




air pollution control district
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 30, 2025

TO: Community Advisory Council (CAC) Members

FROM: Aeron Arlin Genet, Air Pollution Control Officer 

SUBJECT: Community Advisory Council - Quarterly Update

Per the Community Advisory Council (CAC) By-Laws, District staff provides quarterly updates to the CAC to maintain continuity during periods when there are no planning or rulemaking matters to discuss. The last quarterly update to the CAC occurred in June 2025, and a listing of the previous status updates can be found [here](#) on our website. The information below is provided as the quarterly status update for September 2025.

Low-Cost Air Quality Sensors Program

The District currently maintains and operates a network of approximately 50 PurpleAir low-cost air quality sensors throughout Santa Barbara County. The sensors are configured to measure PM_{2.5} and have been successfully used to assess wildfire smoke impacts and to help District staff better communicate health impacts to communities impacted by wildfire smoke. The cost of low-cost air quality sensors are a fraction of the cost of traditional air pollution monitors, which allows air monitoring to be feasible in many more locations throughout the county. The real-time air monitoring data from the PurpleAir sensors is publicly accessible and displayed on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) AirNow Fire and Smoke map: <https://fire.airnow.gov/>.

In December 2024, the District was awarded an Air Quality Sensors Grant under the Inflation Reduction Grant from EPA to purchase and install 40 low-cost air quality sensors throughout Santa Barbara County. In addition, in June 2025, the District Board approved a Memorandum of Understanding between the District and the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association to administer a PurpleAir air quality sensor deployment program, utilizing additional EPA passthrough grant funds. As a result of these two grants, the District is now purchasing and installing approximately 150 additional low-cost air quality sensors throughout Santa Barbara County over the next few years, located at schools, government facilities, nonprofits, and other community-based locations.

The District is currently conducting outreach and soliciting interest from schools and other organizations that would like to host an air quality sensor at their location. If you are aware of

any schools, government agencies, or nonprofits that might be interested, please have them contact sensors@sbcapcd.org to request a sensor or fill-out our [online form](#).

Upgraded Permitted Facilities Map

Earlier this year, the District launched its newly upgraded [Permitted Facilities Map](#), which serves as an easy-to-use tool for the public to find and view records for all of the stationary sources of air pollution permitted by the District. The map offers a full suite of unique and innovative features:

- Comprehensive facility data (company history, source history, permit descriptions, and 10 years of criteria pollutant emissions data);
- Robust document availability (all active permits and permit applications, plus 10 years of annual reports, inspection reports, and Notices of Violation (NOVs)); and
- Real-time Air Quality Index (AQI) data from each of APCD's permanent air quality monitoring stations in Santa Barbara County

Other upgrades from the previous version of the map include mobile- and tablet-view functionality, real-time updates, enhanced search capabilities, reduced load times, and modernized graphics.

An update on the Permitted Facilities Map was presented to the APCD Board at its January 16, 2025 meeting. The Board letter and presentation can be found [here](#) on the District's website. Additionally, the District's Permitted Facilities Map was recently designated as a 2025 Best Practice in Air Pollution Control by the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies (AAPCA), a national, non-profit organization established in 2012 that assists state and local air quality agencies with technical and implementation issues related to the federal Clean Air Act. Earlier this month, District staff attended the AAPCA 2025 Fall Business Meeting in Raleigh, North Carolina to provide a presentation on the APCD's newly upgraded Permitted Facilities Map and to accept an award for being designated as a Best Practice in Air Pollution Control.

Protecting Blue Whales Blue Skies (BWBS) Program & AB 14 Update

For the past 10 years, the BWBS Program has incentivized the world's largest shipping companies to voluntarily opt in to reduce speeds to 10 knots or less off the San Francisco, Central Coast, and South Coast regions to help reduce air pollution, fatal ship strike risk to whales, and underwater noise pollution. After each Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) season (i.e., May to December), the BWBS Program analyzes vessel Automatic Identification System (AIS) data to determine the cooperation levels of the enrolled fleets. This data is used to recognize the shipping companies whose fleets consistently adhered to the reduced speed request and continues to demonstrate how these voluntary efforts translate to quantifiable environmental benefits for the marine environment and coastal California communities. For more information on the BWBS Program and the District's involvement as a program partner, please visit www.bluewhalesblueskies.org/. The 2025 season of the BWBS Program began on May 1 and will run through December 31, 2025.

Related to the BWBS Program, Assembly Bill (AB) 14 was introduced in December 2024 by Assemblymember Gregg Hart. This bill would authorize the expansion of the existing Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies voluntary vessel speed reduction program to include other areas of

the California coast without an existing VSR program. The bill would build upon the existing BWBS Program in order to reduce air pollution, the risk of fatal vessel strikes on whales, and harmful underwater acoustic impacts along the California coast. This bill would coordinate the efforts of California air districts along the coast in consultation with the federal Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, the Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Navy, the Ocean Protection Council, and the maritime industry. The District has been working with the program partners to help urge the passage of AB 14, as it would provide additional support for continuing and expanding the emission-reduction impacts from the existing program. The bill has unanimously passed through the Assembly and Senate and is currently awaiting the Governor's signature.

2025 Ozone Plan

Every three years, the District is required to update our plan to attain and maintain the state 1-hour and 8-hour ozone standards. The 2025 Ozone Plan will be the eleventh triennial update to the initial state Air Quality Attainment Plan adopted by the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (District) Board of Directors in 1991.

We anticipate the 2025 Ozone Plan will be composed of seven chapters that address air quality trends, the emission inventory, stationary source control measures, transportation control measures, voluntary incentive programs, and attainment strategy. District staff plan to hold the next CAC meeting in the Fall of 2025 and will be reaching out to CAC members to schedule a meeting date to begin the review process and discuss the 2025 Ozone Plan. District staff intend to take the 2025 Ozone Plan to the District Board for a public hearing and adoption in January 2025.

This concludes the status update for this quarter. If you have any questions, please contact me (aag@sbcapcd.org) or Alex Economou (aje@sbcapcd.org).

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The CAC's charter is to consider issues related to air pollution planning and rulemaking for which the District has jurisdiction, and to render advice to the District Board and the APCO. The CAC serves an important function by providing expertise and representation of community interests during planning and rulemaking. The CAC's advice has helped the District Board adopt plans and rules, which have contributed to improving air quality in our county, and District staff appreciate the care and consideration you show in carrying out your service. These updates are also be posted to our website at www.ourair.org/community-advisory-council-info.