

BOARD MEETING DATE: February 2, 2024

AGENDA NO. 12

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the December 2023 outreach activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office, which includes Major Events, Community Events/Public Meetings, Environmental Justice Update, Speakers Bureau/Visitor Services, Communications Center, Public Information Center, Small Business Assistance, Media Relations, and Outreach to Community Groups and Federal, State and Local Governments.

COMMITTEE: No Committee Review

RECOMMENDED ACTION:  
Receive and file.

Wayne Nastri  
Executive Officer

DJA:LTO:PFC:EJH:sp:mc

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## **BACKGROUND**

This report summarizes the activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office for December. The report includes Major Events, Community Events/Public Meetings, Environmental Justice (EJ) Update, Speakers Bureau/Visitor Services, Communications Center, Public Information Center, Small Business Assistance, Media Relations, and Outreach to Community Groups and Governments.

## **MAJOR EVENTS (HOSTED AND SPONSORED)**

Each year, staff engage in hosting and sponsoring several major events throughout South Coast AQMD's four-county jurisdiction to promote, educate, and provide important information to the public regarding reducing air pollution, protecting public health, and improving air quality while minimizing economic impacts.

There were no major events hosted nor sponsored in December.

## **COMMUNITY EVENTS/PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Staff engaged with residents and stakeholders to provide information about the agency, incentive programs, and ways individuals can help reduce air pollution through events and meetings sponsored by South Coast AQMD or in partnership with others. Attendees typically receive information regarding the following:

- Tips on reducing their exposure to smog and its negative health effects;
- How to file a complaint;
- Clean air technologies and their deployment;
- Invitations to or notices of conferences, seminars, workshops, and other public events;
- South Coast AQMD incentive programs;
- Funding/grant opportunities by South Coast AQMD and partner agencies;
- Ways to participate in South Coast AQMD's rules and policy development; and
- Assistance in resolving air pollution-related problems.

Staff attended and/or provided information and updates at the following December events and meetings:

### San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

On December 1, staff attended the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments Legislative event to provide information on an upcoming Climate Pollution Reduction Grant workshop and Clean Air Awards nominations.

### Healthy Jurupa Valley

On December 5, staff participated in the Healthy Jurupa Valley collaborative meeting to share updates on the Check Before You Burn program and Clean Air Awards nominations.

### South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce

On December 5, staff attended the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce meeting to provide updates on the California Energy Commission's Communities in Charge funding program and Clean Air Awards nominations.

### Supervisor Curt Hagman Open House

On December 7, staff participated in Supervisor Curt Hagman's Open House at Chino Hills City Hall. Staff provided attendees with information on how to file air quality complaints, South Coast AQMD's mobile App, Check Before You Burn and residential incentive programs.

#### Orange County Business Council

On December 12, staff participated in the Orange County Business Council's Infrastructure Committee meeting to promote nominations for Clean Air Awards and shared the latest South Coast AQMD Advisor newsletter.

#### South Bay Cities Council of Governments

On December 12, staff attended the South Bay Cities Council of Governments' Steering Committee meeting to provide information on the upcoming South Coast AQMD Climate Change Committee meeting.

#### South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

On December 13, staff participated in the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Affairs Committee meeting to provide updates on CEC's Communities in Charge funding program and Clean Air Awards nominations.

#### Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council

On December 13, staff attended the Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council Environmental Ad Hoc Committee meeting to present on how to file air quality complaints via South Coast AQMD mobile app, 1-800-CUT-SMOG® hotline and online complaint system.

#### Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce

On December 21, staff participated in the Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting to encourage nominations for Clean Air Awards.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) UPDATE**

The following are key EJ related activities in which staff participated during December. These events and meetings involve communities which are disproportionately affected by adverse air quality impacts.

#### California Climate Action Team

On December 5, staff participated in the California Climate Action Team working group meeting co-hosted by the California Department of Public Health and CARB. The meeting focused on LGBTQ+ and climate justice issues, including inequitable environmental impacts on housing and quality of life.

