

BOARD MEETING DATE: October 4, 2024

AGENDA NO. 9

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the August 2024 outreach activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office, which includes Major Events, Community Events/Public Meetings, Environmental Justice Update, Speakers Bureau/Visitor Services, Communications Center, Public Information Center, Small Business Assistance, Media Relations, and Outreach to Community Groups and Federal, State and Local Governments.

COMMITTEE: No Committee Review

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Receive and file.

Wayne Natri
Executive Officer

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Background

This report summarizes the activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office for August. The report includes Major Events, Community Events/Public Meetings, Environmental Justice (EJ) Updates, Speakers Bureau/Visitor Services, Communications Center, Public Information Center, Small Business Assistance, Media Relations, and Outreach to Community Groups and Governments.

Major Events (Hosted and Sponsored)

Each year, staff engage in hosting and sponsoring several major events throughout South Coast AQMD's four-county jurisdiction to promote, educate, and provide important information to the public regarding reducing air pollution, protecting public health, and improving air quality while minimizing economic impacts.

There were no major events hosted or sponsored in August.

Community Events/Public Meetings

Staff engaged with residents and stakeholders of diverse communities to provide information about the agency, incentive programs, and ways individuals can help reduce air pollution through events and meetings sponsored by South Coast AQMD or in partnership with others. Attendees typically receive information regarding the following:

- Tips on reducing their exposure to smog and its negative health effects;
- How to file a complaint;
- Clean air technologies and their deployment;
- Invitations to or notices of conferences, seminars, workshops, and other public events;
- South Coast AQMD incentive programs;
- Funding/grant opportunities by South Coast AQMD and partner agencies;
- Ways to participate in South Coast AQMD's rules and policy development; and
- Assistance in resolving air pollution-related problems.

Staff attended and/or provided information and updates at the following August events and meetings:

Arroyo Verdugo Communities Joint Powers Authority

On August 1, staff participated at the Arroyo Verdugo Communities Joint Powers Authority Governing Board meeting to provide information on the AB 2766 Motor Vehicle Subvention Program.

25th Annual Community Resource Fair

On August 3, staff participated in the 25th Annual 41st Assembly District Community Resource Fair and Block Party to provide community members information on the South Coast AQMD Mobile App, how to file a complaint, Residential Electric Lawn Mower Rebate Program, and the upcoming EJ Conference.

Healthy Jurupa Valley

On August 6, staff attended the Healthy Jurupa Valley meeting to announce the upcoming 10th Annual EJ Conference.

Orange County Council of Governments

On August 6, staff participated in the Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG) Infrastructure Committee meeting to provide information on U.S. EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) award for zero-emission goods movement in the South Coast region and thanked OCCOG for their letter of support.

La Habra Area Chamber of Commerce

On August 7, staff met with the La Habra Area Chamber of Commerce President/Chief Executive Officer to share air quality programs and resources such as free technical assistance offered by through the Small Business Assistance Office.

San Bernardino County Second District Open House

On August 8, staff participated in the San Bernardino County Second District Open House. Staff demonstrated a clean air vehicle and shared information on how to file a complaint.

Community Connections

On August 8, staff participated in Riverside Community Connections to provide an overview on South Coast AQMD, air quality issues, how to file a complaint, and the South Coast AQMD Mobile App.

Big Bear Chamber of Commerce

On August 8, staff attended the Big Bear Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide an update on Rule 1146.2 - Emissions of Oxides of Nitrogen from Large Water Heaters, Small Boilers, and Process Heaters (Rule 1146.2). Information on recent smoke advisories was also shared with the Committee.

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

On August 14, staff participated in the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce Legislative Affairs Committee meeting to provide updates on the Carl Moyer program, Rule 2306 – Freight Rail Yards (Rule 2306), and the upcoming 10th Annual EJ Conference.

Inglewood City Council

On August 13, staff attended the Inglewood City Council meeting to provide an update on Rule 2306.

