




Agenda Item: E-1
Agenda Date: May 16, 2024
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Continued Item: No

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 March 21, 2024.

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 March 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:
 - “Blue Whales and Blue Skies” program: *Lompoc Record*, *Santa Maria Times*, *Maritime Executive*, and *Supply Chain Dive*
 - Prescribed Burns: *KEYT*, *Edhat*, and *Noozhawk*
- **Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget:** The draft budget was publicly noticed on March 29. It was posted on the District’s website and sent electronically to more than 1,400 interested parties and permit holders, and via the postal service to approximately 50 other stakeholders. A virtual public workshop was held on April 16 and attended by three members of the public. The District is holding two Board hearings to consider this proposed budget: May 17 and June 20.

Community Programs

- **Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program – Replacement Filters:** In April, in partnership with the City of Guadalupe, the District promoted a one-day giveaway of remaining replacement filters for participants in the 2021 Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program; under the program, the District gave away approximately 800 free air purifiers to residents of Guadalupe and Casmalia. Outreach about the April 16 giveaway of free replacement filters included adding a bilingual flyer insert to all Guadalupe residents’ utility bills, sharing bilingual information on Instagram and Nextdoor, and providing the flyer to the school district to share with parents. Between this April giveaway day and others in November 2023, the District provided approximately 400 replacement filters to program participants. Guadalupe residents who picked up the filters let District staff know that they were grateful for the Clean Air Rooms Program, having noticed a decrease in illnesses and improved bronchitis and asthma symptoms since receiving their free air purifiers.
- **Earth Day:** The District marked Earth Day this year with two separate events. On April 20, the District sponsored and some District staff participated in a beach clean-up of Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve. The clean-up day — hosted by the Guadalupe Dunes Center — removed approximately 200 pounds of trash from the beach. The following weekend, on April 27 and 28, District staff and interns helped share information at the Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition (C5) booth at the Santa Barbara Earth Day Festival. C5, a nonprofit organization administered by the District, supported the festival as a long-standing event sponsor and production partner of the Green Car Show. The two-day event attracted 28,000 attendees, resulting in more than 225 electric vehicle (EV) test drives and 150 e-bike demo rides. Visitors to C5’s booth learned about relevant EV rebates and incentives, local EV charging infrastructure, and the District’s 2023 Toyota Plug-In Hybrid RAV 4 Prime fleet vehicle.

- **California Clean Air Day:** The Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO) has joined the Central Coast coordinating committee for California Clean Air Day. Promoted by the Coalition for Clean Air, Clean Air Day occurs on the first Wednesday of October (October 2 this year) and aims to increase awareness about the importance of improving air quality and maintaining air quality progress. The regional committee is chaired by Director Das Williams and includes partners from Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. Partners will coordinate on outreach ahead of Clean Air Day, and the District's goal is to promote available microgrants to secure as many regional events on Clean Air Day as possible. More information on the microgrants is available on the Clean Air Day website: <https://www.cleanairday.org/events/microgrant-program/>.

Interagency and Regulatory Support Efforts

- **Prescribed Burns:** During this period, District staff worked with partner agencies in planning for and implementing prescribed burns. The District worked with the U.S. Forest Service on prescribed pile burns on Los Padres National Forest land and a burn planned for the Camino Cielo area. People can sign up to receive future prescribed burn notifications on the District's website: www.OurAir.org/subscribe.
- **Wildfire Smoke and Air Quality Alerts Preparedness:** Earlier this month, the District's Compliance Division Manager, Kaitlin McNally, provided an overview of the District's Air Quality Alerts process and wildfire smoke resources to the County Office of Emergency Management's monthly Emergency Managers Committee meeting. Also during this period, the District's Air Pollution Control Officer and Public Information Officer met with County Public Health to review our joint Air Quality Alerts process to ensure continued coordination on outreach during any future wildfire smoke events. People can sign up to receive Air Quality Alerts on the District's website: www.OurAir.org/subscribe. People can find resources for keeping indoor air clean on the District's website as well: www.OurAir.org/clean-air-rooms/.

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.