

BOARD MEETING DATE: March 1, 2024

AGENDA NO. 7

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the January 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

DA:LT:PC:CL:DS:mc:cb:bel

BACKGROUND

This report summarizes the activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office for January. 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 Saturday, January 27, South Coast AQMD partnered with the Habitat for Humanity to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by helping to build two homes in the San Bernardino Muscoy AB 617 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 January events and meetings:

South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce

On January 2, staff attended the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce meeting to provide an update on Clean Air Awards nominations and upcoming working groups for rulemaking proceedings.

Healthy Jurupa Valley

On January 9, staff attended the Healthy Jurupa Valley community monthly meeting to provide information on Clean Air Awards nominations, Check Before You Burn, and other programs.

Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance

On January 10, staff attended the Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance meeting to share information on the Check Before You Burn program.

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

On January 10, staff attended the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Transportation Committee meeting. Staff presented program updates on the upcoming Rule 2305 Annual Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions (WAIRE) reporting deadline and the Carl Moyer zero-emission infrastructure program request for proposals.

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

On January 10, staff attended a South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce Legislative Affairs Committee meeting to present updates on the upcoming Rule 2305 Annual WAIRE reporting deadline and the Carl Moyer zero-emission infrastructure program request for proposals.

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

On January 11, staff attended the South Bay Cities Council of Governments' Legislative Briefing to provide information on the Governing Board's adoption of amended Rule 1180: Fenceline and Community Air Monitoring for Petroleum Refineries and Related Facilities and amended Rule 1180.1: Fenceline and Community Air Monitoring for Other Refineries.

Upland Chamber of Commerce

On January 11, staff virtually attended the Upland Chamber of Commerce meeting to share information on the upcoming Rule 2305 Annual WAIRE reporting deadline, Clean Air Awards nominations, and the Check Before You Burn program.

Big Bear Chamber of Commerce

On January 11, staff attended the Big Bear Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide information on the upcoming Rule 2305 Annual WAIRE reporting deadline, Clean Air Awards nominations, and the Check Before You Burn program.

Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce

On January 19, staff attended the Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce Public Policy meeting to provide updates on Clean Air Awards nominations and Proposed Rule 2304: Indirect Source Rule for Commercial Marine Ports Working Group meetings.

Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce

On January 23, staff attended a Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce meeting to provide information on the upcoming Rule 2305 Annual WAIRE reporting deadline.

Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

On January 24, staff attended the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce's Energy, Water, & Environmental Sustainability Council meeting to provide an update on the upcoming Proposed Rule 2304: Indirect Source Rule for Commercial Marine Ports Working Group meetings.

San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership

On January 24, staff attended a San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership's Legislative Action Committee meeting to provide updates on the upcoming Rule 2305 Annual WAIRE reporting deadline and the Carl Moyer zero-emission infrastructure program request for proposals.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) UPDATE

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

U.S. EPA

On January 10, staff participated in U.S. EPA's webinar on the draft Policy for Public Participation in Agency Decision Making Process. The draft document outlines how the agency will engage with the public and provide meaningful public involvement in all its programs and regions.

U.S. EPA EJ Screening & Mapping Tool

On January 16, staff participated in a U.S. EPA webinar on their EJ Screening & Mapping Tool and the Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. These tools are being utilized in U.S. EPA grant opportunities to identify low-income disadvantaged communities such as the Climate Pollution Reduction Program.

California Air Resources Board

On January 23, staff participated in CARB's Meaningfully Connect with Your Community meeting on clean air and climate change. The meeting focused on collecting input on CARB's engagement model from the public, government agencies, and community-based organizations.

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.

There were no presentations in January.

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 January are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD's Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2411
Calls to South Coast AQMD's Spanish Line	32
Clean Air Connections	12
Total Calls	2455

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 January is summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC	47
Calls to Automated System	135
Total Calls	182
Visitor Transactions	172
Email Advisories Sent	33,625

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 January.

- Provided permit application assistance to 154 companies;
- Processed 96 Air Quality Permit Checklists;
- Provided assistance in filing one request for variance.

