

BOARD MEETING DATE: January 10, 2025

AGENDA NO. 15

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the November 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 Nastri
Executive Officer

LTO:PFC:DS:bel

Background

This report summarizes the activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office for November. The report includes Major Events, Community Events/Public Meetings, Environmental Justice (EJ) Update, 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.

Working with Communities

On November 2, South Coast AQMD's Working with Communities Program partnered with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles to help build eight homes in the AB 617 Southeast Los Angeles community.

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 November events and meetings:

Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce

On November 5, staff attended the Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide information regarding the Check Before You Burn (CBYB) program.

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

On November 6, staff participated in the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Transportation Committee meeting to share the latest Advisor newsletter and information regarding U.S. EPA's Clean School Bus Rebates program.

Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce

On November 8, staff took part in a Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce Governmental Affairs Committee meeting to share information regarding the Replace Your Ride (RYR) program.

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

On November 11, staff participated in the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce Legislative Affairs Committee meeting to share information regarding the CBYB program and the latest Advisor newsletter.

Casa Blanca Community Action Group

On November 13, staff attended the Casa Blanca Community Action Group meeting to provide information regarding RYR and Residential Electric Lawn & Garden Equipment Rebate program.

Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance

On November 13, staff participated in the Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance meeting to share information regarding CBYB and thanked the Mountain Rim Fire Safe Alliance for their assistance in distributing KN95 masks provided by South Coast AQMD during the fires in September.

Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce

On November 13, staff attended the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee meeting to share information regarding CBYB.

Fountain Valley Chamber of Commerce

On November 14, staff took part in the Fountain Valley Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee meeting to announce the appointment of Orange County Supervisor Donald P. Wagner to the Governing Board and shared the latest Advisor newsletter.

Upland Chamber of Commerce

On November 14, staff participated in the Upland Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee meeting to share information regarding RYR and CBYB.

Orange County Business Council

On November 15, staff participated in the Orange County Business Council Government Affairs Committee meeting to announce the appointment of Orange County Supervisor Donald P. Wagner to the Governing Board.

Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce

On November 21, staff attended the Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide updates regarding the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust funding opportunities.

Environmental Justice Update

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

California Climate Action Team

On November 7, staff attended the California Climate Action Team Public Health Workgroup meeting. An overview of the Fifth Climate Change Assessment and Public Health Report was presented, highlighting how these resources can support local, regional, tribal, and statewide planning to avoid health impacts associated with climate change.

Pacoima Community Initiative

On November 8, staff participated in Pacoima Community Initiative's monthly meeting to share information regarding the South Coast AQMD's Clean Air Program for Elementary Students and Why Healthy Air Matters programs and how to report air quality issues.

South Coast AQMD's EJ Advisory Group

On November 14, South Coast AQMD hosted the fourth quarterly EJ Advisory Group meeting. Presentations included an update on Assembly Bill 98 (J. Carrillo), which focuses on planning and zoning related to logistics use and trucks routes, as well as an update on South Coast AQMD Rule 1135: Emissions of Oxides of Nitrogen from Electricity Generating Facilities.

U.S. EPA's National Environmental Justice Community Engagement Meeting

On November 19, staff participated in U.S. EPA's National Environmental Justice Community Engagement meeting. Agenda items included a presentation by the U.S. EPA's External Civil Rights Office and updates on Inflation Reduction Act grant programs.

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.

San Bernardino County Commuter Services

On November 19, staff attended San Bernardino County's Commuter Services monthly "Transit Tuesday" webinar to present an overview on South Coast AQMD's incentive 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 November are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD's Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2,104
Calls to South Coast AQMD's Spanish Line	5
Clean Air Connections	37
Total Calls	2,146

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 November is summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC	45
Calls to Automated System	215
Total Calls	260
Visitor Transactions	74
Email Advisories Sent	16,479

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 November.

- Provided permit application assistance to 145 companies; and
- Processed 81 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 November report is listed below:

Major Media Interactions	155
Press Releases	16
News Carousel	2

Major Media Topics:

- **Air Quality:** Staff participated in an interview with CBS News and USC Annenberg Media regarding air quality due to severe winds and fire smoke. Staff also participated in an interview with NBC to discuss the air quality and safety precautions particularly in San Bernardino County.
- **Annual Emissions Reporting (AER):** LA Public Press had questions about the AER process and national/state air quality standards. Response was provided.
- **Ports:** KTLA requested information on our upcoming Public Working Group meeting on Port Charging and Fueling Infrastructure. Response was provided.
- **Caltrans Environmental Impact Report Project:** LA Times inquired about our agency's concerns over a potential traffic plan for the Vincent Thomas Bridge project near Wilmington. Response was provided.
- **Ecobat:** Public Health Watch had follow-up questions on Ecobat violations and inspections. Response was provided.
- **Wildfires:** University of Illinois journalism graduate student requested a statement and data regarding health effects from wildfires. Response was provided.
- **Warehouse Indirect Source Rule (ISR):** Inside EPA inquired about enforcement actions against warehouses and whether the actions are mostly tied to the ISR. Response was provided.
- **Hydrogen Sulfide:** Voice of San Diego requested an interview and resources on hydrogen sulfide guidelines to help evaluate SDAPCD's newly released guidelines. Reporter was referred to CARB for information on the state standard.
- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL):** Spectrum News asked for the effective date of the revised Hearing Board Order for CCL. Reporter also requested the last name of one of our legal staff members for a story. Responses were provided. KNX News requested information about the CCL modified Order of Abatement. Response was provided.
- **Ports ISR:** LA Times requested the latest update on the Ports ISR, federal emissions reductions and threat of Clean Air Act sanctions for ozone noncompliance. Response was provided. City News Service asked if we are developing a Zero-Emission Infrastructure Plan for ports. Response was provided.

- **Monitoring Efforts:** LA Public Press inquired about potential Trump administration impacts on monitoring efforts and Clean Air Act requirements. Response was provided.
- **Hyperion:** LA Times had follow-up questions on their Hyperion inquiry from September. Response was provided.
- **Air Pollution:** Cal State Northridge journalism student requested information regarding air pollution health effects and mitigation strategies. Response was provided.
- **Zero-Emission Water Heaters (Rule 1146.2):** Automation World inquired about additional resources on Rule 1146.2 and incentive programs for industrial operators and the benefits of electrification. Response was provided.
- **Methyl Bromide:** Long Beach Post requested information regarding the discovery of elevated levels of methyl bromide in West Long Beach. Response was provided.
- **Colorado Lagoon:** Long Beach Post/Long Beach Business Journal requested a comment on the Colorado Lagoon channel project in Long Beach and our confirmation on two complaint case numbers. Working on a response.
- **CCL Press Release:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **CBYB Press Release:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **New Board Member Press Release:** Pitched to media outlets.
- **No-Burn Day Advisory:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **Smoke Advisory:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in media coverage.

News Releases:

- **Check Before You Burn Pollution Prevention Program Begins November 1 – October 30, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of the start of the 13th Annual Check Before You Burn Season.
- **Orange County Supervisor Don Wagner Joins South Coast AQMD Governing Board – November 1, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of the newly appointed Board Member.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues and Expands Windblown Dust Advisories Due to High Winds – November 3, 5 & 6, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of PM10 Windblown Dust Advisories issued due to high winds.
- **No-Burn Alert: Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban in Effect for Residents of the South Coast Air Basin – November 7, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of a mandatory wood-burning ban due to predicted high air pollution.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Smoke Advisory Due to the Mountain Fire – November 7, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of a smoke advisory due to a wildfire.
- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL) Required to Take Further Actions to Address Odors – November 14, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of an Order for Abatement issued to CCL, requiring additional measures to mitigate odors.

News Carousel:

- **Get involved! Attend a working group meeting on Port Charging and Fueling Infrastructure on Fri., Nov. 15 (11/8)** – Linked to the Facility-Based Mobile Source Measures webpage.
- **Get funding for replacement or repower of combustion freight and marine, or Class 8 Freight and drayage truck projects (11/20)** – Linked to Volkswagen Mitigation Trust webpage.

Social Media Posts:

- [Windblown Dust Advisory \(11/6\)](#): 14,990 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @LAFDtalk, @michtrujillotv, @countyofLA, @NWSLosAngeles, @AirResources, @NWSSanDiego, @ReadyLA
- [Mountain Fire Smoke Advisory \(11/7\)](#): 6,591 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @BelenNBCLA, @CodeRed001Blue, @NWSSanDiego
- [AQ Forecast \(11/17\)](#): 6,336 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @KTLA, @CodeRed001Blue

