

BOARD MEETING DATE: November 1, 2024

AGENDA NO. 7

REPORT: Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Report

SYNOPSIS: This report highlights the September 2024 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

LTO:PC:DS:lb:bel:sr:cb

Background

This report summarizes the activities of the Legislative, Public Affairs and Media Office for September. 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.

Commercial and Residential Electric Lawn & Garden Equipment (eL&G) Demonstration

On September 21, South Coast AQMD partnered with the America Green Zone Alliance (AGZA) to demonstrate commercial eL&G equipment for landscapers and the public at South Gate Park. Approximately 60 attendees tested equipment and received detailed information on how to participate in the electric Commercial and Residential (eL&G) Program. Information was also provided on South Coast AQMD, air quality issues, how to file a complaint and other programs.

Community Events/Public Meetings

Staff engaged with residents and stakeholders of diverse communities 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 September events and meetings:

South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce

On September 3, staff attended the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide information on the Small Business Assistance program.

Inland Empire Grand Slam Health Jam

On September 8, staff participated in the Inland Empire Grand Slam Health Jam event in Rancho Cucamonga and shared information on Replace Your Ride (RZR), smoke advisories, eL&G Program, and how to file an air quality complaint.

Riverside County Board of Supervisors

On September 10, staff attended the Riverside County Board of Supervisors meeting to provide information on RZR.

Fullerton College

On September 10, staff participated in Fullerton College's Fall 2024 Community Resource Fair to provide information on the Mobile App, including how to check for real time air alerts and wildfire safety tips.

Casa Blanca Community Action Group

On September 11, staff attended the Casa Blanca Community Action Group meeting to provide information on RYR and how to file an air quality complaint.

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

On September 11, staff participated in the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce meeting to provide information on how to use the Mobile App, including how to check for real time air alerts and wildfire safety tips.

Upland Chamber of Commerce

On September 12, staff took part in the Upland Chamber of Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide information regarding RYR and a recent smoke advisory.

Orange County Business Council

On September 13, staff attended the Orange County Business Council's Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide information on the latest smoke advisory and wildfire safety tips.

Greater Irvine Chamber

On September 18, staff participated in the Greater Irvine Chamber's Business Advocacy Speaker Series to provide information regarding the eL&G Program, the Mobile App, and copies of the latest Advisor.

Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce

On September 19, staff attended the Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce's Government Affairs Committee meeting to provide information about South Coast AQMD's sponsored bill, SB 1158 (Archuleta): Carl Moyer Memorial Air Quality Standards Attainment Program.

29th Annual Central Avenue Jazz Festival

On September 21, staff participated in the 29th Annual Central Avenue Jazz Festival in Los Angeles to provide information on how to file an air quality complaint, the Mobile App, Check Before You Burn, and wildfire safety tips.

Orange County Council of Governments

On September 26, staff attended the Orange County Council of Governments' Board of Directors meeting to provide information on RYR.

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

On September 26, staff attended the South Bay Cities Council of Governments' Board of Directors meeting to provide information on the eL&G Program and the 10th Annual EJ Conference.

National Drive Electric Week EV Expo

On September 28, staff participated in the National Drive Electric Week EV Expo in San Jacinto. Staff provided information regarding RYR, how to file an air quality complaint, and what to do before, during and after a wildfire event.

Long Beach Westside Festival and Fiesta in the Park

On September 28, staff participated in Long Beach's Westside Festival and Fiesta in the Park to provide residents with information on how to file a complaint, the eL&G Program, and the Mobile App.

Environmental Justice Update

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

Pacoima Community Initiative (PCI)

On September 6, staff attended PCI's monthly meeting to provide updates on the Clean Air Program for Elementary Students (CAPES), Why Healthy Air Matters Program, and the upcoming 10th Annual EJ Conference.

Kimbark Elementary School

On September 10, staff met with Kimbark Elementary School staff to provide information regarding CAPES.

Community Engagement, Environmental Justice & Health Center (CEEJH)

From September 11-13, staff attended the 10th annual EJ Symposium hosted by CEEJH at the University of Maryland, School of Public Health.

U.S. EPA Competition Process Webinar

On September 12, staff attended U.S. EPA's Competition Process webinar intended to help grant applicants learn how to find and successfully apply for grants. U.S. EPA provided an overview of the process from application through evaluation and selection.

U.S. EPA National Environmental Justice Community Engagement Call

On September 17, staff participated in U.S. EPA's National EJ Community Engagement Call. The meeting included presentations on the National Environmental Youth Advisory Council and National EJ Advisory Council Nominations.

