




## Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board  
FROM: Aeron Arlin Genet, Air Pollution Control Officer   
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SUBJECT: Update on Public Outreach Activities

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### 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 15, 2019.

### 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 August 15 meeting to present.

#### Agency Awareness

- **OurAir.org Website Revamp:** Efforts continue with website design professionals to revamp the District website to improve the navigation, maximize popular webpages for easy access, and refresh the overall look. The website will launch in the coming months.

- **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, the District received media interest on the following issues:
  - District’s limited authority regarding odors from the growing of cannabis: *Santa Barbara Independent, Carpinteria Coastal View News, and KEYT*
  - Marine shipping program: *Los Angeles Times*
  - Upcoming prescribed burns: *Santa Ynez Valley News, Edhat, Noozhawk, Santa Maria Times, KEYT, and Lompoc Record*
  - 2019 Clean Air Grants: *Edhat*
  - District grants issued in 1995 and 2003 to Truth Aquatics: *Santa Barbara News-Press*
  - Buellton vegetation fires: *Noozhawk*
  - California Clean Air Day: *KEYT, Noozhawk, and Edhat*
  - Trump Administration comments regarding air quality standards: *Santa Barbara Independent*
  - Use of back-up generators during power shutoffs: *Edhat*
  - District and Santa Barbara County Public Health Department guidance on “clean air rooms”: *Edhat*
  - Electric vehicle charging stations: *KEYT*
  - HVI Cat Canyon bankruptcy proceedings: *Santa Maria Sun*

### **Community Programs**

- **Clean Air Day:** On October 2, the District collaborated with SBCAG/Traffic Solutions, Santa Barbara County Public Health Department, Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District, and Sansum Clinic to encourage Santa Barbara County residents to take three steps to participate in California Clean Air Day. Those three steps were to 1) sign up to receive air quality alerts, 2) learn more about air pollution and health, and 3) try alternative transportation this October. The District shared these messages via a news release and social media, as well as at a Clean Air Day celebration at Marian Regional Medical Center in Santa Maria.
- **Wildfire Preparedness:** In September as part of National Preparedness Month, the District and Santa Barbara County Public Health Department issued a joint news release encouraging Santa Barbara County residents to prepare for future instances of wildfire smoke by creating “clean air rooms” in their home. High-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) purifiers can remove 90 percent of particles indoors, which is especially important when more time is spent inside during wildfires. HEPA purifiers can be purchased in stores and online, and a DIY version can be made by attaching a MERV-rated air filter to a box fan.
- **Education programs:** The District’s Clean Air Ambassadors program is gearing up for its second year, with 10 potential classroom visits in October and five scheduled for November throughout the county. Due to the popularity of the program among teachers, staff are also working to recruit two additional Ambassadors. More than 20 UCSB and

Westmont College students applied, including some who are fluent in Spanish. In other education news, the District recently announced the annual application period for the Care for Our Earth Grants, which provide mini-grants to K-12 teachers for completing environmental projects in their classrooms. The grants are a partnership with the Santa Barbara County Education Office and Santa Barbara County Water agency.

### **Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts:**

- **Marine Shipping Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) Program:** The 2019 VSR program continues, running through November 15. Fifteen companies are participating this year, an increase from the 12 companies enrolled in the 2018 program; these 15 companies represent 75 percent of the container ship and auto carrier transits in this region. A mid-season update was provided to the participating companies, outlining each company's compliance with the voluntary program thus far and reminding companies of the award tiers. Mid-season summary results are available at [www.ourair.org/air-pollution-marine-shipping/](http://www.ourair.org/air-pollution-marine-shipping/).
- **CAC Meetings on 2019 Ozone Plan:** The District Community Advisory Council (CAC) had an informational-only meeting on August 28 to begin discussing the 2019 Ozone Plan. This triennial update will include seven chapters addressing air quality trends, emissions inventory, stationary source control measures, transportation control measures, voluntary incentive programs, and maintenance strategies. The CAC will meet again on October 23 to consider the entire 2019 Plan. After CAC consideration, the District will bring the Ozone Plan to the District Board for proposed adoption.
- **Prescribed Burns:** This period has seen a lot of coordination between the District and fire agencies in preparation for and execution of several prescribed burns. District staff worked with the Santa Barbara County Fire Department and Santa Maria City Fire Department on a burn in September at the Santa Maria Airport. District staff are also working with the Santa Barbara County Fire Department on larger upcoming burns at the Righetti Ranch and the BarM/Barham Ranch. District staff have also been coordinating with the Vandenberg Air Force Base Fire Department on two separate prescribed burns planned for the base. For every prescribed burn, the District completes a two-step public notification process: 1) a news release is issued once the burn window is identified, and 2) a follow-up advisory is issued the day before the burn occurs. In addition, portable monitoring devices (EBAMs) are temporarily installed at neighboring schools to assess potential air quality impacts from the prescribed burns.

### **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.