El Segundo Main Streetcar Show

On August 17, staff participated in the 26th Annual El Segundo Main Street Car Show to provide community outreach on how to file complaints, the South Coast AQMD Mobile App, Residential Electric Lawn Mower Rebate program, and wildfire health and safety tips.

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

On August 22, staff attended the South Bay Cities Council of Governments Board of Directors meeting to provide updates on Rule 2306 and the Carl Moyer Program.

Riverside County Board of Supervisors

On August 27, staff attended the Riverside County Board of Supervisors meeting to provide information on Rule 1146.2.

City of Bell

On August 28, staff attended the Bell City Council meeting to provide updates on Rule 1146.2 and the upcoming 10th Annual EJ Conference.

Environmental Justice Update

The following are key EJ related activities in which staff participated during August. These events and meetings involve communities affected disproportionately from adverse air quality impacts.

East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice (EYCEJ)

On August 2, staff met with EYCEJ staff to discuss South Coast AQMD's 10th Annual EJ Conference.

Community Hub of Santa Ana

On August 7, staff met with Community Hub of Santa Ana to provide information on our educational programs, Clean Air Program for Elementary Students (CAPES) and Why Health Air Matters (WHAM), and the 10th Annual EJ Conference.

U.S. EPA Asthma Webinar Series

On August 14, staff participated in U.S. EPA's Asthma webinar. Topics of discussion included risks associated with wildfire smoke, solutions for protecting people with asthma and others at risk, and air filtration, environmental education, and in-home counseling to support those affected by air pollution from wildfires.

California Safe Schools

On August 15, staff met with California Safe Schools and provided an update on CAPES, WHAM, and the 10th Annual EJ Conference.

Mission Bell Elementary School

On August 22, staff visited Mission Bell Elementary School to provide information about CAPES.

Environmental Justice Advisory Group

South Coast AQMD hosted the third quarterly Environmental Justice Advisory Group meeting on August 30. Presentations included an overview on "Go Zero" which is South Coast AQMD's residential and commercial building appliances pilot program and an update by SCAG on the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan under development through the U.S. EPA CPRG program for the Los Angeles – Long Beach – Anaheim area.

Speakers Bureau/Visitor Services

South Coast AQMD regularly receives requests for staff to speak on air quality-related issues from a wide variety of organizations, such as trade associations, chambers of commerce, community-based groups, schools, hospitals, and health-based organizations. South Coast AQMD also hosts visitors from around the world who meet with staff on a wide range of air quality issues.

National Institute of Environmental Research, South Korea

On August 30, South Coast AQMD welcomed a delegation from the National Institute of Environmental Research in South Korea. The visit included a tour of the lab and presentations on fence-line and community air monitoring programs.

Communication Center Statistics

The Communication Center handles calls on South Coast AQMD’s main line, 1-800-CUT-SMOG®, the Spanish line, and after-hours calls to those lines. Total calls received in the month of August are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2,715
Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Spanish Line	24
Clean Air Connections	4
Total Calls	2,743

Public Information Center Statistics

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls and assists individuals who walk in for general information. Email advisories provide information on upcoming meetings and events, program announcements and alerts on time-sensitive issues. Information for the month of August is summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC	72
Calls to Automated System	209
Total Calls	281
Visitor Transactions	185
Email Advisories Sent	25,683

Small Business Assistance

South Coast AQMD notifies local businesses of proposed regulations so they can participate in the agency’s rule development process. South Coast AQMD works with other agencies and governments to identify efficient, cost-effective ways to reduce air pollution and shares that information broadly. Staff provided personalized assistance to small businesses over the telephone, at South Coast AQMD headquarters and via virtual on-site consultation, as summarized below for August.