Outreach to Community Groups and Federal, State and Local Governments

Communication was conducted in November 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 Barragán
- U.S. Representative Ken Calvert
- U.S. Representative Tony Cárdenas
- U.S. Representative Judy Chu
- U.S. Representative Lou Correa
- U.S. Representative Robert Garcia
- U.S. Representative Jimmy Gomez
- U.S. Representative Kamlager-Dove
- U.S. Representative Young Kim
- U.S. Representative Mike Levin
- U.S. Representative Ted Lieu
- U.S. Representative Grace Napolitano
- U.S. Representative Jay Obernolte
- U.S. Representative Katie Porter
- U.S. Representative Raul Ruiz
- U.S. Representative Linda Sanchez
- U.S. Representative Adam Schiff
- U.S. Representative Brad Sherman
- U.S. Representative Michelle Steel
- U.S. Representative Mark Takano
- U.S. Representative Norma Torres
- U.S. Representative Maxine Waters
- Senator Catherine Blakespear
- Senator Steven Bradford
- Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh
- Senator Richard Roth
- Senator Kelly Seyarto
- Assemblymember Sabrina Cervantes
- Assemblymember Laurie Davies
- Assemblymember Diane Dixon
- Assemblymember Bill Essayli
- Assemblymember Mike Gipson
- Assemblymember Chris Holden
- Assemblymember Tom Lackey
- Assemblymember Cottie Petrie-Norris
- Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez
- Assemblymember Pilar Schiavo
- Assemblymember Tri Ta

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

Agoura Hills	El Monte	Manhattan Beach
Aliso Viejo	El Segundo	Maywood
Anaheim	Fountain Valley	Menifee
Arcadia	Fullerton	Mission Viejo
Artesia	Garden Grove	Monrovia
Azusa	Gardena	Montclair
Baldwin Park	Glendale	Montebello
Banning	Hawaiian Gardens	Monterey Park
Beaumont	Hawthorne	Moreno Valley
Bell	Hemet	Murrieta
Bell Gardens	Hermosa Beach	Newport Beach
Bellflower	Hidden Hills	Norco
Beverly Hills	Huntington Beach	Norwalk
Bradbury	Huntington Park	Orange
Brea	Inglewood	Palm Springs
Buena Park	Irvine	Palos Verdes Estates
Burbank	Irwindale	Paramount
Calabasas	Jurupa Valley	Pasadena
Calimesa	La Cañada Flintridge	Perris
Canyon Lake	La Habra	Pico Rivera
Carson	La Habra Heights	Placentia
Cerritos	La Mirada	Pomona
Chino	La Palma	Rancho Palos Verdes
Chino Hills	La Puente	Rancho Santa Margarita
City of Industry	La Verne	Redondo Beach
Claremont	Laguna Beach	Riverside
Colton	Laguna Hills	Rolling Hills
Commerce	Laguna Niguel	Rolling Hills Estates
Compton	Laguna Woods	Rosemead
Corona	Lake Elsinore	San Clemente
Costa Mesa	Lake Forest	San Dimas
Covina	Lakewood	San Fernando
Cudahy	Lawndale	San Gabriel
Culver City	Loma Linda	San Jacinto
Cypress	Lomita	San Juan Capistrano
Dana Point	Long Beach	San Marino
Diamond Bar	Los Alamitos	Santa Ana
Downey	Los Angeles	Santa Clarita
Duarte	Lynwood	Santa Fe Springs
Eastvale	Malibu	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

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

Association of California Cities, Orange County
Bear Valley Electric Service, Inc.
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
California Department of Toxic Substances Control
California Hydrogen Business Council
Carson Chamber of Commerce
Coachella Valley Association of Governments
Coachella Valley Economic Partnership
Corona Chamber of Commerce
Fountain Valley Chamber of Commerce
Gardena Valley Chamber of Commerce
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Greater Irvine Chamber of Commerce
Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce
Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce
Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau
Imperial Irrigation District
Inglewood Airport Area Chamber of Commerce
Inland Empire Regional Chamber of Commerce
Inland Empire Resource Conservation District
Inland Empire Utilities Agency
Inland Regional Energy Network
Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce
League of California Cities, Riverside County Division
Lomita Chamber of Commerce
Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce
Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority
Metrolink

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Monday Morning Group, Riverside
Moreno Valley Chamber of Commerce
Mountain Transit
Omnitrans
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Transportation Authority
Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
Port of Long Beach
Port of Los Angeles
Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce
Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino County Fire Protection District
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Pedro Chamber of Commerce
Santa Fe Springs Chamber of Commerce
South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce
Upland Chamber of Commerce
Valley Industry and Commerce Association
Western Riverside Council of Governments

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

Bellflower Unified School District
Downey Unified School District
CALSTART
Foundation for California Community Colleges
HOPE Collaborative
Inland Action
Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance
Long Beach Unified School District
Los Angeles Unified School District
Montebello Unified School District
Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council
Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District
Reach Out, Jurupa Valley
Rim of the World Unified School District

San Bernardino Valley College
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Riverside
Upland Unified School District