

Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board

FROM: Aeron Arlin Genet, Air Pollution Control Officer 

CONTACT: Lyz Bantilan, Public Information Officer, (805) 979-8283

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 October 20, 2022.

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 (Twitter, 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 October 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, media interest in the District included the following coverage:
 - Various prescribed burns (Spaulding/Midland, Chamberlin, VSFB, Painted Cave, TREX trainings, and BarM): *Santa Barbara Independent*, *KEYT*, *KSBY*, *Edhat*, *Santa Barbara News-Press*, *Santa Ynez Valley News*, and *Santa Maria Times*
 - Marine Shipping Program: *KCLU*
 - Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program: *Grist* and *Salon* (same article)
 - Santa Barbara Harbor Commission meeting and cruise ships: *Santa Barbara Independent*

Community Programs

- **Clean Air Center Programs:** Earlier this year, the District issued a news release regarding funding availability for a regional clean air center and conducted follow-up outreach to eligible entities. The funding comes from a statewide pilot program administered by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association. Applicants were asked to apply for one of these project types: 1) HVAC upgrades, 2) high-efficiency air filter purchases, or 3) portable air purifier purchases. Facilities located in low-income or disadvantaged communities were encouraged to apply. Applications were submitted at the end of June. As of now, some applications have been approved for funding and others are still being reviewed. The District is excited that the Isla Vista Community Services District was a successful applicant (see the IVCSA news release [here](#)) and will discuss outreach partnership opportunities with them. If other organizations in Santa Barbara County are selected, the District will seek to partner with them as well. Entities that receive funds will need to make their facility publicly available as a “clean air center” during wildfire smoke events. At the federal level, a Congressional representative’s office recently approached our agency for background information about our Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program for Guadalupe and Casmalia residents, as they have efforts underway to seek out federal funding in the upcoming session.

Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts

- **CalEnviroScreen Outreach:** Since presenting to your Board about CalEnviroScreen in March, District staff held multiple meetings with the staff and/or city managers for the cities of Goleta and Guadalupe regarding understanding the metrics used to calculate their rankings, clarifying the District’s role with relevant metrics, and providing suggestions for other agencies the cities could work with to address other areas of concern. District staff have also had related meetings with staff from the Santa Barbara County Agricultural Commissioner’s office, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, and CALEPA’s Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. Moving forward, the District will continue to partner with the cities, county, and state agencies as requested and highlight state funding opportunities that are provided specifically for disadvantaged communities.

More information about the CalEnviroScreen presentation to your Board from March 2022 can be found on our website: www.OurAir.org/apcd-board-actions-march-17-2022/.

- **Prescribed Burns:** During this period, District staff coordinated with different fire agencies on multiple upcoming prescribed burns. Due to the high volume of burns during this time, the District created a new webpage, linked from our homepage, listing all of the burns: www.OurAir.org/prescribed-burns-schedule/. For prescribed burns, the District works with fire partners to complete a two-step public notification process: 1) a news release is issued once the burn window is identified, and 2) a follow-up media advisory is issued the day before or morning of the selected burn day. The District also posts information about all burns on our social media accounts. As needed, portable air quality monitors are installed nearby to monitor for any smoke impacts to surrounding areas.
- **Cruise Ships and Air Pollution:** On December 1, District staff presented to a subcommittee of the City of Santa Barbara Harbor Commission regarding cruise ships and air pollution, at the Harbor Commission's request. Staff provided information about the types of air pollutants emitted by cruise ships and estimates of the pollution associated with a typical cruise ship visiting Santa Barbara. Emissions were put into perspective by comparing them to the emissions from passenger vehicles and seeing how cruise ships fit into the county's overall emission inventory. Coincidentally, on the same day as the presentation, CARB released an updated analysis of emission-control technologies for ocean-going vessels, including cruise ships and at-anchoring activity; that day, District staff had a meeting with CARB staff to discuss potential air quality mitigation for Santa Barbara's cruise ship program. The District will be reviewing CARB's analysis and will continue to be a resource to the City of Santa Barbara regarding air pollution questions about cruise ships. Materials from the December 1 Harbor Commission subcommittee meeting can be found on the City's website: <https://santabarbaraca.gov/harbor-commission/harbor-commission-agendas-documents>.

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.