- Provided permit application assistance to 280 companies, and
- Processed 147 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

Types of businesses assisted:

Architecture Firms	Gas Stations	Schools
Auto Body Shops	Manufacturing Facilities	Warehouses
Construction Firms	Offices	
Dry Cleaners	Restaurants	
Engineering Firms	Retail Facilities	

Media Relations

The Media Office handles all South Coast AQMD outreach and communications with television, radio, newspapers and all other publications, and media operations. The August report is listed below:

Major Media Interactions	110
Press Releases	10
News Carousel	5

Major Media Topics:

- **Rail Yards Indirect Source Rule (ISR):** Staff participated in an interview with KVCR following adoption of the new rule. The Los Angeles Times requested clarification on the rule and the Editorial Board had questions about the Board vote. Responses were provided.
- **Coachella Valley Air Quality:** Staff participated in an interview with KESQ to discuss windblown dust (WBD) in the Coachella Valley. Reporter had follow-up questions. Responses were provided. Newsweek inquired about conditions in the Coachella Valley contributing to the WBD advisory in effect, and whether air quality conditions for smoke are different than for dust. Response was provided.
- **Warehouse Indirect Source Rule (WAIRE):** Staff participated in an interview with Spectrum News to discuss the WAIRE program. Chemical and Engineering News requested an interview to discuss findings from a study on air pollution impacts of warehouses and had questions on the rule. Response was provided.

- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL):** KHTS, The Signal, and an independent Filmmaker attended the CCL Hearing Board meeting in Santa Clarita. KNX News and Spectrum requested information on the outcome of the hearing. Informed reporters that the hearing was extended, and that information will be available once the hearing is over. LAist inquired about the number of complaints we've received for CCL since January 2024. Response was provided.
- **Aerial Advertising:** LAist inquired about whether pollution from aerial advertising is regulated/monitored. Response was provided.
- **Fontana Air Monitor:** ProPublica requested field notes pertaining to construction for the Fontana air monitoring station and requested a visit to the station. Reporter was informed there are no field notes. Site visit was conducted on August 8.
- **Atlas Metal:** Univision and the Los Angeles Times inquired about an explosion at Atlas Iron & Metal Co. Responses were provided.
- **Ecobat:** Public Health Watch had questions about an Ecobat permit issued by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Response was provided.
- **U.S. EPA Proposal on Ozone Non-attainment:** Inside Washington Publishers requested comment on the U.S. EPA proposal about South Coast AQMD ozone non-attainment and had follow ups on any State Implementation Plan/Federal Implementation Plan requirements. Responses were provided. Reporter had follow-up questions related to fees. Additional response was provided.
- **Roofing Permits:** Freelance journalist inquired about a permit and compliance information for a roofing company in Los Angeles. Response was provided.
- **Air Purifiers:** Boyle Heights Beat inquired about the number of free air purifier applications since their published article. Response was provided.
- **MATES V Report:** Capital and Main followed up on their public records request for MATES V Advanced Air Monitoring Report. Response was provided.
- **Construction Site:** The Los Angeles Times inquired about a proposed construction project in downtown Los Angeles known as Fourth and Central. Response was provided.
- **Hyperion:** The Los Angeles Times requested an interview about Hyperion violations and status updates. Interview was held on August 30.
- **Baker Commodities:** Meat+Poultry inquired about Baker Commodities' permit application to store thousands of pounds of processed animal remains per day. Response was provided.
- **Rails Yards ISR Press Release:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **Sterigenics Press Release:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **CCL Press Release:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (8/11 & 8/23):** Pitched to media outlets resulting in media coverage.

News Releases:

- **South Coast AQMD Governing Board Adopts Rail Yards Indirect Source Rule – August 2, 2024 (English and Spanish)** – Informed the public of adopted Rule 2306 - Freight Rail Yards Indirect Source Rule.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for the Coachella Valley – August 11, 2024 (English and Spanish)** – Informed the public of a PM10 Dust Advisory issued due to high winds.
- **South Coast AQMD Requires Sterigenics to Pay Over Half a Million for Permit Violations – August 22, 2024 (English and Spanish)** – Informed the public that Sterigenics paid a penalty to settle permit violation NOV's.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for the Coachella Valley and San Geronio Pass – August 23, 2024 (English and Spanish)** – Informed the public of a PM10 Dust Advisory issued due to high winds.
- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill Ordered to Take Further Action to Address Odors After Months of No Significant Improvements – August 27, 2024 (English and Spanish)** – Informed the public of additional steps required for CCL to reduce odors.

