

BOARD MEETING DATE: January 5, 2024

AGENDA NO. 4

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the November 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 Natri
Executive Officer

EJH:cb:mc:bel

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 (EJ) 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.

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 November events and meetings:

Gateway Cities Council of Governments

On November 1, staff participated in the Gateway Cities Council of Governments Board of Directors meeting. Staff presented on U.S. EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program.

Orange County Business Council

On November 3, staff attended the Orange County Business Council's Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide updates on the Check Before You Burn program, South Coast AQMD's mobile phone app, compliance assistance training, and Clean Air Awards nominations.

Healthy Jurupa Valley

On November 7, staff participated in the Healthy Jurupa Valley collaborative meeting to provide updates on the Check Before You Burn and residential incentive programs.

South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce

On November 7, staff provided updates at the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce meeting on the Check Before You Burn program, compliance assistance training and shared the latest issue of South Coast AQMD's Advisor newsletter.

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

On November 8, staff attended the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Affairs Committee meeting to provide updates on Voucher Incentive Program funding and the Check Before You Burn program.

Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce

On November 14, staff participated in the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting. Staff presented on how to submit air quality complaints through 1-800-CUT-SMOG, online or using South Coast AQMD's mobile phone app.

Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce

On November 16, staff attended the Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide updates on compliance assistance training and the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards nomination process.

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

On November 16, staff participated in the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Board meeting to announce the upcoming CPRG workshop, current Communities in Charge funding by California Energy Commission for EV charging infrastructure, and the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards nominations.

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

On November 16, staff attended the South Bay Cities Council of Governments' Board of Directors meeting and presented on the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards nominations process and the latest issue of South Coast AQMD's Advisor newsletter.

Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce

On November 17, staff attended the Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide information on Check Before You Burn program, the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards nominations and compliance assistance training.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) UPDATE

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

CARB Environmental Justice Advisory Committee

On November 9, staff participated in CARB's Environmental Justice Advisory Committee meeting. The meeting agenda focused on CARB programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as Cap-and-Trade, Low Carbon Fuel Standard, and others.

Environmental Justice Advisory Group

The fourth quarterly Environmental Justice Advisory Group meeting was held on November 16. The agenda included an overview on U.S. EPA's CPRG program and an update on Rule 2305: Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions (WAIRE).

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.

On November 7 and 8, the Taiwan Ministry of Environment met with South Coast AQMD staff, which included a tour of the lab and headquarters. Agenda topics included permitting, AB 617 and air monitoring, air toxics and stationary source regulations, air quality forecasting, Multiple Air Toxics Emission Study, AB 2588 Toxics Hotspots program, and clean air technology research and development projects.

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 are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD's Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2074
Calls to South Coast AQMD's Spanish Line	16
Total Calls	2090

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls and assists individuals who walk in for general information. Email advisories provide 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	32
Calls to Automated System	189
Total Calls	221
Visitor Transactions	133
Email Advisories Sent	33667

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 November.

- Provided permit application assistance to 165 companies, and
- Processed 105 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

Types of businesses assisted:

Architecture Firms	Gas Stations	Retail Facilities
Auto Body Shops	Manufacturing Facilities	Schools
Construction Firms	Other Businesses	Warehouses
Engineering Firms	Restaurants	

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 report is listed below:

Major Media Interactions	192
Press Releases	16
News Carousel	2

Major Media Topics:

- **Tustin Hangar Fire:** KNX, Voice of OC, The Los Angeles Times, KCAL, ABC7, KCRW, OC Register, LAist, NBC4, KTLA, Chapman University, and others requested information on the Tustin Hangar Fire. Reporters were referred to the Incident Management Team.
- **Railroad Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** A freelance reporter inquired about the proposed MOU with railroads. Responses were provided.
- **Highland Fire:** KVCR requested information on the Highland Fire and its impacts on air quality. Response was provided.
- **I-10 Fire:** The Los Angeles Times and Boyle Heights Beat requested information on South Coast AQMD's response to the fire that affected the I-10 freeway. Responses were provided.
- **Federal Air Quality Standards:** Cal Matters requested information on federal air quality standards that South Coast AQMD is required to meet. Responses were provided.

