




air pollution control district
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Agenda Item: D-1
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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 June 26, 2025.

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 (i.e., X – formally known as 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 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, media interest in the District included the following coverage:
 - District's New Permitted Facilities Map: *KEYT*, *Santa Barbara Independent*, and *Edhat*.
 - Electric Off-Road and Landscape Equipment Demo: *KEYT* and *Lompoc Record*.
 - Madre Fire: *Santa Barbara Independent*, *Noozhawk*, *New York Times*, *KSBY*, *KEYT*, and *Edhat*.
 - Gifford Fire: *KEYT*, *Noozhawk*, *Santa Barbara Independent*, *Santa Maria Times*, *KSBY*, *KCLU*, *Daily Express* (UK), and *KCBX*.

Community Programs

- **Community Events:** August was a busy community outreach month for the District, with staff attending four outreach events throughout the county: the "Healthy Lompoc Night" of the Lompoc Old Town Market (August 1) and three County Health Back-to-School Fairs in Santa Maria (August 5), Lompoc (August 6), and Santa Barbara (August 7). According to County Health, a combined 2,550 people attended the three Back-to-School Fairs. At all four of the events, District staff shared information about the Air Quality Index, wildfire smoke preparedness and health-protection measures, our newly revamped Permitted Facilities Map, our Clean Air Ambassadors classroom program, and general District information. Bilingual staff attended all the events.
- **Clean Air Grants Program:** This year's Clean Air Grants program opened on July 28 and will be accepting applications through September 5. Approximately \$3.5 million is available to help fund infrastructure, off-road, marine, heavy-duty on-road, locomotive, and school bus projects. Eligible projects could receive a grant with a range from \$10,000 to \$250,000, and emission reductions from the projects must be surplus to any rule or regulation. Priority for grant funds will be given to projects with zero-emission technology, as well as projects in State-designated disadvantaged communities; the three areas in Santa Barbara County designated as disadvantaged communities are Guadalupe, Old Town Goleta, and the Santa Ynez Chumash Reservation. The District's outreach methods to promote this program to eligible applicants include a bilingual news release, social media posts, and email reminders to businesses and organizations. District staff also presented to the County of Santa Barbara Agricultural Advisory Committee and the Santa Barbara Harbor Commission. Staff have also met with local off-road equipment dealers to discuss program details and improve outreach to their clients. Grant applications are currently available on the District's website, with assistance available for Spanish speakers. More information is available on the District's website: www.OurAir.org/grants.
- **Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition (C5):** C5, a program administered by the District, is a coalition of stakeholders working to decarbonize transportation throughout the Central Coast. On July 9, the District and C5 co-hosted a successful Electric Off-Road and Landscape Equipment Demo at Allan Hancock College. Approximately 100 participants

and 16 vendors attended, with a variety of electric equipment on display. Event partners, including the District, C5, Central Coast Community Energy (3CE), Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, and California Air Resources Board, set up informational booths about grant funding, eligible equipment types, and applicable rules or regulations.

During this time, C5 conducted outreach for several workforce development initiatives. C5 partnered with Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance (VCREA), Tri-County Regional Energy Network (3C-REN), and Clean Power Alliance (CPA) to sponsor a three-week, in-person Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Technician Training Program at Oxnard College from June 23 – July 11. Eight individuals successfully completed the training program delivered by ChargerHelp, which featured 14 days of comprehensive, hands-on instruction in EVSE maintenance and repair. In early August, C5 attended the “Healthy Lompoc Night” of the Lompoc Old Town Market. C5 also visited 21 car dealerships across Santa Barbara County to distribute informational flyers, in English and Spanish, for electric vehicle (EV) and EV charging incentives, as well as to invite dealers to attend an EV 101 Training Webinar hosted by the Electric Ride 805 coalition on August 26. Lastly, C5 facilitated several meetings with regional partners to coordinate a series of EV Showcases to occur during National Drive Electric Month September 12 – October 12.

Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts

- **Wildfires and Air Quality:** During this time, two wildfires — the Madre Fire in July, and the Gifford Fire in August — affected local air quality. For both incidents, the District implemented our full Air Quality Alerts process, working the County Health Department. That process involves issuing joint Air Quality Alerts/Watches, sharing information on our website and social media accounts, conducting media interviews, coordinating with the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and other stakeholders, responding to questions and concerns from the public, frequently analyzing air quality data and updating air quality forecasts, and providing general resources and informational support. For two community meetings during the Gifford Fire, the District provided updates for OEM to share, as well as handouts — in English and Spanish — regarding creating “clean air rooms,” understanding the Air Quality Index, checking air quality readings, and cleaning up ash safely. The District plans to continue conducting outreach with community stakeholders, especially in the Cuyama area, to share health-protective measures that people can take during future incidents.

Prior to the Madre Fire in July, the District issued a news release with the Air Pollution Control Districts of Ventura and San Luis Obispo counties on tips to prepare for wildfire season; the release focused on resources for checking air quality readings, creating “clean air rooms,” and signing up for Air Quality Alerts. Also in July, the District gave a presentation on wildfire smoke preparedness to the Disaster Healthcare Partners Coalition, hosted by the County Health Department.

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.