Types of businesses assisted:

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

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 January report is listed below:

Major Media Interactions	120
Press Releases	12
News Carousel	2

Major Media Topics:

- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill Violations:** Staff participated in an interview with Spectrum News to discuss the reported violations at Chiquita Canyon Landfill.
- **Ethylene Oxide (EtO):** Staff participated in an interview with Inside Health regarding our efforts in addressing EtO, the recently implemented rule and how it compares to U.S. EPA's rule.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory:** Staff participated in an interview with Univision/NBC Palm Springs to discuss wind conditions and precautions for the Coachella Valley.
- **No Burn Alert:** Staff participated in an interview with KNX and the LA Times to discuss the no-burn alert.
- **Lawn & Garden Rebate Program:** The podcast, 99% Invisible, requested an interview on the program and its impacts on air quality. OC Register also requested information on a proposed MOU between South Coast AQMD and the City of Irvine to create a rebate program exclusively for Irvine residents and businesses. Response was provided.
- **Warehouse Indirect Source Rule:** Fontana Herald News asked how many notices of violations (NOVs) were issued in relation to Rule 2305 for warehouses in Fontana, and how that number compares to other cities. Response was provided. KCVR News inquired about warehouse NOVs. Response was provided. Journal of Commerce requested information on NOVs related to Rule 2305 by South Coast AQMD. Response was provided.
- **Tustin Hangar Fire:** The Los Angeles Times inquired about the Tustin Hangar Fire incident and whether air quality complaints are still being received, and other issues related to asbestos. Referred reporter to the Joint Information Center.
- **Port of Los Angeles:** Freelance writer expressed interest in the Port of Los Angeles and asked for an estimate of commercial trucks operating in the South Coast Air Basin. Response was provided.
- **Tesla Funding:** TechCrunch inquired about the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure grant application South Coast AQMD submitted with Tesla. Response was provided.
- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill Hearing:** KTLA had questions about the Chiquita Canyon Landfill hearing. Responses were provided. The Signal requested documents referenced at the Hearing. Information was provided. The Los Angeles Times, CBS and ABC 7 requested information, images, and videos from the hearing board proceedings on Chiquita Canyon Landfill. Information was provided. ABC7 requested information on Chiquita Canyon Landfill, including the timeline to correct the issues, whether sensors are in place at the landfill and what is next for residents dealing with the odor. Response was provided. KCAL requested information on next steps following the issuance of NOVs to Chiquita Canyon Landfill. Response was provided. ABC7 and Newsweek asked about potential health impacts due to the Chiquita Canyon Landfill. Responses were provided. Newsweek followed up with questions regarding air monitoring. Working on responses.

- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill Methane Leak:** KCAL inquired about a potential methane leak at Chiquita Canyon Landfill. Response was provided.
- **Air Monitoring Sites:** KESQ requested a list of the locations of South Coast AQMD's air quality monitoring sites in the Coachella Valley. Follow-up questions were provided on specific locations. Responses were provided. The Los Angeles Times inquired about which monitoring stations have the worst PM 2.5 and requested information related to the Mira Loma air monitoring station. Response was provided.
- **No-Burn Alert:** The Los Angeles Times, NBC News & KTLA inquired about a no-burn alert. Responses were provided.
- **China Shipping:** Law 360 requested a comment regarding the China Shipping litigation. Response was provided.
- **Port Indirect Source Rule:** Politico requested an interview or comment in response to labor unions saying proposed Indirect Source Rule for Ports will automate and reduce the work force. Response was provided.
- **State Implementation Plan (SIP):** Inside Washington News requested letters referenced in the Federal Register notice on PM2.5 standard. Response was provided.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (1/7 & 1/10):** Pitched advisory to media outlets resulting in coverage.
- **No-Burn Alert Advisory (1/14, 1/15 & 1/16):** Pitched advisory to media outlets resulting in coverage.
- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill Hearing PR (1/17):** Pitched press release to media outlets resulting in coverage.

News Releases:

- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for Coachella Valley — January 7, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of a Windblown Dust Advisory due to elevated particle pollution (PM10).
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for Portions of Riverside County — January 10, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of a Windblown Dust Advisory due to expected elevated particle pollution (PM10).
- **South Coast AQMD Issues a No-Burn Alert: Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban Effect for South Coast Air Basin Residents — January 14-16, 2023 (English & Spanish):** Informed the public of the mandatory wood-burning ban.
- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill Required to Take Additional Steps to Address Oozing Liquid Causing Foul Odors, Increase Air Monitoring and Public Transparency — January 17, 2024 (English & Spanish):** Informed the public of the modifications to the order for abatement in place for Chiquita Canyon Landfill.