- **Boyle Heights Air Quality:** California State University, Los Angeles' University Times Community News requested information on air quality in Boyle Heights. Working on a response.
- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL):** The Signal requested documents on the ongoing investigation at CCL. Referred reporter to file a Public Records Request.
- **Ports and Railroad Indirect Source Rule (ISR):** Journal of Commerce requested information on the timing for both the Ports and Railroads ISRs. Response was provided.
- **WAIRE:** Southern California News Group requested information on WAIRE enforcement and inquired if the rule is part of the State Implementation Plan. Response was provided.
- **Exide:** PBS requested information on past air quality efforts at Exide. Responses were provided.
- **Ports ISR:** Provided off-the-record information on efforts related to the Ports ISR to The Los Angeles Times, Associated Press, and Southern California News Group.
- **Check Before You Burn Season (11/1):** Pitched local media outlets regarding this year's start of the Check Before You Burn season.
- **Wildfire Smoke Advisory (11/2):** Pitched local media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (11/6-7, 11/20):** Pitched local media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **Tustin Fire Smoke Advisory (11/7):** Pitched local media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **Tustin Hangar Asbestos and CCL Notice of Violation Press Releases (11/8, 11/17):** Pitched releases to local media outlets resulting in coverage.

News Releases:

- **Check Before You Burn Season Begins – November 1, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public on start of Check Before You Burn season.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues a Smoke Advisory Due to the Canyon Fire – November 2, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public about smoke caused by the Canyon Fire.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues a Windblown Dust Advisory for the Coachella Valley and San Gorgonio Pass – November 6, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public about elevated particulate matter (PM10).
- **South Coast AQMD Issues a Windblown Dust Advisory for the Jurupa Valley and Riverside areas of Riverside County – November 7, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public about elevated PM10.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues a Smoke Advisory for a Hangar Fire at the former Tustin Air Base – November 7, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public about smoke due to a fire at the former Tustin Air Base.

- **Debris from Tustin Air Base Hangar Fire Shows Presence of Asbestos – November 8, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed public about presence of asbestos related to the Tustin hangar fire.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Violations to Chiquita Canyon Landfill for Failure to Maintain Leachate Collection System – November 17, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed public of a Notice of Violation issued to landfill.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues a Windblown Dust Advisory for the Long Beach area, the Inland Empire and Orange County – November 20, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public about elevated PM10.

Social Media Posts:

- [Hangar Fire \(Tustin\) Smoke Advisory \(11/7\)](#): 31,574 Twitter Impressions
--RT by @OCFireAuthority, @SupervisorFoley, @AirResources
- [AQ Forecast \(11/12\)](#): 6,896 Twitter Impressions
--RT by @AIRNow, @NWSSanDiego
- [AQ Forecast \(11/22\)](#): 1,523 Twitter Impressions
--RT by @AIRNow, @LAFDtalk, @805weather

News Carousel:

- **“VIP Funding available for replacing older, higher-polluting heavy-duty trucks in small fleets with newer, lower-emission models”** – Linked to VIP webpage.
- **“Nominations are Open for the 34th Annual Clean Air Awards - Submit a clean air hero today!”** – Linked to Clean Air Awards nominations webpage.

OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY GROUPS AND FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

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

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| • U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler | • Representative Raul Ruiz |
| • U.S. Senator Alex Padilla | • Representative Linda Sanchez |
| • Representative Pete Aguilar | • Representative Michelle Steel |
| • Representative Nanette Barragán | • Representative Mark Takano |
| • Representative Ken Calvert | • Senator David Min |
| • Representative Lou Correa | • Assemblymember Laura Friedman |
| • Representative Mike Garcia | • Assemblymember Cottie Petrie-Norris |
| • Representative Robert Garcia | • Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva |
| • Representative Young Kim | • Assemblymember James Ramos |
| • Representative Mike Levin | • Assemblymember Luz Rivas |
| • Representative Jay Obernolte | • Assemblymember Miguel Santiago |
| • Representative Katie Porter | |

Outreach was conducted in November to communicate with elected officials or staff from the following cities:

Agoura Hills	El Segundo	Maywood
Alhambra	Fontana	Menifee
Anaheim	Fullerton	Mission Viejo
Arcadia	Gardena	Monrovia
Artesia	Glendale	Montclair
Azusa	Glendora	Montebello
Baldwin Park	Grand Terrace	Monterey Park
Banning	Hawaiian Gardens	Moreno Valley
Beaumont	Hawthorne	Murrieta
Bell	Hemet	Newport Beach
Bell Gardens	Hermosa Beach	Norco
Bellflower	Hidden Hills	Norwalk
Beverly Hills	Highland	Ontario
Big Bear Lake	Huntington Park	Orange
Bradbury	Indian Wells	Palm Desert
Brea	Indio	Palm Springs
Buena Park	Industry	Paramount
Burbank	Inglewood	Pasadena
Calabasas	Irvine	Perris
Calimesa	Irwindale	Pico Rivera
Canyon Lake	Jurupa Valley	Placentia
Carson	La Cañada Flintridge	Pomona
Cathedral City	La Habra	Rancho Cucamonga
Cerritos	La Habra Heights	Rancho Mirage
Chino	La Mirada	Rancho Palos Verdes
Chino Hills	La Palma	Redlands
Claremont	La Puente	Redondo Beach
Coachella	La Quinta	Rialto
Colton	La Verne	Riverside
Commerce	Lake Elsinore	Rolling Hills
Compton	Lake Forest	Rolling Hills Estates
Corona	Lakewood	Rosemead
Covina	Lawndale	San Bernardino
Cudahy	Loma Linda	San Dimas
Culver City	Lomita	San Fernando
Desert Hot Springs	Long Beach	San Gabriel
Diamond Bar	Los Alamitos	San Jacinto
Downey	Los Angeles	San Marino
Duarte	Lynwood	Santa Ana
Eastvale	Malibu	Santa Clarita
El Monte	Manhattan Beach	Santa Fe Springs

Santa Monica	Stanton	West Covina
Seal Beach	Temecula	West Hollywood
Sierra Madre	Temple City	Westlake Village
Signal Hill	Torrance	Whittier
South El Monte	Upland	Wildomar
South Gate	Vernon	Yorba Linda
South Pasadena	Walnut	Yucaipa

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

Alhambra Chamber of Commerce
 Anaheim Chamber of Commerce
 Azusa Chamber of Commerce
 Baldwin Park Chamber of Commerce
 Banning Chamber of Commerce
 Burbank Chamber of Commerce
 California Air Resources Board
 California Department of Transportation
 Claremont Chamber of Commerce
 Covina Chamber of Commerce
 Duarte Chamber of Commerce
 East Valley Association of Realtors
 El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce
 Foothill Transit
 Gateway Cities Council of Governments
 Glendale Chamber of Commerce
 Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority
 Greater Monterey Park Chamber of Commerce
 Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce
 Greater West Covina Business Association
 Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce
 Industry Business Council
 Inland Action
 La Canada Flintridge Chamber of Commerce and Community Association
 La Verne Chamber of Commerce
 League of California Cities
 Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
 Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
 Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
 METRO
 Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
 National Park Service
 Omnitrans

Orange County Transportation Authority
Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Pomona Chamber of Commerce
Rosemead Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Dimas Chamber of Commerce
San Fernando Chamber of Commerce
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Chamber of Commerce
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control
San Marino Chamber of Commerce
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce
Santa Clarita Chamber of Commerce
Sierra Madre Chamber of Commerce
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Southern California Association of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Southern California Edison
Taiwan Ministry of Environment
Temple City Chamber of Commerce
Torrance Chamber of Commerce

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

California State University, San Bernardino
Clean Air Coalition of N. Whittier & Avocado Heights
Clean Power Alliance
Discovery Cube, Los Angeles
The Energy Coalition
League of Women Voters, San Gabriel Valley
Move LA
Pasadena City College
Rancho Santiago Community College District
Rialto Unified School District
San Bernardino Valley College
San Gabriel Mountains Community Collaborative
San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers Mountains Conservancy
South Pasadena Troop 342
Sustainable Claremont
Trust for Public Land
University of California, Riverside
Whittier Area Environmental Coalition