




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 March 19, 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 March 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, Noozhawk, KEYT, and Edhat*
 - Blue Whales & Blue Skies program: *Edhat*
 - Clean Air Rooms Program: *Santa Barbara Independent and Edhat*
 - County's Environmental Justice Element: *Santa Maria Sun*
 - Appointment of Director David Silva to CARB Board: *Noozhawk, Edhat, and Santa Maria Times*
 - Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition (C5): *KEYT*

Community Programs

- **Air Quality Sensors Program Outreach:** For several months, the District has been installing air quality sensors throughout the county so that we can allocate our grant award 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 decision-making tool 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, the District implemented two Clean Air Rooms programs this fiscal year: one for residents of the City of Guadalupe and one for residents of 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 both programs:
 - Guadalupe program: This was the second iteration of a program for Guadalupe residents, following our pilot program in 2021 that provided approximately 800 air purifiers to program participants. This year's program was implemented using a drop-ship service from our air purifier vendor; participants completed an online form and provided proof of address, and then the vendor shipped an air purifier directly to their home. This program was incredibly popular and was closed in mid-March once participation limits were met. District staff are now working on finalizing the remaining drop-ship orders. This program distributed approximately 630 air purifiers to Guadalupe residents, plus to Guadalupe schools.
 - Old Town Goleta program: On March 14, the District hosted a successful event with the City of Goleta at the Goleta Community Center, distributing 400 air purifiers on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants provided proof of address. The District also provided 75 air purifiers to the Housing Authority building in Old Town. Following the March 14 event, the program pivoted to accepting online

drop-ship applications just like the Guadalupe program; only Old Town residents who didn't participate in the March 14 event are eligible. The District is working with the City of Goleta to provide additional outreach to Old Town residents about the drop-ship option, which will remain open while supplies last. The District expects the Old Town program to provide approximately 860 total air purifiers.

- **Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition (C5):** C5, a program administered by the District, is a coalition of regional stakeholders dedicated to advancing clean transportation across the Central Coast. C5 served as a production partner for the 25th Green Car Show at the 2026 Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival, which took place on April 25 – 26 at Alameda Park. This year's event was highly successful, generating 99 electric vehicle test drives—featuring models from Rivian, Toyota, and Hyundai—and 135 e-bike test rides from local vendors. At the C5 booth, District staff engaged with hundreds of community members about clean transportation technologies, grant and incentive opportunities such as the statewide Driving Clean Assistance Program (DCAP), and available air quality resources.

Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts

- **Prescribed Burns:** During this time, the District worked with the U.S. Forest Service on public notifications about 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. In April, the District was invited to attend a statewide forum, hosted by the Climate & Wildfire Institute and CalFIRE, to discuss the benefits of prescribed burning, smoke models and tools, and the latest research regarding grapes and wildfire smoke. Attendees included vintners, land managers, university researchers, CalFIRE, CAPCOA, CARB, and various air districts. At the forum, the District presented on our role with smoke management for prescribed burns.
- **Wildfire Resilience Collaborative Symposium:** On May 7, the District attended the first annual Wildfire Resilience Collaborative Symposium, hosted by the Santa Barbara County Fire Safe Council and held at UCSB. The event brought together representatives from various government agencies, nonprofits, and research organizations to discuss ways to collaborate on projects that make our county more resilient to wildfire. The District shared information about our role with prescribed burning and with outreach related to wildfire smoke. The District will join the associated Technical Advisory Committee to continue sharing input.
- **Blue Whales & Blue Skies (BWBS) program:** The District recently issued two news releases with our program partners regarding efforts to incentivize ships to slow down to reduce air pollution and protect whales. One of the releases detailed the environmental benefits that the 2025 season of the program produced. The next BWBS news release recapped the April awards ceremony that celebrated the 2025 season's participating shipping lines, program ambassadors, and Assemblymember Gregg Hart, whose dedication to this program resulted in the passage of AB 14 — signed by the Governor last fall —

which expanded this voluntary program statewide. The awards ceremony drew 85 attendees, also kicked off the 12th season of this program, with participating shipping lines now able to participate along the entire California coast. The District is proud to be a founding partner agency of this program. More information 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.