Social Media Posts:

- [Odor Advisory \(8/1\)](#): 4,432 Twitter Impressions
 - RT by @NWSSanDiego, @AirResources, @CodeRed001Blue
- [Windblown Dust Advisory \(8/11\)](#): 7,026 Twitter Impressions
 - RT by @NWSSanDiego, @AirResources, @CodeRed001Blue
- [AQ Forecast \(8/18\)](#): 1,451 Twitter Impressions
 - RT by @LAFDtalk, @CodeRed001Blue
- [Windblown Dust Advisory \(8/23\)](#): 4,226 Twitter Impressions
 - RT by @NWSSanDiego, @AirResources, @OEHHA

News Carousel:

- **The Carl Moyer Program is now accepting applications! (8/6)** – Linked to Carl Moyer Program webpage.
- **Attend the in-person only Hearing Board meeting for a status report on Chiquita Canyon Landfill (8/15)** – Linked to Hearing Board calendar.
- **Keep up with the Latest News from South Coast AQMD – View the August/September edition of the Advisor newsletter (8/15)** – Linked to the August/September Advisor webpage.
- **Attend the in-person only Hearing Board meeting for a status report on Chiquita Canyon Landfill (8/22)** – Linked to Hearing Board calendar.
- **Hot days with stagnant weather and strong sunlight can cause poor air quality (8/29)** – Linked to our Air Alerts page.

Outreach to Community Groups and Federal, State and Local Governments

Communication was conducted in August with elected officials and/or staff from the following state and federal offices:

- U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler
- U.S. Senator Alex Padilla
- U.S. Representative Pete Aguilar
- U.S. Representative Nanette Diaz Barragán
- U.S. Representative Mike Garcia
- U.S. Representative Robert Garcia
- U.S. Representative Ted Lieu
- U.S. Representative Jay Obernolte
- U.S. Representative Raul Ruiz
- U.S. Representative Maxine Waters
- Governor Gavin Newsom
- Senator Ben Allen
- Senator Bob Archuleta
- Senator Angelique Ashby
- Senator Josh Becker
- Senator Steven Bradford
- Senator María Elena Durazo
- Senator Lena Gonzalez
- Senator Brian Jones
- Senator Dave Min
- Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh
- Senator Steve Padilla
- Senator Anthony Portantino
- Senator Kelly Seyarto
- Senator Aisha Wahab
- Senator Scott Wilk
- Assemblymember Issac Bryan
- Assemblymember Sabrina Cervantes
- Assemblymember Diane Dixon
- Assemblymember Tom Lackey
- Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal
- Assemblymember Tina McKinnor
- Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi
- Assemblymember Anthony Rendon
- Assemblymember Kate Sanchez
- Assemblymember Miguel Santiago
- Assemblymember Pilar Schiavo

Outreach was conducted personally and virtually in August to communicate with elected officials or staff from the following cities:

Agoura Hills	Big Bear Lake	Colton
Alhambra	Bradbury	Commerce
Aliso Viejo	Brea	Compton
Anaheim	Buena Park	Corona
Arcadia	Burbank	Costa Mesa
Artesia	Calabasas	Covina
Baldwin Park	Calimesa	Cudahy
Banning	Canyon Lake	Culver City
Beaumont	Carson	Cypress
Bell	Cerritos	Dana Point
Bell Gardens	Chino	Diamond Bar
Bellflower	City of Industry	Downey
Beverly Hills	Claremont	Duarte

Eastvale
El Monte
El Segundo
Fontana
Fountain Valley
Fullerton
Garden Grove
Gardena
Glendale
Glendora
Hawaiian Gardens
Hawthorne
Hemet
Hermosa Beach
Hidden Hills
Huntington Beach
Huntington Park
Inglewood
Irvine
Irwindale
Jurupa Valley
La Cañada Flintridge
La Habra
La Habra Heights
La Mirada
La Palma
La Puente
La Verne
Laguna Beach
Laguna Hills
Laguna Niguel
Laguna Woods
Lake Elsinore
Lake Forest
Lakewood
Lawndale

