

BOARD MEETING DATE: September 1, 2023

AGENDA NO. 17

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the July 2023 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 Nastri
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, 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 hosting 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.

There were no major events hosted nor sponsored in July.

COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS

Staff engaged 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 information regarding the following:

- Tips on reducing their exposure to smog and its negative health effects;
- How to file a complaint;
- Clean air technologies and their deployment;
- Invitations to or notices of conferences, seminars, workshops, and other public events;
- South Coast AQMD incentive programs;
- Funding/grant 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:

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

On July 6, staff attended the South Bay Cities Council of Governments Steering Committee meeting to announce the upcoming Proposed Amended Rule 1180 (Refinery Community and Fenceline Air Monitoring) and Proposed Rule 1180.1 (Other Refinery Fenceline and Community Air Monitoring) Working Group on July 11.

Orange County Business Council

On July 7, staff participated in Orange County Business Council Governmental Affairs Committee meeting to provide information on the Voucher Incentive Program (VIP) and mobile apps.

53rd Assembly District Summer Open House

On July 8, staff participated in the Summer Open House for Assembly District 53. Staff demonstrated a clean air vehicle and provided information on the Commercial Electric Lawn & Garden (eL&G) Equipment Incentive & Exchange Program.

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

On July 12, staff attended South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Affairs Committee meeting to provide program updates on Replace Your Ride, eL&G, VIP, and wildfire air quality tips.

Upland Chamber of Commerce

On July 13, staff attended Upland Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs Committee meeting to provide information on eL&G and other programs.

Western Riverside Council of Governments

On July 19, staff participated in a virtual meeting with Western Riverside Council of Governments to share information on Carl Moyer, Replace Your Ride, and eL&G.

Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce

On July 20, staff participated in Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting. Updates were shared on South Coast AQMD's recent CalSTA award for zero-emission projects in the San Pedro Bay Ports corridor.

Department of Toxic Substances Control Open House

On July 20, staff participated in the Department of Toxic Substances Control Open House related to Ecobat, formerly known as Quemetco, in the City of Industry. Information was shared with attendees on how to file a complaint by phone, web, and/or mobile apps.

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.

U.S. EPA Office of Research and Development Webinar

On July 11, staff participated in U.S. EPA's ORD webinar, "Available Tools to Advance Our Understanding of Cumulative Impacts" to learn about publicly available tools and analytical methods to measure cumulative impacts.

CalEPA EJ Action Grants Workshop

On July 12, staff participated in CalEPA's second virtual public listening session regarding draft guidelines for the EJ Action Grants program.

U.S. EPA's National EJ Community Engagement Call

On July 18, staff participated in U.S. EPA's National EJ Community Engagement call on outreach, health equity and public participation, and updates on civil rights issues.

Office of Management and Budget Webinar

On July 20, staff participated in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) webinar on broadening public participation in federal government actions. OMB shared information on efforts to develop expanded federal public participation tools and guidance.

U.S. EPA's Community Environmental Justice Mapping Tool & Training

On July 26, staff participated in U.S. EPA's training webinar on the Community EJ Mapping Tool & EJSCREEN 2.2.

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 presentations 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 month of July are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	1,917
Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Spanish Line	26
Total Calls	1,943

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls and assists individuals who walk in for general information. 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	36
Calls to Automated System	243
Total Calls	279
Visitor Transactions	137
Email Advisories Sent	36,951

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 provided personalized assistance to small businesses over the telephone, at South Coast AQMD headquarters and via virtual on-site consultation, as summarized below for July.

