



air pollution control district  
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Agenda Item: D-3  
Agenda Date: March 18, 2021  
Agenda Placement: Admin  
Estimated Time: N/A  
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

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### 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 21, 2021.

### 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 21 meeting to present.

[Aeron Arlin Genet](#), Air Pollution Control Officer

## Agency Awareness

- **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:
  - Old Car Buy Back Program: *Edhat*
  - Prescribed burn in Los Padres National Forest: *Edhat, Santa Barbara News-Press, KSBY, and KEYT*
  - Permit burns: *Edhat and Santa Barbara News-Press*
  - Crematoriums and air quality: *Santa Barbara Independent*
  - Electric vehicle infrastructure grants to City of Goleta: *Santa Barbara News-Press, Edhat, and KEYT*

**E-newsletter:** The District issued a bilingual e-newsletter on February 22 to approximately 2,000 subscribers. The next e-newsletter is planned for May. People can sign up to receive future e-newsletters on the District website: [www.ourair.org/subscribe](http://www.ourair.org/subscribe). Articles in the February edition included the following topics:

- January Board of Directors meeting
  - Old Car Buy Back Program
  - Outlook on electric vehicles in Santa Barbara County
  - EZ Bike Project
  - District accepting online payments
- **Presentations and Meetings:** Since the last Board meeting, District staff have been involved in several virtual events sharing information about our programs and opportunities for partnerships.
    - *CAPCOA Prescribed Burn Training, January 27-28:* Multiple staff attended this annual event, which brings together air district officials, land managers, fire agencies, and other stakeholders to discuss best practices and lessons learned related to prescribed burning. The APCO and Public Information Officer each gave presentations as part of the training.
    - *Air & Waste Management Association, Channel Islands Chapter, February 24:* The APCO provided an update to the local chapter of this organization regarding the District's 2021 goals and programs. Attendees included other regional air district partners and business stakeholders.
    - *UCSB classes, January and February:* District staff gave presentations to two separate undergraduate classes during this time — Environmental Economics and Policy, taught by Roland Lewin (January 27), and Introduction to Environmental Law, taught by Linda Krop (February 27). Staff shared with students about District jurisdiction, history, and programs.
    - *Santa Ynez Chumash Environmental Office, March 4:* The APCO, Planning Division Manager, and Public Information Officer met virtually earlier this month with officials to discuss air monitoring, wildfires, prescribed burns, and messaging on air quality. This was an introductory meeting, and additional efforts will continue to enhance the District's ability to better serve and work with the tribe on any air quality matters.

## **Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts**

- **Prescribed Burns:** During this period, District staff have coordinated with the U.S. Forest Service offices on an ongoing series of prescribed pile burns in the Los Padres National Forest. For prescribed burns, the District completes a two-step public notification process: 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. With this annual series of burns, the District issues the follow-up advisory on Mondays each week when there is potential for burning to occur. This series of burns could run through April.
- **Smoke Messaging:** The District's Public Information Officer is representing medium-sized air districts for CAPCOA on a steering committee that is planning a U.S. EPA-funded conference about wildfire smoke. The virtual conference, to occur in late April, will look at lessons learned from the 2020 wildfires in preparation for the 2021 wildfire season. Topics will include long-term health effects of smoke exposure, clean indoor spaces, smoke modeling and transport, reaching underserved communities, and the added challenge of PSPS events. The District's Public Information Officer will be moderating a panel discussion on emerging intervention strategies to protect health.

### **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.