Lomita
Long Beach
Los Alamitos
Los Angeles
Lynwood
Malibu
Manhattan Beach
Maywood
Menifee
Mission Viejo
Monrovia
Montebello
Monterey Park
Moreno Valley
Murrieta
Newport Beach
Norco
Norwalk
Ontario
Orange
Palos Verdes Estates
Paramount
Pasadena
Perris
Pico Rivera
Placentia
Pomona
Rancho Cucamonga
Rancho Palos Verdes
Rancho Santa Margarita
Redlands
Redondo Beach
Rialto
Riverside
Rolling Hills

Rolling Hills Estates
Rosemead
San Clemente
San Dimas
San Gabriel
San Jacinto
San Juan Capistrano
San Marino
Santa Ana
Santa Clarita
Santa Fe Springs
Santa Monica
Seal Beach
Sierra Madre
Signal Hill
South El Monte
South Gate
South Pasadena
Stanton
Temecula
Temple City
Torrance
Tustin
Vernon
Villa Park
Walnut
West Covina
West Hollywood
Westlake Village
Westminster
Whittier
Wildomar
Yorba Linda
Yucaipa

Staff represented South Coast AQMD in August and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following governmental agencies and business organizations:

Arroyo Verdugo Communities Joint Powers Authority
Association of California Cities – Orange County
Big Bear Municipal Water District
Carson Chamber of Commerce
Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce
Coachella Valley Resource Conservation District
Colton Chamber of Commerce
Corona Chamber of Commerce
Crestline Chamber of Commerce
East Valley Water District
El Segundo Chamber of Commerce
Fontana Chamber of Commerce
Gardena Valley Chamber of Commerce
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce
Greater Ontario Business Council
Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce
Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce
Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce
Highland Area Chamber of Commerce
Hydrogen Fuel Cell Partnership
Imperial Irrigation District
Inglewood Airport Area Chamber of Commerce
Inland Empire Health Plan
Inland Empire Regional Chamber of Commerce
Inland Empire Utilities Agency
Inland Regional Energy Network
Jurupa Community Services District
La Habra Area Chamber of Commerce
Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce
League of California Cities, Los Angeles County and Orange County Divisions
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
Los Angeles County Library
Lomita Chamber of Commerce
Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce
Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council
Mountain Transit
Ontario International Airport Authority

Omnitrans
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Council of Governments
Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
Redlands Chamber of Commerce
Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce
Riverside County Board of Supervisors
Riverside Transit Authority
San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Pedro Chamber of Commerce
SCAG
South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Southern California Association of Governments
SunLine Transit Agency
Temescal Valley Municipal Advisory Council
Upland Chamber of Commerce
Valley Industry and Commerce Association
West Valley Water District
Yucaipa Valley Chamber of Commerce

In August, staff represented South Coast AQMD and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following community and educational groups and organizations:

Bear Valley Unified School District
California State University, Dominguez Hills
California State University, Long Beach
California State University, San Bernardino
Castaic Area Town Council
Clean Power Alliance
College of the Canyons
Del Amo Action Committee
Grades of Green
Habitat for Humanity, Orange County
Habitat for Humanity, Greater Los Angeles
Inland Empire Electric Vehicle Association
Loma Linda University

Los Angeles Community College District
Los Angeles Unified School District
Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy
Pasadena Community College
Partners for Innovative Communities, San Bernardino and Riverside
Reach Out Jurupa Valley
Rialto Unified School District
Rim of the World Unified School District
Rio Hondo College
Saban Community Clinic
San Bernardino City Unified School District
San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
San Bernardino Valley College
Sierra Club
South Bay Parkland Conservancy
Torrance Refinery Action Alliance
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, Riverside
University of Redlands
Val Verde Civic Association
Valley Cultural Foundation