



air pollution control district
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Agenda Item: E-3
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Continued Item: No

Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board

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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 March 18, 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 March 18 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:
 - Marine Shipping Program: *The New York Times, Ventura County Star*
 - Air Quality Awareness Week: *Noozhawk*
 - Green Business Program Celebration: *Noozhawk*
 - Permit burns: *Edhat*

- **E-newsletter:** The District issued a bilingual e-newsletter earlier this week to approximately 2,000 subscribers. The next e-newsletter is planned for this summer. People can sign up to receive future e-newsletters on the District website: www.ourair.org/subscribe. Articles in the May edition included the following topics:
 - Remembering former staffer, Jon Mundt
 - Overview of recent series of prescribed pile burns
 - Marine Shipping Program

- **Presentations and Meetings:** Since the last Board meeting, District staff have been involved in several virtual efforts to share information about our programs and opportunities for partnerships.
 - *CAPCOA and EPA Wildfire Smoke Conference, April 20-21:* Several staff attended this virtual conference, and the Public Information Officer moderated a panel discussion about health-protective intervention strategies. More than 250 individuals from all over the country attended and shared lessons learned from the 2020 wildfires across topics ranging from health effects of smoke exposure and clean indoor spaces, to smoke modeling and transport, and reaching underserved communities.

 - *Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival, April 22-24:* The District created a digital booth for this virtual edition of the annual festival, and staff were available during the booth visitor hours. The District's digital booth featured a variety of bilingual materials and links to important resources on our website. Our Instagram account offered Earth Day and District-related trivia across all three days of the festival, with participants entered to win District tote bags; those trivia posts received hundreds of views and more than 100 interactions. According to festival organizers, approximately 15,000 people entered the virtual event over three days.

 - *Meetings with MICOP (April 22) and CAUSE (May 19):* The APCO and select District staff met with both organizations to discuss our agency's ability to better reach and serve Spanish and/or Mixteco-speaking individuals in our county, and how we could partner to promote certain programs and resources. The District plans to continue strengthening our relationship with these community-based groups.

 - *Presentation to Cal Poly, SLO class, April 29:* One of the District's Air Quality Engineers (a Cal Poly alumna) gave a virtual presentation to a Cal Poly environmental engineering class that she took during her college career. She

shared information about the District's programs, including the state AB 2588 air toxics program that the District implements, and about her role at our agency.

EPA Children's Health and Wildfire Smoke Workshop for Public Health Officials, May 5-6: The District's Public Information Officer attended this virtual conference, with hundreds of attendees representing government agencies from across the country. The sessions focused on emerging research and associated outreach strategies in the area of children's health and wildfire smoke exposure.

Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts

- **Marine Shipping Program:** A news release was jointly issued by program partners earlier this week, highlighting the whale and air quality benefits realized by the 2020 program. To congratulate and recognize the participating shipping companies, in lieu of an in-person awards ceremony, program partners have prepared several advertising campaigns to occur over the next several months. The 2021 program was also launched earlier this month.

Prescribed Burns and Permit Burns: The APCO and District staff met with County Fire representatives earlier this month to discuss our goals and priorities regarding prescribed burning and permit burning. Our agencies will continue collaborating to inform Santa Barbara County residents about our roles regarding these activities and are developing joint messaging materials about burning in advance of the next prescribed burn season.

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.