms	Engineering Firms	Restaurants
Auto Body Shops	Gas Stations	Retail Facilities
Auto Repair Centers	Gasoline Dispensing	Telecommunication
Construction Firms	Facilities	Center
Dry Cleaners	Manufacturing Facilities	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. The July reports are listed below:

Major Media Interactions	99
Press Releases	12
News Carousel	3

Major Media Topics:

- **Particulate Advisory:** Pitches were sent to media on the particulate advisory issued for 4th of July resulting in coverage from TV, radio and print media. Staff participated in follow-up interviews with KPCC/The LAist and the Los Angeles Times on health impacts of fireworks smoke.
- **Sterigenics:** Pitches were sent to media on NOV's issued to the Sterigenics facility in Ontario, resulting in coverage from television, radio and print media. Pitches were sent on the Sterigenics Order for Abatement, resulting in coverage from television, radio and print media.
- **Parter Sterilization Services:** Pitches were sent to media on EtO emissions from Parter Sterilization Plant resulting in coverage from television, radio and print media.
- **South Coast AQMD Education Programs:** Pitches were sent to media on the WHAM and CAPES program highlighting last year's achievements.
- **Hyperion Treatment Plant:** Pitches were sent to media on notices of violations issued to Hyperion, resulting in coverage from television, radio and print media. KNX submitted questions regarding the release. A written response was provided.
- **Supreme Court Ruling on U.S. EPA:** The Associated Press inquired about the Supreme Court recent ruling on U.S. EPA's ability to regulate coal fired power plants. Written responses were provided.
- **Health Effects of Wildfire Smoke and South Coast AQMD:** Staff participated in an interview with Univision on the health effects of wildfire smoke as part of a three-part segment.
- **CEQA:** The Desert Sun inquired about the CEQA policy development timeline, when it will take effect and the guidance on cumulative impacts, including those from warehouses. Written responses were provided.
- **2028 Olympics:** LA28 requested contact information for the Executive Officer to extend an event invite. Contact information was provided.
- **Request to Film at Diamond Bar Headquarters:** A Veloz film location scout requested information on the filming of South Coast AQMD's hydrogen fueling station. A follow-up was provided.
- **Documentary on Electric Vehicles:** A documentary filmmaker submitted questions regarding electric passenger vehicles and air quality impacts. The filmmaker was referred to CARB.
- **South Coast AQMD Spotlight Stories:** Reached out to KPAS (City of Pasadena), LA Channel 35, LA Channel 36, ICTV (City of Irvine) and Empire KVCR, regarding possible highlight pieces on South Coast AQMD issues. Working on potential stories on KPAS TV's "Arroyo Live" and Channel 35's "LA City View" programs.
- **Ports Indirect Source Rule (ISR):** The Los Angeles Times requested an update on the Ports ISR and the China Shipping lawsuit. A written response was provided.

- **Railyards and Federal Law:** KCET submitted a follow-up inquiry on the Railyard ISR and the South Coast AQMD's position on federal action. Written responses were provided.
- **Long Beach Water Department:** The Daily Breeze inquired on the Long Beach City Water Department case, on the Hearing Board calendar for July 21. A copy of the petition was provided, and the reporter was advised that the hearing was cancelled.
- **Prescribed Burns:** KCRW inquired about prescribed burns in San Bernardino and requested an interview on burn days and poor air quality. An interview is being arranged.
- **Torrance Refinery:** Bloomberg inquired if South Coast AQMD received recent variance petitions for the Torrance refinery. Written responses were provided.

Press Releases:

- **Violations Issued to Sterilization Facility in Ontario Following Ethylene Oxide Emissions – July 1, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of two NOVs issued to Sterigenics.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Particulate Advisory Due to 4th of July Fireworks – July 2, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of air quality conditions due to fireworks.
- **South Coast AQMD Seeks Order to Reduce Ethylene Oxide Emissions from a Sterilization Facility in Vernon, Protect Public Health – July 15, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of South Coast AQMD's petition for Order of Abatement against Sterigenics.
- **South Coast AQMD's Air Quality Education Programs Reach More than 31,000 Students – July 20, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of the newest updates for WHAM and CAPES.
- **Six Violations Issued to Hyperion Treatment Plant for Ongoing Odor Issues – July 21, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of NOVs issued to Hyperion Treatment Plant.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Violation to Parter Sterilization Services in Carson for Elevated Levels of Ethylene Oxide – July 29, 2022 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of the NOV issued to Parter Sterilization Services.