- Provided permit application assistance to 119 companies, and
- Processed 41 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

Types of businesses assisted:

Auto Body Shops	Gas Stations	Telecommunication
Construction Firms	Manufacturing Facilities	Centers
Dry Cleaners	Restaurants	Warehouses
Engineering Firms	Retail Facilities	

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 report is listed below:

Major Media Interactions	255
Press Releases	26
News Carousel	1

Major Media Topics:

- **Southern California Air Quality:** Staff participated in an interview with the Los Angeles Times on Southern California air quality following the cooler weather in May and June.
- **KLM Data:** CBS2/KCAL requested data to use for the wildfire season. Response sent to reporter.
- **Fireworks Advisory:** Radio Korea had questions regarding the 4th of July advisory. The press release was sent. Staff participated in an interview with KNX, KTLA and KESQ regarding the 4th of July Holiday particulate advisory.
- **July 4 Aftermath:** Staff participated in interviews with Air Talk, KNX, KTLA, ABC, KVCR Radio, and Los Angeles Times on air quality effects from July 4 fireworks. Written responses were sent to The New York Times.
- **Wildfires and AQ:** Staff participated in an interview with NBC4 and KPCC on the wildfires and air quality.
- **Heatwave:** Staff participated an interview with Los Angeles Times on why air quality is worse during a heatwave.
- **Ozone Advisory:** Staff participated in an interview with KCRW on the ozone advisory.
- **Air Quality Centers:** Staff participated in an interview with KESQ on the air quality monitor in Palm Springs, and the air quality in the Coachella Valley.
- **Salton Sea:** A freelance journalist submitted follow up questions on agricultural dust PM2.5 and PM10 emissions in Coachella. Response sent to journalist.
- **Smog Reduction Progress:** Los Angeles Times inquired about the progress of reducing smog in Los Angeles County for the spring and summer. Response sent to journalist.

- **AQ Alert Days:** NBC requested information on the number of code red days in New York in May/June compared to this time during previous years. Referred reporter to the New York Air Quality agency.
- **Rendering Plants:** LAist inquired about rendering plants in Vernon, if Coast Packing Co. is exempt from posting a 1-800-CUT-SMOG sign by its entrance, and why rendering plants that only conduct edible rendering are not subject to Rule 415. Response sent to reporter and reporter followed up with a fact check.
- **Air Monitor at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX):** Los Angeles Times inquired about the air monitor at the LAX Tom Bradley International Terminal. Response sent to reporter.
- **AB 617 Funding in Salton Sea:** Freelance science journalist inquired about the most up-to-date funding for the three AB 617 communities around Salton Sea. Journalist was directed to submit a request for information.
- **Marathon Refinery:** Reuters inquired about the Marathon Refinery. Response sent to Reuters.
- **Tesla application:** Staff participated in an interview with Bloomberg on South Coast AQMD's application for Tesla chargers and whether recordings are posted for the Special Governing Board meetings, Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee (MSRC), and MSRC Technical Advisory Committee meetings.
- **Rule 1158:** Undark Magazine requested information on Rule 1158 requirements. Response was provided. A follow-up inquiry was received. Response was provided.
- **Air Quality Index (AQI) Map:** ABC7 producer expressed interest in use of South Coast AQMD's air quality monitoring system and the real-time AQI map. Information was sent to producer.
- **Particulate, Smoke, Ozone and Windblown Advisories:** Pitched advisories to local outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **IQAir/Red Cross Event:** Pitched media event on air purifiers to local outlets. ABC7, NBC4/Telemundo, KNX, Univision, and Spectrum all covered the event and conducted interviews.
- **Press Releases:** Pitched press releases for Hyperion, Sterigenics, and the Fuel Cell Train Funding to local media outlets resulting in media coverage.

News Releases:

- **South Coast AQMD Issues Particulate Advisory due to July 4th Fireworks – July 3, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of poor air quality due to fireworks.

