



air pollution control district
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

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Continued Item: No

Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board

FROM: Aeron Arlin Genet, Air Pollution Control Officer 

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SUBJECT: Update on Public Outreach Activities

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file this update on District outreach activities.

BACKGROUND:

The District conducts public outreach throughout Santa Barbara County to provide air quality information. This regular agenda item will provide an update on recent outreach efforts by District staff since the previous Board meeting on January 16, 2020.

DISCUSSION:

The District uses a variety of methods to share information about air quality and District programs. Those methods include the District website, news releases, air quality alerts, social media (Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor), school and civic group presentations, interagency coalitions, events and festivals, media interviews, and phone calls with the public. Efforts are made to provide information in English and Spanish. For this recurring agenda item, outreach activities will be organized into the following categories as needed: Agency Awareness, Community Programs, and Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts. This update covers outreach efforts from the docket deadline of the January 16 meeting to present.

Agency Awareness

- **OurAir.org Website Revamp:** Efforts are nearing completion with website design professionals to revamp the District website to improve the navigation, maximize popular webpages for easy access, and refresh the overall look. District staff plan to share the new website with your Board at your May meeting.
- **Media Relations:** The District regularly receives questions from the media regarding specific District programs as well as general air quality topics. During this time period, the District received media attention on the following issues:
 - Designation of Santa Barbara County as attainment for the state ozone standard: *Santa Maria Sun*
 - Prescribed burns: *Edhat, KEYT, Noozhawk, and KSBY*
 - District's rule on winery fermentation emissions: *Napa Valley Register*
 - Passing of Laura Kath, District contractor for Santa Barbara Car Free program: *Noozhawk*
 - Planned shutdown of three offshore oil platforms: *Santa Barbara Independent*
 - Odor-control system, and Carpinteria residents' lawsuit against cannabis farms: *Noozhawk*
 - Planned installation of electric vehicle charging stations at County's Lompoc office: *Santa Maria Times*

Community Programs

- **Education programs:** The District's Clean Air Ambassadors program continues to grow in popularity among Santa Barbara County teachers, with the Ambassadors presenting to 12 additional classes across seven schools during this report period. A presentation to your Board about this program is planned for your May meeting. In addition, the District also had a presence at one Science Night (at Santa Barbara Community Academy) and at El Camino Elementary School's "Night of Discovery." District staff also presented to two different UCSB classes.
- **LEEF program:** Per the Board's approval at the December 2019 meeting, earlier this month District staff launched the Landscape Equipment Electrification Fund (LEEF) Pilot Program. The program provides financial incentives for landscaping companies — as well as schools, universities, and public agencies that perform their own landscaping work — to swap gas-powered gardening equipment for less polluting electric-powered models. Staff shared informational postcards, application materials, and a news release in English and Spanish; additional outreach included social media posts and direct correspondence (email and postal mail) to eligible participants (commercial landscapers, schools, and local municipalities).

Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts:

- **Marine Shipping Program:** To recognize the 15 companies that participated in the 2019 program, program partners have organized an awards ceremony to take place at the Port of Hueneme on Friday, April 3; companies that participated in a similar program in the Bay Area only will also be recognized at this ceremony. District Board Members who wish to attend the ceremony can contact Director Arlin Genet. A news release highlighting the ceremony and 2019 program results will be issued following the event.
- **Prescribed Burns:** During this time period, District staff have coordinated with the Los Padres National Forest on a series of prescribed pile burns in remote forest lands of the county. Staff are also working with Vandenberg Air Force Base fire officials on upcoming burns planned on base property. For every prescribed burn, the District completes a joint two-step public notification process with the involved fire agency: 1) a news release is issued once the burn window is identified, and 2) a follow-up advisory is issued the day before the burn occurs. In addition, depending on the location and scale of the burn, portable monitoring devices (EBAMs) are temporarily installed at neighboring schools to assess potential air quality impacts.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The costs for the outreach efforts and activities described above are included in the budget approved by your Board. There are no additional fiscal impacts.