


## Board Agenda Item

TO: Air Pollution Control District Board

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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 January 19.

### 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.

## 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:
  - Prescribed pile burns on USFS land: *Edhat*, *KEYT*, and *News-Press*
  - Assembly Bill 953 (Marine Shipping Program): *Santa Barbara Independent*, *Edhat*, *Daily Republic* (Bay Area), and *My Logistics Magazine*
  - Summerland Beach oil sheen: *Noozhawk*, *KEYT*, and *KSBY*
- **E-newsletter:** The District issued a bilingual e-newsletter earlier this month to approximately 1,800 subscribers. People can sign up to receive future news and alerts on the District website: [www.OurAir.org/subscribe](http://www.OurAir.org/subscribe). Articles in the March edition covered the following topics:
  - Our agency's 2023 goals and priorities, plus some 2022 highlights
  - An introduction to our Planning, Compliance, and Outreach interns
  - A recap of the October, December, and January Board of Directors meetings
  - Reminder about the District's new phone numbers

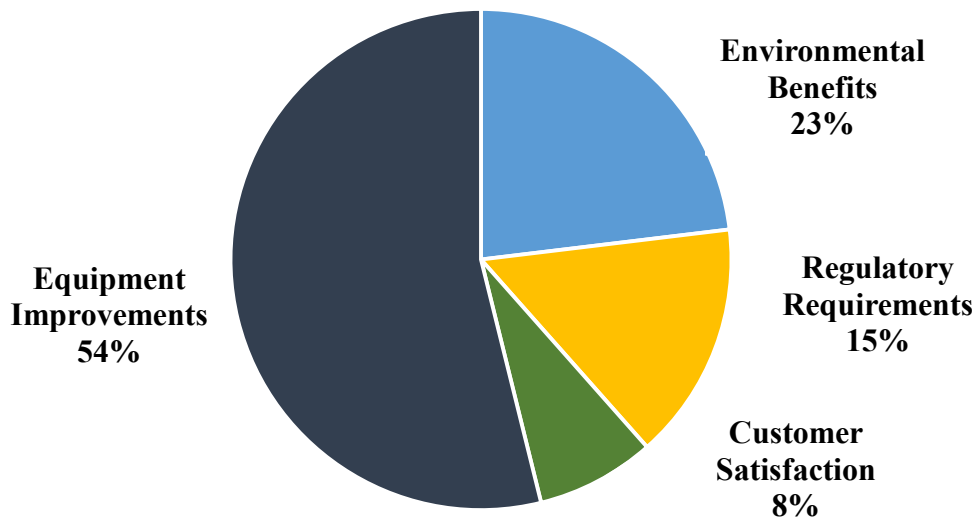
## Community Programs

- **Clean Air Grants 2021 Survey Responses Summary:** The District surveyed participants of the 2021 Clean Air Grants program to receive feedback on their experience with the new, cleaner equipment, and how the grant process can be improved.
  - Seventeen percent of applicants (13 out of 77 applicants) responded to the survey; respondents were from the off-road (respondents from 10 of these projects), infrastructure (respondents from 2 of these projects), and marine engine (respondent from one of these projects) categories.
  - Overall, participants are satisfied with their new equipment, giving an average score of 4.4 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest rating.
  - Figure 1 displays reported benefits and challenges of using the new equipment. Participants are experiencing benefits such as having fewer breakdowns and lower maintenance costs. Some common challenges are related to charging issues and employees adapting to the new equipment.
  - The survey asked applicants about what motivated them to apply to the program (Figure 2). The main motivation for most surveyed participants (54%) is to improve and upgrade their equipment. Other motivators include helping the environment (23%), getting ahead of regulatory requirements (15%), and improving customer satisfaction (8%).
  - The survey respondents also provided helpful feedback on program improvements, including allowing more time for the application process and providing training resources for staff to learn how to use the new equipment.
  - Overall, 92% of the respondents said they would participate in the Clean Air Grants program again.

**Figure 1: Applicant Benefits and Challenges of Using New Equipment**

<u>Benefits/Challenges</u>	
“Lower maintenance costs	Getting employees adapted
Increased customers	Need permanent charging infrastructure
Less downtime	ChargePoint issues
No breakdowns	Chargers are slower
Residents benefit from free charging	Battery size isn’t suitable for all day charging
Higher efficiencies	Teaching operators how to care for equipment”

**Figure 2: Applicant Motivation for Participating in Program**



**Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts**

- Prescribed Burns:** During this period, District staff continued to coordinate with the Los Padres National Forest fire crew on prescribed pile burns on various remote forest sites, scheduled to occur through the spring during favorable conditions. 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. (For the prescribed pile burns on forest land, the District coordinates with the fire crew to issue a media advisory each week that burning will occur.) The District also posts information about all burns on our social media accounts and sends a text alert to subscribers the day before burning starts. As needed, portable air quality monitors are installed nearby to monitor for any smoke impacts to surrounding areas.

**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.