- **South Coast AQMD Awarded \$76 Million for a First-of-its-Kind Zero-Emission Fuel Cell Train and Infrastructure that will Transform Goods Movement in San Pedro Bay Port Corridor – July 6, 2023 (English and Spanish)** – Informed residents about a grant awarded to South Coast AQMD for zero-emission projects.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Ozone Advisory Due to Heat Wave – July 13, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of hazardous ozone levels due to heat.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Smoke Advisories Due to Moreno Valley Fire – July 14-16, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of smoke advisory due to fires.
- **South Coast AQMD, IQAir & the American Red Cross to Receive Air Purifiers for Creation of Wildfire Clean Air Centers – July 17, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed citizens about delivery of 183 air purifiers to South Coast AQMD, IQAir, and Red Cross, which are used to strengthen the network of clean air centers for wildfires.
- **South Coast AQMD Extends Ozone Advisory as Heat Wave Continues - July 18, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed residents of extended ozone advisory due to continued heat wave.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory Due to High Winds in the Coachella Valley – July 23, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of a PM10 Dust Advisory caused by high winds in the Coachella Valley.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Violation to Hyperion Treatment Plant for Elevated Levels of Hydrogen Sulfide – July 26, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed public of an NOV issued due to elevated levels of Hydrogen Sulfide.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Violation to Sterigenics Medical Sterilization Facility in Ontario, California – July 28, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed public of a NOV issued due to modifying an air pollution control system without first obtaining a required permit to operate.
- **South Coast AQMD Smoke Advisory Due to Wildfire in Eastern Riverside County – July 28, and 31, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of The Bonny Fire.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory Due to High Winds in the Coachella Valley – July 31 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of the winds from thunderstorms in the Imperial Valley and Coachella Valley have caused Hazardous particle pollution levels throughout the Coachella Valley and the San Geronio Pass area.

Social Media Posts:

- [Ozone Advisory \(6/30\)](#): 8,077 Twitter Impressions
--RT by @LAFDtalk, @AirResources, @KESQHaley, @SBCountyPH, @cd1losangeles, @NWSSanDiego, @805Weather, @AIRNow

- [Fireworks Particulate Advisory \(7/3\)](#): 12,219 Twitter Impressions
--RT by @ReadyLA, @JustADayinLA, @LAFDtalk, @bellgardenscity, @SenGonzalez33, @CountyofLA, @ourSantaMonica, @AirResources, @ReadyLACounty
- [AQ Forecast \(7/6\)](#): 2,802 Twitter Impressions
--RT by @WeAre4CleanAir, @ReadyLA, @OurSantaMonica, @AIRNow, @ReadyLACounty
- [Reche / Rabbit / Highland Fire Smoke Advisory \(7/14\)](#): 10,375 Twitter Impressions
--RT by @805Weather, @NWSSanDiego, @RSO, @RivCoReady, @CityofMoVal
- [Rabbit/Reche Fire Smoke Advisory Update \(7/15\)](#): 14,101 Twitter Impressions
--RT by @OurSantaMonica, @NWSLosAngeles, @805Weather, @CaliforniaEPA, @CityofMoVal, @NWSSanDiego
- [Clean Air Centers \(7/19\)](#): 2,466 Twitter Impressions
--RT by @AirResources

News Carousel:

- **Apply now for the medical member position on the Hearing Board** – Linked to Current Job Opportunities page.

OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY GROUPS AND FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

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

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| • U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein | • Senator Aisha Wahab |
| • U.S. Senator Alex Padilla | • Senator Scott Wiener |
| • U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán | • Assemblymember Philip Chen |
| • U.S. Representative Tony Cárdenas | • Assemblymember Diane Dixon |
| • U.S. Representative Judy Chu | • Assemblymember Laurie Davies |
| • U.S. Representative Young Kim | • Assemblymember Mike Fong |
| • Senator Catherine Blakespear | • Assemblymember Mike Gipson |
| • Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh | • Assemblymember Chris Holden |
| • Senator Lena Gonzalez | • Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal |
| • Senator Brian Jones | • Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi |
| • Senator Dave Min | • Assemblymember Blanca Pacheco |
| • Senator Josh Newman | • Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva |
| • Senator Anthony Portantino | • Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur |

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

Agoura Hills	Fontana	Manhattan Beach
Alhambra	Fountain Valley	Malibu
Aliso Viejo	Gardena	Maywood
Arcadia	Garden Grove	Menifee
Artesia	Glendale	Mission Viejo
Avalon	Glendora	Monrovia
Azusa	Hawaiian Gardens	Montclair
Baldwin Park	Hawthorne	Montebello
Banning	Hemet	Monterey Park
Beaumont	Hermosa Beach	Moreno Valley
Bell	Hidden Hills	Murrieta
Bell Gardens	Highland	Newport Beach
Bellflower	Huntington Beach	Norco
Big Bear Lake	Huntington Park	Norwalk
Bradbury	Industry	Ontario
Brea	Inglewood	Orange
Buena Park	Irvine	Palm Desert
Burbank	Irwindale	Paramount
Calabasas	Jurupa Valley	Pasadena
Calimesa	Laguna Beach	Perris
Canyon Lake	Laguna Hills	Pico Rivera
Carson	Laguna Niguel	Pomona
Cerritos	Laguna Woods	Rancho Cucamonga
ChinoClaremont	La Cañada Flintridge	Rancho Palos Verdes
Colton	Lake Forest	Ranco Santa Margarita
Commerce	La Habra Heights	Redlands
Compton	La Mirada	Redondo Beach
Corona	La Palma	Riverside
Costa Mesa	La Puente	Rolling Hills
Covina	La Verne	Rolling Hills Estates
Cudahy	Lake Elsinore	Rosemead
Culver City	Lakewood	San Bernardino
Dana Point	Lawndale	San Clemente
Diamond Bar	Loma Linda	San Dimas
Downey	Lomita	San Fernando
Duarte	Los Alamitos	San Gabriel
Eastvale	Long Beach	San Jacinto
El Monte	Los Angeles	San Juan Capistrano
El Segundo	Lynwood	San Marino

Santa Ana	South El Monte	Vernon
Santa Clarita	South Gate	Villa Park
San Fernando	South Pasadena	Walnut
Santa Clarita	Stanton	West Covina
Santa Fe Springs	Temecula	West Hollywood
Santa Monica	Temple City	Westminster
Seal Beach	Torrance	Wildomar
Sierra Madre	Tustin	Whittier
Signal Hill	Upland	Yucaipa

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

Bear Lake Valley Chamber of Commerce
 Bear Valley Electric Service
 Big Bear Municipal Water District
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
 California Department of Insurance
 California Realtors Association
 Carson Chamber of Commerce
 Chino Basin Water Conservation District
 Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce
 Department of Toxic Substances Control
 Gardena Valley Chamber of Commerce
 Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce
 Inland Action
 Inland Empire Resource Conservation District
 Kaiser Permanente
 LA Sanitation & Environment
 Lomita Chamber of Commerce
 Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
 Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
 Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce
 Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
 Moreno Valley Utility
 NAIOP, Inland Empire Chapter
 Orange County Business Council
 Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
 Port of Long Beach
 Port of Los Angeles
 Rancho Cucamonga Municipal Utility
 Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce

Riverside Public Utilities
San Bernardino International Airport Authority
San Bernardino County Fire Protection District
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Pedro Chamber of Commerce
SCAG
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce
Upland Chamber of Commerce
Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
Valley Industry and Commerce Association

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

Breathe Southern California
California State University, Dominguez Hills
California State University, San Bernardino
Chaffey College
Clean Air Coalition of North Whittier & Avocado Heights
Clean Power Alliance of Southern California
Coalition for Clean Air
Del Amo Action Committee
Discovery Cube, Los Angeles
Grades of Green
Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance
Living Desert Zoo and Gardens
Mt. San Antonio College
Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy
Pasadena City College
South Bay Parkland Conservancy
Southern California Mountains Foundation
Tree People
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, Riverside
University of Redlands
Upland Unified School District
Wildlands Conservancy