#### Pacoima Community Initiative

On December 8, staff participated in Pacoima Community Initiative's monthly meeting. Staff shared information on Clean Air Awards nominations, Clean Air Program for Elementary Students and Why Healthy Air Matters educational programs, and how to report air quality issues.

Coalition for Clean Air (CCA)

On December 14, staff attended the Coalition for Clean Air’s webinar on Abramowitz vs. U.S. EPA. Dr. Joseph Lyou, CCA President and CEO, and Mark Abramowitz discussed the lawsuit and its impact on air quality in California.

**SPEAKERS BUREAU/VISITOR SERVICES**

South Coast AQMD regularly receives requests for staff to speak on air quality-related issues from a wide variety of organizations, such as trade associations, chambers of commerce, community-based groups, schools, hospitals, and health-based organizations. South Coast AQMD also hosts visitors from around the world who meet with staff on a wide range of air quality issues.

There were no speaking engagements nor visitors in December.

**COMMUNICATION CENTER STATISTICS**

The Communication Center handles calls on South Coast AQMD’s main line, 1-800-CUT-SMOG®, the Spanish line, and after-hours calls to those lines. Total calls received in the month of December are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	1,894
Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Spanish Line	11
Clean Air Connections	13
Total Calls	1,918

**PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER STATISTICS**

The Public Information Center (PIC) handles phone calls and assists individuals who walk in for general information. Email advisories provide information on upcoming meetings and events, program announcements and alerts on time-sensitive issues. Information for the month of December is summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC	47
Calls to Automated System	129
Total Calls	176
Visitor Transactions	112
Email Advisories Sent	7,646

## SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

South Coast AQMD notifies local businesses of proposed regulations so they can participate in the agency’s rule development process. South Coast AQMD works with other agencies and governments to identify efficient, cost-effective ways to reduce air pollution and shares that information broadly. Staff provided personalized assistance to small businesses over the telephone, at South Coast AQMD headquarters and via virtual on-site consultation, as summarized below for December.

- Provided permit application assistance to 136 companies, and
- Processed 69 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

Types of businesses assisted:

Architecture Firms	Gas Stations	Retail Facilities
Auto Body Shops	Manufacturing Facilities	Schools
Construction Firms	Offices	Warehouses
Engineering Firms	Restaurants	

## MEDIA RELATIONS

The Media Office handles all South Coast AQMD outreach and communications with television, radio, newspapers and all other publications, and media operations. The December report is listed below:

Major Media Interactions	141
Press Releases	18
News Carousel	2

### Major Media Topics:

- **Chiquita and Sunshine Canyon Landfills:** Staff participated in an interview with LAist to discuss current challenges at Chiquita and Sunshine Canyon landfills.
- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill Violations:** Staff participated in an interview with Spectrum News 1 to discuss issues related to the Chiquita Canyon landfill.
- **Odor in South Los Angeles:** ABC7 inquired about an odor in the South LA area and if we had received any complaints about it. Response was provided.
- **Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL) Meeting:** The Signal requested information on the upcoming CCL Hearing Board proceeding. Response was provided.
- **Boyle Heights Air Quality:** Cal State Los Angeles UT Community News requested information on air quality in Boyle Heights. Response was provided.
- **Exide:** Public Broadcasting Service requested information on past efforts at Exide. Response was provided.