Social Media Posts:

- [AQ Forecast \(1/3\)](#): 1,299 Twitter Impressions
 - RT by @AIRnow, @AIRnow, @LAFDtalk
- [AQ Forecast \(1/4\)](#): 1,152 Twitter Impressions
 - RT by @AIRnow, @LAFDtalk
- [AQ Forecast \(1/14\)](#): 1,347 Twitter Impressions
 - RT by @LAFDtalk
- [AQ Forecast \(1/19\)](#): 1,892 Facebook Impressions
 - FB Shares by @AirNow, @Orange County Wildfire Incidents, @Riverside County Wildfire Incidents, @Fire Department Incidents/Riverside County, @Fire and Police Watch in Southwest Riverside County
- [AQ Forecast \(1/30\)](#): 1,138 Twitter Impressions
 - RT by @LAFDtalk, @805weather, @AIRNow

News Carousel:

- **“1st Annual Compliance Reports for Phase 2 Warehouses Due Jan. 31 - Phase 1 operators must submit their 2nd Annual WAIRE Report”** — Linked to online reporting webpage.
- **“Apply by 2/6 for funding for infrastructure projects supporting deployment of zero emission heavy duty vehicles and other equipment”** — Linked to funding application webpage.

OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY GROUPS AND FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

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

- U.S. Senator Alex Padilla
- U.S. Representative Pete Aguilar
- U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán
- U.S. Representative Robert Garcia
- Senator Ben Allen
- Senator Bob Archuleta
- Senator Steven Bradford
- Senator Maria Elena Durazo
- Senator Lena Gonzalez
- Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh
- Senator Maria Elena Durazo
- Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas
- Assemblymember Sabrina Cervantes
- Assemblymember Mike Fong
- Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia
- Assemblymember Mike Gipson
- Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal
- Assemblymember Tina McKinnor
- Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi
- Assemblymember James Ramos
- Assemblymember Eloise Gomez Reyes
- Assemblymember Avelino Valencia
- Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur

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

Banning	Hawthorne	Palos Verdes Estates
Beaumont	Hemet	Pasadena
Big Bear Lake	Hermosa Beach	Perris
Burbank	Inglewood	Pomona
Calimesa	Irwindale	Rancho Cucamonga
Canyon Lake	Jurupa Valley	Rancho Palos Verdes
Carson	La Habra Heights	Redondo Beach
City of Industry	La Verne	Riverside
Claremont	Lake Elsinore	Rolling Hills
Coachella	Lawndale	Rolling Hills Estates
Colton	Lomita	San Bernardino
Corona	Long Beach	San Fernando
Cudahy	Los Angeles	San Jacinto
Diamond Bar	Manhattan Beach	Santa Clarita
Eastvale	Menifee	South Pasadena
El Monte	Mission Viejo	Temecula
El Segundo	Monterey Park	Torrance
Gardena	Moreno Valley	Upland
Glendale	Murrieta	Wildomar
Glendora	Norco	

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

Alhambra Chamber of Commerce
Anaheim Chamber of Commerce
Arcadia Chamber of Commerce
Banning Chamber of Commerce
Big Bear Chamber of Commerce
Burbank Chamber of Commerce
California Air Resources Board
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
California Department of Insurance
California Department of Transportation
California Energy Commission
California State Transportation Agency
Coachella Valley Association of Governments
El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce
Foothill Transit

Glendale Chamber of Commerce
Glendora Chamber of Commerce
Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce
Inland Action
Inland Regional Energy Network
Inland Empire Resource Conservation District
Kaiser Permanente
League of California Cities
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority
Metrolink
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Mountain Transit
Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce
National Park Service
OmniTrans
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Council of Governments
Orange County Transportation Authority
Port of Long Beach
Port of Los Angeles
Riverside Transit Agency
San Bernardino County Fire Protection District
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Bernardino International Airport
San Fernando City Chamber of Commerce
San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy
San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership
San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce
Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce
South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Southern California Association of Governments
SunLine Transit Agency
Upland Chamber of Commerce
Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service
U.S. Green Building Council
Valley Industry & Commerce Association
Western Riverside Council of Governments

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

California State University, Fullerton

California State University, San Bernardino

City of Hope

Habitat for Humanity, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Orange County, and Riverside

Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance

Inland Empire Health Plan

Plaza de la Raza

Plug In America

Polytechnic School

Rancho Santiago Community College District

Sustainable Claremont

University of California, Riverside