

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 August 20, 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/X, 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 August 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:

- Air Quality Watch: *Noozhawk*, *KSBY*, and *Edhat*
 - Hearing Board Member Recruitment: *Edhat* and *Santa Ynez Valley News*
 - Prescribed burn at UCSB: *Noozhawk*, *KEYT*, *Edhat*, and *Santa Barbara Independent*
- **Air Quality Watch:** On August 31, the District issued an Air Quality Watch due to local smoke impacts from two wildfires burning in Monterey County. That Watch was in effect until September 8. For Air Quality Watches and Air Quality Alerts, the District works closely and quickly with the County Health Department to notify the public about smoke impacts that may occur. The notifications are provided in English and Spanish and distributed through the District's comprehensive public information process. Anyone can sign up to receive future Air Quality Watches or Alerts via email and/or text message by visiting the District's website: www.OurAir.org/subscribe.
 - **California Clean Air Day:** On October 7, the District marked California Clean Air Day by conducting an afternoon beach clean-up at Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Park in partnership with the Guadalupe Dunes Center's after-school kids hiking club. California Clean Air Day occurs every year on the first Wednesday in October and serves as an occasion to celebrate the tremendous progress made toward reducing air pollution in California while encouraging additional ways to protect air quality. The District was pleased to spend time with local kids enjoying fresh air, talking about the importance of clean air, and cleaning the beach of litter.

Community Programs

- **Air Quality Sensors Program Outreach:** For the last year, the District has been installing dozens of air quality sensors in Santa Barbara County, adding to the network of sensors the District has installed historically. There are now 102 District-installed sensors throughout the county. Locations include schools, government agencies, and nonprofits. Sensors capture neighborhood-level air quality conditions and complement the District's network of permanent air monitoring stations, making sensors a great decision-making tool during wildfires. More information about the sensors program is on the District's website: www.OurAir.org/sensors.
- **Cuyama Valley Clean Air Rooms Program:** On October 2, APCD — in partnership with the Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center (CVFRC) — distributed 270 air purifiers in the Cuyama Valley. The school district received 35 air purifiers — one for each classroom and administrative building — and 235 air purifiers were given to residents, the post office, the library, the Sheriff's Department substation, and the fire station. The air purifiers were distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, limited to one per household, and proof of address was required for residents to participate. Air purifiers help keep indoor air clean — creating a “clean air room” — when wildfire smoke is affecting air quality. APCD was pleased to partner with CVFRC to plan for and host the event. APCD also provided free food at the event and shared information in English and Spanish about multiple resources available to check local air quality and participate in APCD programs. The Cuyama Valley Clean Air Rooms program, as approved by the Board of Directors earlier this year, was paid for using the District's Clean Air Fund, which comes from excess revenues from Notices of Violation.
- **Old Town Goleta Clean Air Rooms Program:** Earlier this year, in March, the District hosted a one-day event with the City of Goleta at the Goleta Community Center to distribute 400 air purifiers on a first-come, first-served basis to residents of the Old Town Goleta neighborhood.

The District also provided 75 air purifiers to the Housing Authority building in Old Town. Following the March event, the program pivoted to accepting online drop-ship applications, whereby eligible residents fill out an [online form](#) on the District's website and email a proof of address to have an air purifier shipped directly to their home. The District is still accepting applications for the drop-ship program, but only Old Town Goleta residents who haven't yet participated in either the March event or the drop-ship program are eligible.

- **Lompoc Clean Air Fund:** During this time, the District has been focusing on outreach in the Lompoc area, especially to share with community members about our Clean Air Fund projects at two elementary schools (Clarence Ruth and Leonora Fillmore) and at the City's Dick DeWees Center, the YMCA, and the Boys & Girls Club. The Clean Air Fund helped replace 60-year-old classroom furniture for all K-2 classrooms at both of those schools, and covered the cost of HVAC upgrades to make those three community buildings Clean Air Centers. The District will be working with all partners on continued community outreach. The District has been working closely with the two schools recently on efforts to connect with parents. Staff attending a Back-to-School Night at Clarence Ruth in August and are attending two "Lunch on the Lawn" events at Clarence Ruth in October and December. In November, staff will be giving a bilingual presentation and hosting a listening session for parents at Leonora Fillmore. Later this month, District staff will also be attending an event put on by the Santa Barbara County Regional Climate Collaborative to celebrate efforts to complete environmental grant projects in Lompoc and Guadalupe.
- **Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition (C5):** C5, a non-profit organization administered by the District, is a coalition of regional stakeholders dedicated to advancing clean transportation across the Central Coast. On October 14, C5 hosted a Clean Transportation Showcase as part of UCSB's 2026 Central Coast Sustainability Summit; the showcase featured electric vehicles from local municipal fleets, including sedans, SUVs, and pickup trucks. In partnership with the National Lab of the Rockies and four other California-based Clean Cities and Communities coalitions, C5 is launching a project to evaluate the current landscape of alternative-fuel off-road equipment technologies. The objectives of the project are to assess stakeholder needs, identify challenges and opportunities for early adopters, and develop resources that enable coalitions to better support industry partners.

Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts

- **Prescribed Burns:** In September, the District worked with the Santa Barbara County Fire Department on public notifications about a prescribed burn that occurred on the UCSB campus. This burn was part of an ongoing management effort to control non-native grasses and establish native bluff scrub vegetation. During this time, the District has also been putting the finishing touches on a soon-to-launch mapping tool for all prescribed burns that occur in Santa Barbara County. The map will add a user-friendly visual element to our existing prescribed burn outreach methods. 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 for notifications on the District's website: www.OurAir.org/subscribe.

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.