- **Ports and Railroad Indirect Source Rule (ISR):** Journal of Commerce sent questions concerning both Ports and Railroad ISR. Response was provided.
- **Warehouse Actions and Investments to Reduce Emissions (WAIRE) Program:** Press Enterprise inquired whether the WAIRE program would be added to the federal State Implementation Plan. Response was provided.
- **Complaint Investigations:** A freelance journalist inquired about the number of complaints it takes for South Coast AQMD to send an investigator to a site. Response was provided.
- **Baker Commodities:** LAist requested comments from us regarding the upcoming Baker Commodities hearing. Response was provided.
- **Lawn & Garden:** SCPR/LAist inquired about the Commercial Electric Lawn & Garden Equipment program. Response was provided.
- **Oil Drilling:** Southern California Public Radio and LAist requested information on oil drilling and compliance and enforcement related to rules. Response was provided.
- **Fontana Warehouses:** Fontana Harold News asked how many warehouses in Fontana committed violations, and how that number compares to other cities. A list of warehouses that received a Notice of Violations (NOV) to date was provided.
- **Warehouse NOVs:** KCVR News requested an interview or written responses on Warehouse NOVs. Response was provided.
- **Lawn & Garden Rebate Program in Irvine:** Orange County Register inquired about a proposed MOU between the city of Irvine and South Coast AQMD to create a lawn and garden rebate program for Irvine residents and businesses. Response was provided.
- **Tustin Hanger Fire:** The Los Angeles Times inquired about the Tustin hangar fire incident and whether we are still receiving air quality complaints, if the fire has left a toxic footprint, and if the threat of asbestos is still a concern. Referred reporter to the Joint Information Center.
- **No-Burn Alert:** The Los Angeles Times, NBC News & KTLA inquired about the no-burn alert. Responses were provided.
- **Warehouse ISR:** The Journal of Commerce inquired about the December 19 South Coast AQMD press release on violations issued to warehouses for failing to comply with the ISR. Response was provided.
- **Port of Los Angeles:** Freelance writer expressed interest in the Port of Los Angeles and asked for an estimate of commercial trucks operating in the South Coast Air Basin. Response was provided.
- **Governing Board Press Release (12/1):** Pitched release to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (12/9):** Pitched advisory to media outlets resulting in media coverage.

- **NOV's-ISR Release (12/19):** Pitched press release to media outlets resulting in media coverage.
- **Check Before You Burn (12/24-25, 12/26-28):** Pitched advisory to media outlets resulting in media coverage.

#### News Releases:

- **South Coast AQMD Amends Rule to Further Reduce Ethylene Oxide Emissions from Sterilization Operations - December 1, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed public of amendment to Rule 1405.
- **South Coast AQMD Governing Board Re-Elects Senator (Ret.) Vanessa Delgado as Chair and Councilmember Michael A. Cacciotti as Vice Chair - December 6, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of Governing Board Chair and Vice Chair reelection.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for the Inland Empire, Orange County and Long Beach - December 9, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of a Dust Advisory issued due to particulate matter (PM10).
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Over 100 Violations Issued to Warehouses for Failing to Comply with Indirect Source - December 19, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of various violations issued to warehouses across the region.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues No-Burn Alert: Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban in Effect for South Coast Air Basin - December 24, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of the No-Burn Alert.
- **South Coast AQMD Extends No-Burn Alert: Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban in Effect for South Coast Air Basin - December 25, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of the No-Burn Alert.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues No-Burn Alert: Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban in Effect for South Coast Air Basin - December 26, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of the No-Burn Alert.
- **South Coast AQMD Extends No-Burn Alert: Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban in Effect for South Coast Air Basin - December 27, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of the No-Burn Alert.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues No-Burn Alert: Mandatory Wood-Burning Ban in Effect for South Coast Air Basin - December 28, 2023 (English and Spanish):** Informed the public of the No-Burn Alert.

#### Social Media Posts:

- [AQ Forecast \(12/2\)](#): 5,207 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @NWSSanDiego, @805weather
- [AQ Forecast \(12/13\)](#): 1,136 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @LAFDtalk, @805weather

- [AQ Forecast \(12/19\)](#): 975 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @LAFDtalk, @805weather
- [AQ Forecast \(12/26\)](#): 13,808 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @AIRnow, @NWSSanDiego, @NWSLosAngeles, @longdrivesouth, @CodeRed001Blue

**News Carousel:**

- **“Be Green for the Holidays - Simple tips to help save energy and reduce air pollution”** -- Linked to flyer.
- **“Make a New Year’s Resolution to Reduce Air Pollution!”** -- Linked to flyer.

**OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY GROUPS AND FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

Communication was conducted in December with elected officials and/or staff from the following state and federal offices:

- U.S. Senator Alex Padilla
- U.S Representative Pete Aguilar
- U.S. Representative Mark Takano
- Senator Caroline Menjivar
- Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh
- Assemblymember Eloise Gómez Reyes

Outreach was conducted personally and virtually in December to communicate with elected officials or staff from the following cities:

Agoura Hills	Calabasas	Diamond Bar
Alhambra	Calimesa	Downey
Anaheim	Canyon Lake	Duarte
Arcadia	Carson	Eastvale
Artesia	Cerritos	El Monte
Azusa	Chino	El Segundo
Baldwin Park	Chino Hills	Fontana
Banning	Claremont	Fullerton
Beaumont	Coachella	Gardena
Bell Gardens	Colton	Glendale
Bellflower	Commerce	Glendora
Beverly Hills	Compton	Grand Terrace
Big Bear Lake	Corona	Hawaiian Gardens
Bradbury	Covina	Hawthorne
Brea	Cudahy	Hemet
Buena Park	Culver City	Hidden Hills
Burbank	Desert Hot Springs	Highland

Huntington Park	Montclair	San Fernando
Indio	Montebello	San Gabriel
Inglewood	Monterey Park	San Jacinto
Irvine	Moreno Valley	San Marino
Irwindale	Murrieta	Santa Ana
Jurupa Valley	Newport Beach	Santa Clarita
La Cañada Flintridge	Norco	Santa Fe Springs
La Habra	Norwalk	Santa Monica
La Habra Heights	Ontario	Seal Beach
La Mirada	Orange	Sierra Madre
La Palma	Palm Desert	Signal Hill
La Puente	Palm Springs	South El Monte
La Quinta	Paramount	South Gate
La Verne	Pasadena	South Pasadena
Lake Elsinore	Perris	Temecula
Lake Forest	Pico Rivera	Temple City
Lakewood	Placentia	Torrance
Lawndale	Pomona	Upland
Loma Linda	Rancho Cucamonga	Vernon
Lomita	Rancho Palos Verdes	Walnut
Long Beach	Redlands	West Covina
Los Angeles	Redondo Beach	West Hollywood
Lynwood	Rialto	Westlake Village
Malibu	Riverside	Whittier
Manhattan Beach	Rolling Hills	Wildomar
Maywood	Rolling Hills Estates	Yorba Linda
Menifee	Rosemead	Yucaipa
Mission Viejo	San Bernardino	
Monrovia	San Dimas	

Staff represented South Coast AQMD in December and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following governmental agencies and business organizations:

Carson Chamber of Commerce  
 Citrus Valley Realtors  
 Clean Power Alliance  
 Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
 El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce  
 Foothill Transit  
 Gateway Cities Council of Governments  
 Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce  
 Industry Business Council

Inland Empire Health Plan  
L.A. Care Health Plan  
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce  
Los Angeles County Department of Sustainability  
Metrolink  
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California  
Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District  
Omnitrans  
Orange County Business Council  
Orange County Transportation Authority  
Port of Long Beach  
Port of Los Angeles  
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority  
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments  
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments  
San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership  
South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce  
South Bay Cities Council of Governments  
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce  
Southern California Association of Governments  
Sun Valley Area Neighborhood Council  
Western Riverside Council of Governments

In December, staff represented South Coast AQMD and/or provided updates or a presentation to the following community and educational groups and organizations:

Center for Sustainable Energy  
Cool OC  
Foundation for Early Childhood Education  
Harvey Mudd College  
League of Women Voters  
Los Angeles Community Garden Council  
Pasadena City College  
Plaza de la Raza, Los Angeles  
San Gabriel Valley Conservation Corps  
Santa Ana Unified School District  
Standford Avalon Community Garden  
Sustainable Claremont  
Wilmington Resource Center  
YWCA Pasadena-Foothill Valley