



air pollution control district
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Agenda Item: E-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 January 15, 2026.

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 January 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, prior to the docket deadline, media interest in the District included the following coverage:
 - Prescribed Burns: *KSBY, KEYT, Noozhawk, and Edhat*
 - Blue Whales & Blue Skies program: *Edhat*
 - Cannabis and odor: *Santa Barbara News-Press*
 - Old Town Goleta Clean Air Rooms Program: *KCLU*

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. Recently, District staff began making phone calls to school administrators, which has resulted in several additional air sensor installations. 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. Below are updates on the programs for Guadalupe and Old Town Goleta residents:
 - Guadalupe program: During this time, the District worked with Mayor Julian and the Guadalupe Dunes Center to spread the word about this program. The District also paid the City of Guadalupe to include a bilingual informational flyer in a recent mailout of utility bills; the flyer included a QR code linking to the online form where people can apply to participate. These additional outreach methods have resulted in increased participation in the program. Previous outreach included flyers distributed at the Foodbank distribution event, and units were also provided to residents moving into Escalante Meadows. Moving forward, the District will continue working with the Housing Authority of Santa Barbara County to distribute additional units. The online form for people to apply to participate will remain open while supplies last.
 - Old Town Goleta program: On March 14, the District hosted a successful event at the Goleta Community Center, distributing approximately 400 air purifiers on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants had to provide proof of address, such as a driver's license or utility bill, or a postcard previously mailed to all eligible residents. The District worked closely with the City of Goleta to plan for the

outreach and logistics of the March 14 event. Following that event, the program will transition to accepting online applications just like the Guadalupe program, while supplies last.

- **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. C5 partnered with City of Santa Barbara, UC Santa Barbara (UCSB), and Municipal Maintenance Equipment (MME) to coordinate a public demonstration of two all-electric street sweepers on January 21 at UCSB. To promote the event, C5 released a series of email campaigns and social media posts, conducted targeted outreach to fleets, and created an event registration page. The demo was positively received by 15+ attendees who appreciated the opportunity to test out the innovative equipment, ask questions, and engage directly with MME staff. On February 11, C5 facilitated a High-Voltage Electric Vehicle (EV) Safety Training for 20 fleet technicians from local municipalities, school districts, and transit agencies from across the tri-county Central Coast. This hands-on training was designed for fleet technicians working on light, medium, and heavy-duty EVs and covered critical topics related to EV systems and safety. This free training was co-sponsored by C5, Central Coast Community Energy, County of Santa Barbara Sustainability Division, and City of Santa Barbara Sustainability & Resilience Department, and was generously hosted by UCSB's Transportation & Parking Services.

C5 also coordinated 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 an event to showcase EVs and provide test drives to interested individuals. This event occurred on March 14 at the Goleta Community Center, alongside the Clean Air Rooms program air purifier giveaway for Old Town Goleta residents. The March 14 test drive event was open to all members of the public and offered free food to a limited number of participants. In addition to test drives, the event also offered the opportunity to learn about DCAP incentives ranging from \$7,500 to \$12,000. C5 has also participated in several planning meetings to support the upcoming 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 both the U.S. Forest Service and the Santa Barbara County Department on public notifications about separate prescribed burns occurring near Highway 154, with visibility in the southern portion of the county. 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.

Blue Whales & Blue Skies (BWBS) program: Since your last Board meeting, the District issued two news releases with our regional program partners regarding this program. One of the releases announced that cruise ships will now be eligible to participate in the program after data showed that allowing cruise ships to participate would result in an air quality benefit, as well as provide a safer habitat for whales. Another BWBS news release during this time shared information about participating shipping companies' cooperation

rates during the 2025 program. The District is proud to be a founding partner agency of this program, which marked 11 years in operation this past season. Every year, program partners plan a BWBS awards ceremony to recognize participating shipping companies for their environmental contributions. The District is working with Assemblymember Gregg Hart's office to include a special segment as part of the program recognizing Assembly Bill 14 — authored by Asm. Hart — for expanding this program statewide, as signed into law by Governor Newsom last year. More information on the program is available on the program's website: www.BlueWhalesBlueSkies.org.

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.