




Agenda Item: D-7
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Continued Item: No

Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board

FROM: Aeron Arlin Genet, Air Pollution Control Officer 

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SUBJECT: Clean Air Rooms Program for Cuyama Valley Residents

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider recommendations as follows:

1. Approve the allocation of \$60,000 from the District's Clean Air Fund in Fiscal Year 2026-27 to purchase air purifiers for a Cuyama Clean Air Rooms Program; and
2. Authorize the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District (District) to purchase air purifiers from Winix America, Inc., as a sole source procurement without being required to conduct a formal bid process, for a total cost not to exceed \$60,000, including tax and shipping.

BACKGROUND:

Clean Air Fund

On March 21, 2019, your Board approved Resolution 19-03, which established the Clean Air Fund. Funded by excess revenues from Notices of Violation (NOVs), the Clean Air Fund was established to fund projects undertaken by the District and/or third parties that provide air quality and human health benefits for communities throughout Santa Barbara County, consistent with the District's mission. Clean Air Fund projects are subject to review and approval by your Board, and results of completed projects are reported back to your Board annually

Clean Air Rooms Program

In June 2021, the District designed a Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program and received Board authorization to use a portion of Clean Air Funds to give High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) air purifiers to residents of select communities in Santa Barbara County. The goal of the program

was to provide more individuals with the ability to keep their indoor air safe and clean during wildfire smoke events and other high-pollution events.

With the Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program, the District's goal was to provide HEPA devices to Santa Barbara County residents who are traditionally underserved and/or who may not have the means to purchase an air purifier on their own. In selecting which communities to implement the pilot program, the District used CalEnviroScreen, a State-created mapping tool that uses environmental, health, and socioeconomic data collected from state and federal sources to compare communities across California. Utilizing the criteria from CalEnviroScreen, the State designates the 25% highest scoring census tracts, as well as federally recognized tribal areas, as disadvantaged communities. For the Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program, the District reviewed the CalEnviroScreen analysis and decided to implement the pilot program in the City of Guadalupe, as well as in the community of Casmalia. According to CalEnviroScreen, the census tracts for these areas received the highest scores in the county and are designated as disadvantaged communities. The Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program was very successful, and from 2021-2023, the District distributed 793 HEPA air purifier units to residents of Guadalupe and Casmalia on a first-come, first-served basis.

Following the success of the pilot program, the District expanded the Clean Air Rooms Program to additional disadvantaged communities in Santa Barbara County. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26, your Board authorized two new iterations of the program: one for residents of the City of Guadalupe (a second iteration for that community) and one for residents of the Old Town Goleta neighborhood.

The second Guadalupe program was implemented using a drop-ship model, in which participants completed an online form and provided proof of address, and the vendor shipped an air purifier directly to their home; the program was incredibly popular and closed in March 2026 after distributing approximately 630 air purifiers to Guadalupe residents and local schools. The second Guadalupe program was partially co-funded through a partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara, which had been awarded grant funds to purchase and distribute air purifiers to residents of the Escalante Meadows housing development and throughout the City of Guadalupe.

The Old Town Goleta program launched with a community event at the Goleta Community Center on March 14, 2026, where 400 air purifiers were distributed, followed by 75 units provided to an affordable housing community located in Old Town Goleta and ongoing drop-ship orders. Following the March event, the program pivoted to accepting online drop-ship applications just like the Guadalupe program, with only Old Town residents who didn't participate in the March event 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.

DISCUSSION:

Following the successful expansion of the Clean Air Rooms Program to Old Town Goleta and a second iteration in Guadalupe, the District decided to establish the next iteration of the program in the Cuyama Valley. The Cuyama region was selected for the next round of the Clean Air Rooms Program because it is a State-designated low-income community, according to the California Climate Investments Priority Populations Mapping Tool. Additionally, the Cuyama region has

been adversely impacted by smoke from several wildfires in recent years, including the Lake, Gifford, Madre, Hill, and Foothill fires.

Leading up to the launch of the Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program in 2021, the District issued a request for proposals for air purifiers, utilizing requirements which were recommended by subject-matter experts at the California Air Resources Board. Winix America, Inc. was the successful bidder, and the District has purchased air purifiers from the company for subsequent iterations of the program, including the Guadalupe pilot program, the second Guadalupe program, and portions of the Old Town Goleta program; the remaining portion of the Old Town Goleta program will use air purifiers purchased from Blueair (less than \$25,000 worth).

The District would like to move forward with purchasing air purifiers from Winix America, Inc. for the Cuyama Clean Air Rooms Program. However, since the quoted cost for the air purifiers exceeds the District's authority to issue a purchase order without completing a bid process, the District requests a competitive bid waiver to move forward with the purchase of the Winix America, Inc. equipment. If approved by your Board, the District will distribute the air purifiers to residents of the Cuyama region; once the program details are fleshed out, the District will share more information about this program with your Board.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The \$60,000 for purchasing air purifiers for the Cuyama Clean Air Rooms Program is included as part of the Clean Air Fund expenditures in the District's proposed Fiscal Year 2026-27 Budget. All labor for administration of the Cuyama Clean Air Rooms Program is also included in the District's proposed Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget. There are no fiscal impacts to the proposed budget.