Social Media Posts:

- **AQ Forecast (7/6):** 4,758 Twitter Impressions
- **AQ Forecast (7/10):** 2,102 Twitter Impressions
- **AQ Forecast (7/14):** 2,102 Twitter Impressions
- **AQ Forecast (7/25):** 4,564 impressions

News Carousel:

- **The Replace Your Ride Program is open for new applications – July 13, 2022:** Provided a link to the page.
- **CEMEX USA adds low-emission natural gas trucks to Southern California fleet – July 14, 2022:** Press release highlighting low-emission trucks with quote from South Coast AQMD.
- **Choose a Low-VOC Paint for your Summer Home Projects – July 27, 2022:** Provided a link to the South Coast AQMD’s Green Painter’s Guide page.

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

Outreach was conducted personally and virtually in July to communicate with elected officials or staff from the following cities:

Alhambra	Industry	Riverside
Anaheim	Inglewood	Rosemead
Arcadia	Irvine	San Dimas
Azusa	La Habra	San Fernando
Baldwin Park	La Verne	San Gabriel
Beaumont	Lake Elsinore	San Jacinto
Big Bear Lake	Long Beach	San Juan Capistrano
Brea	Los Angeles	San Marino
Burbank	Malibu	San Pedro
Carson	Maywood	Santa Clarita
Claremont	Menifee	Sierra Madre
Corona	Mission Viejo	South El Monte
Covina	Monrovia	South Pasadena
Culver City	Monterey Park	Temecula
Dana Point	Moreno Valley	Temple City
Diamond Bar	Murrieta	Vernon
El Monte	Newport Beach	Walnut
El Segundo	Norco	West Covina
Fullerton	Ontario	Westminster
Garden Grove	Pasadena	Yorba Linda
Glendale	Placentia	Yucaipa
Glendora	Pomona	
Hemet	Redondo Beach	
Huntington Beach	Rialto	

Communication was conducted in July 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 Lucille Roybal-Allard
- U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán
- U.S. Representative Tony Cárdenas
- U.S. Representative Ted Lieu
- U.S. Representative Norma Torres
- Senator Ben Allen
- Senator Bob Archuleta
- Senator Steven Bradford
- Senator María Elena Durazo
- Senator Lena Gonzalez
- Senator Josh Newman
- Senator Anthony Portantino
- Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon
- Assembly Member Cristina Garcia
- Assembly Member Eduardo Garcia
- Assembly Member Mike Gipson
- Assembly Member Chris Holden
- Assembly Member Tina McKinnor
- Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi
- Assembly Member Freddie Rodriguez
- Assembly Member Blanca Rubio
- Assembly Member Miguel Santiago

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

BizFed

CALSTART

Coachella Valley Association of Governments

Crestline Chamber of Commerce

Department of Toxic Substance Control

El Monte - South El Monte Chamber of Commerce

Foothill Transit

Inland Action

Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance

Inland Valley Development Agency

Lake Arrowhead Chamber of Commerce

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

NAIOP, Commercial Real Estate Development Association

Omnitrans

Orange County Board of Supervisors

Orange County Council of Governments

Orange County Transportation Authority

Regional Chamber of Commerce - San Gabriel Valley

Riverside County Board of Supervisors

Running Springs Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Bernardino International Airport Authority
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Gabriel Valley Public Affairs Network
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Southern California Association of Governments
Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
Veloz
Western Riverside Council of Governments

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

Asia Pacific University of Technology & Innovation
Cal Poly Pomona
Citrus College
Clean Healthy Air, Clean Healthy Altadena
Coalition for Clean Air
Los Angeles Unified School District
Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
Mt. San Antonio College
Orange County United Way
Pasadena City College
Taking Responsibility and Control 91746 Neighborhood Watch
University of California, Riverside
Western University of Health Sciences