




Agenda Item: D-3
Agenda Date: August 19, 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

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 June 17, 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 June 17 meeting to present.

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:
 - “Clean air rooms” for wildfire smoke: *New York Magazine, Edhat, and Santa Barbara News-Press*
 - Marine Shipping program: *Maritime Executive*
 - Sedgwick Reserve prescribed burn: *KSBY and Edhat*
 - CALeVIP electric vehicle program: *KSBY, Santa Barbara Independent, Edhat, Paso Robles Daily News, Pacific Coast Business Times, KCBX, Government Technology, and Green Car Congress*
 - Santa Lucia fire near Lompoc: *KSBY and Noozhawk*
 - PSPS events and diesel generators: *Edhat*
 - 2021 Clean Air Grants Program: *Santa Barbara Independent and Noozhawk*
 - Air Quality Alert issued on August 7: *KEYT, KSBY, Noozhawk, and Edhat*

Community Programs

- **2021 Clean Air Grants Program:** The District’s annual Clean Air Grants program launched on August 2, with an application window through September 3. District staff conducted outreach prior to and following the launch; methods have included issuing a news release, sharing on social media, presenting to the County Agricultural Advisory Committee, and sending multiple emails to approximately 950 interested entities. District staff also provided a presentation at the City of Santa Barbara Harbor Commission’s monthly meeting in June. More information is available on our website: www.OurAir.org/grants.
- **CALeVIP Program Launch:** The District is pleased to report that this program to expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure has been incredibly popular in our tri-counties region as a whole, as well as in Santa Barbara County. The program launched on August 5. Within only three minutes of launch, interested parties in all three of the counties had submitted applications exceeding available funding for the DC Fast Charger infrastructure. Five days into the launch, both Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties had received more applications for Level 2 charging infrastructure than there is funding. In advance of the launch, the District worked with program partners to share information with the community and potential applicants. Outreach methods included a bilingual news release, which garnered considerable news coverage, and more than 23 announcements shared on social media.

Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts

- **County Agricultural Advisory Committee:** Earlier this month, the APCO and District staff attended a virtual meeting of this committee. The APCO shared information about the robust air quality data the District provides on our website, as well as other ways to stay informed about local air quality, such as signing up for Air Quality Alerts and

following our social media channels. The presentation provided information to assist with the implementation of CalOSHA regulations to distribute N95 masks to outdoor workers when the Air Quality Index exceeds 150 due to wildfire smoke impacts. Staff also shared with the group about our 2021 Clean Air Grants program, as many eligible project types could be of interest to them.

- **Smoke Messaging:** The District issued a joint Air Quality Alert with County Public Health on August 7 in response to elevated particulate matter levels affecting the eastern portion of the county, specifically the Cuyama area. Smoke from wildfires burning in Northern California and elsewhere was being transported to our region. Thankfully, meteorological conditions started pushing the smoke away from our area a couple of days later. The bilingual Alert reminded county residents of ways to check air quality conditions and protect their health from smoke.

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.