



## Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board

FROM: Aeron Arlin Genet, Air Pollution Control Officer 

CONTACT: Lyz Bantilan, Public Information Officer, (805) 979-8283

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 October 16, 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 – formerly 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 October 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:
  - AB 14, expanding Blue Whales & Blue Skies Program Statewide: *Noozhawk, KSBY, Santa Barbara Independent, and Maritime Executive*
  - County BOS Sable Hearings: *Santa Barbara Independent* and *Santa Maria Times*
  - Prescribed Burns: *Edhat*

## Community Programs

- **Air Quality Sensors Program Outreach:** For several months, District staff have been working to install air quality sensors throughout the county so that we can meet our grant requirements to finish installing them by the summer of 2026. Our first priority is installing the sensors at schools, followed by government and nonprofit buildings. We have sent multiple emails, as well as postcards and personalized letters, to school administrators throughout the county. We've also been in touch with other local government partners, plus nonprofits and select businesses that are interested and able to host a sensor for the District. Air quality sensors capture neighborhood-level air quality conditions and complement the District's existing network of permanent air quality monitoring stations, making them a great tool to help make decisions during air quality incidents such as wildfires. Interested parties can submit information via our [online form](#). More information about sensors is available on our website: <https://www.ourair.org/sensors/>
- **Clean Air Rooms Programs:** As approved by your Board, District staff have been working to implement Clean Air Rooms programs for residents of the City of Guadalupe and the Old Town Goleta neighborhood, both of which are considered underserved communities by the State. The District's Clean Air Rooms program provides free air purifiers to residents of select communities on a first-come, first-served basis; air purifiers significantly improve indoor air quality during air quality events like wildfires. The program is currently open only for residents of the City of Guadalupe and will transition to eligibility for only Old Town Goleta residents in mid-March.
  - Guadalupe program: In recent months, Escalante Meadows received approximately 36 air purifiers, and the District plans on offering air purifiers for each of the public school classrooms in Guadalupe as well. Moving forward, the program will be open to all Guadalupe residents. To participate, Guadalupe residents can submit information via an online form and the air purifier will be shipped directly to them from the District's vendor. Outreach for the Guadalupe program will include distributing flyers at a Foodbank distribution event, sharing information via school message boards, and working with community partners to spread the word.
  - Old Town Goleta program: Working with the City of Goleta, District staff are planning to hold a one-day distribution event in mid-March at the Goleta Valley Community Center to give away a limited number of air purifiers. Following that event, the program will transition to accepting online applications just like the Guadalupe program.

- **Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition (C5):** C5, a program administered by the District, is a coalition of stakeholders dedicated to expanding clean transportation across the Central Coast. In November, District staff representing C5 presented at Electric Ride 805's Open Stakeholder Meeting to share information about funding available through the District's Clean Air Grants Program for zero-emission school bus fleet expansion projects. C5 has also begun coordinating with the Driving Clean Assistance Program (DCAP), a statewide incentive program for electric vehicles (EVs) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), to co-host a Ride and Drive with the District in Santa Barbara County in early 2026. The event, tentatively scheduled for mid-March in the Old Town Goleta neighborhood, will offer attendees the opportunity to test-drive a range of EVs and PHEVs that qualify for DCAP incentives ranging from \$7,500 to \$12,000. Since the last Board meeting, the District and C5 also participated in several planning meetings for the Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival's Green Car Show, for which C5 serves as a production partner. The Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival will take place April 25-26, 2026 at Alameda Park.

### **Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts**

- **Prescribed Burns:** During this time, the District worked with the County Fire Department to on public notifications about a prescribed burn on the Sedgwick Reserve in the Santa Ynez Valley, which occurred in November. The District also worked with the U.S. Forest Service on public notifications regarding the agency's annual series of prescribed pile burns in the Los Padres National Forest. The District follows a two-step public notification process for prescribed burns; a news release is issued several weeks ahead of the intended burn date, and a follow-up notification is issued either the day before or morning of the first day of burning. People can sign up to receive future prescribed burn notifications — via email and/or text message — on the District's website: [www.OurAir.org/subscribe](http://www.OurAir.org/subscribe).

In December 2025, District staff met with the Santa Barbara County Fire Department to enhance the coordination on our prescribed burn program. Discussion items included 2025 reflections, including Santa Barbara County Fire's success using electronic message boards to inform the public about nearby prescribed burns, and the challenges facing both of our agencies due to limited resources and the large acreage countywide to cover. Looking forward, we discussed our plans to incorporate maps into our joint outreach documents and improve our coordination with stakeholders such as the Santa Barbara County Range Improvement Association and Santa Barbara County Vintners Association.

### **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.