




air pollution control district
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Agenda Item: E-3
Agenda Date: March 17, 2022
Agenda Placement: Admin
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No

Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board

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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 January 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 January meeting to present.

Aeron Arlin Genet, Air Pollution Control Officer

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, the District received media attention on the following issues:
 - Prescribed burns: *Santa Barbara Independent*, *KSBY*, *Edhat*, *Santa Barbara News-Press*, *KCLU*, and *KEYT*
 - Marine Shipping Program: *Port News*
 - COVID-19 impact on air quality: *Santa Maria Times* and *Lompoc Record* (same article)
 - Cannabis and air quality: *KEYT*, *Santa Barbara Independent*, *Noozhawk*, (all same article) and *Lompoc Record*

Community Programs

- **Clean Air Grants Survey:** The District surveyed participants of the 2020 Clean Air Grants program to receive feedback on their experience with the new, cleaner equipment, and how the grant process can be improved. Nineteen percent of applicants (15 out of 79 applicants) responded, including applicants from the off-road, infrastructure, marine engine, and school bus programs. Overall, participants are very satisfied with their new equipment, giving an average score of 4.86 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest rating. Benefits of using the new equipment are dependability, low maintenance, efficiency, employee satisfaction, modern features, fuel savings, and environmental benefits (Figure 1 below). The survey asked applicants how they first learned of the program so that District outreach efforts can be improved (Figure 2 below). The survey respondents also gave helpful feedback for how the program can be improved, including providing more transparency during the application selection process, giving better instructions for required paperwork, and allowing more time for the new equipment to be delivered or installed. Overall, 88 percent of the respondents said they would participate in the Clean Air Grants program again.

Figure 1: Benefits of New Equipment

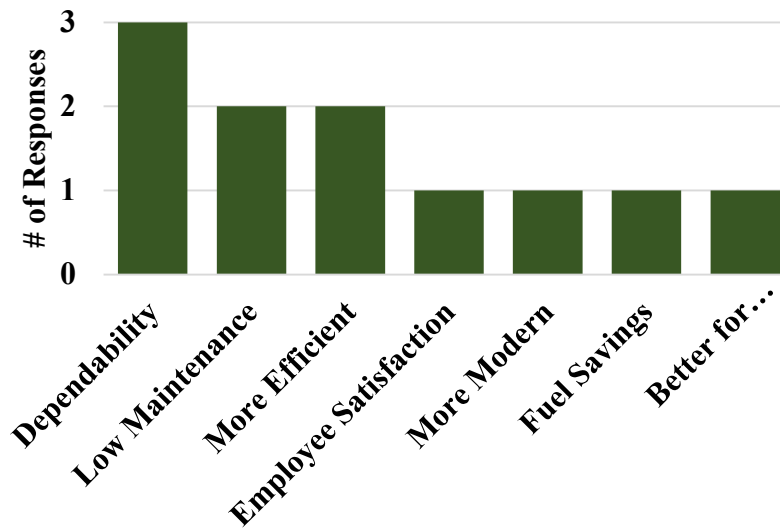
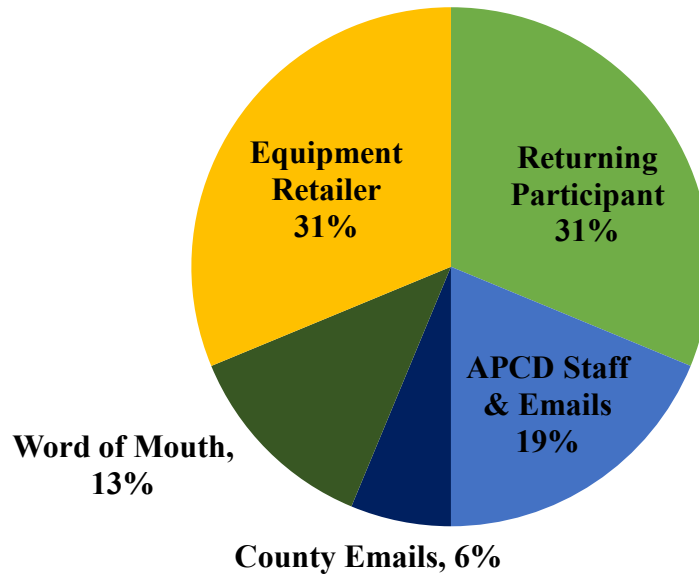


Figure 2: How Applicants Learned of Program



Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts

- **Prescribed Burns:** During this period, District staff continued to coordinate with Santa Barbara County Fire Department on a planned prescribed pile burn project in the Painted Cave area. The District also coordinated with U.S. Forest Service officials for their annual series of prescribed pile burns on forest lands. 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 advisory is issued the day before the burn occurs. As needed, portable air quality monitors are installed nearby to monitor for any smoke impacts to surrounding areas. The District is also working on an infographic about the benefits of prescribed burns, and our process working with fire agencies.

Also during this time, the APCO met with representatives for the Santa Ynez Chumash Environmental Office, Community Environmental Council, and LegacyWorks group to raise awareness about the District’s robust prescribed burn program as part of stakeholder meetings for the Indigenous Burn Project. More information about the project can be found here: <https://www.sbcwildfireresilience.org/projects/indigenous-burning>.

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.