Opportunities for Renewable Energy on Contaminated Sites Webinar

On September 25, staff participated in a webinar hosted by U.S. EPA on the Opportunities for Renewable Energy on Contaminated Sites. The webinar included updates on the federal Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund’s three programs: the National Clean Investment Fund, the Clean Communities Investment Accelerator and Solar for All.

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.

Air & Waste Management Association (A&WMA) Webinar

On September 19, staff participated in A&WMA’s Webinar "Air Sensors – Opportunities and Challenges for Air Quality Monitoring” to present information on implementing community-based air quality monitoring programs and evaluating data.

Kangwon National University, South Korea

On September 25, staff welcomed a delegation from Kangwon National University in South Korea to learn more about air quality planning, emissions inventories, and modeling.

Los Angeles Nomadic Division

On September 27, the Los Angeles Nomadic Division, along with one of their featured artists, took a lab tour to learn more about how air quality data is collected and analyzed.

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 September are summarized below:

Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Main Line and 1-800-CUT-SMOG®	2,508
Calls to South Coast AQMD’s Spanish Line	18
Clean Air Connections	3
Total Calls	2,529

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 September is summarized below:

Calls Received by PIC	49
Calls to Automated System	150
Total Calls	199
Visitor Transactions	137
Email Advisories Sent	19,494

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 September.

- Provided permit application assistance to 199 companies, and
- Processed 85 Air Quality Permit Checklists.

Types of businesses assisted:

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

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 September report is listed below:

Major Media Interactions	448
Press Releases	52
News Carousel	6

Major Media Topics

- **Hyperion:** Staff participated in an interview with the Los Angeles Times about Hyperion violations and status updates. The reporter had follow-up questions. Response was provided.
- **Heat Wave:** Staff participated in an interview with ABC7 regarding air quality due to the heat wave. Newsweek had questions about issued advisory. Responses were provided.
- **Wildfires and Air Quality:** Staff gave interviews to KCAL, KESQ, ABC7, USA Today, NBC Palm Springs news stations, and University of La Verne students to discuss the wildfires, poor air quality, and safety precautions. Crescenta Valley Weekly requested information on air quality conditions, and information on future forecasts for the Crescenta Valley area. KVCR requested information on air quality in the Inland Empire. Newsweek inquired about forecasts and “unhealthy” conditions throughout the week. SoCal News Group inquired about air quality levels, their correlation with current fires, and the extreme heat wave. Voice of OC requested air monitor data for Orange. All inquiries were addressed.
- **Assembly Bill 98 (AB 98):** Los Angeles Times requested information on AB 98 and distance recommendations for warehouses and truck loading bays from sensitive receptors. Response was provided.
- **Ecobat:** Public Health Watch requested photographs of the air monitors at the facility’s fence line. Response was provided.
- **School Closure in Yucca Valley:** KESQ requested an interview on poor air quality causing school closures. Reporter was referred to the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District.
- **Diesel Emissions:** Freelance journalist requested data pertaining to deaths related to diesel emissions from mobile sources. Response was provided.
- **Air Purifiers:** Boyle Heights Beat inquired about the number of free air purifier applications received since they published an article on the program. Response was provided.
- **Warehouse ISR:** Inside EPA inquired about enforceability in reference to U.S. EPA’s approval of the warehouse ISR. Response was provided. SoCal News Group requested compliance and settlement information related to warehouses. Information was sent to reporter.
- **Office of Inspector General (U.S. EPA Internal Watchdog) report:** California Environmental Insider requested a comment regarding Inspector General report published in July. Response was provided.
- **Coachella Valley Air Quality:** The Desert Sun requested a copy of the presentation given to the Coachella Valley Association of Governments. Response was provided.
- **Air Monitor:** Los Angeles Times inquired about data gaps for the Big Bear City monitor. Response was provided.

- **Dry Cleaners:** LA Public Press inquired about perchloroethylene and dry cleaners. Response was provided.
- **Ports ISR:** Agri-Pulse West inquired about Port ISR information on South Coast AQMD's website. Response was provided.
- **Long Beach Odor:** ABC7 requested odor complaint information for a porta-potty facility in Long Beach. Response was provided.
- **Electric Lawn & Garden Rebate Program Press Release:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in coverage.
- **Green Framework Press Release:** Pitched to media outlets resulting in coverage.
- **Ozone Advisory (9/3 & 9/6):** Pitched to media outlets resulting in coverage.
- **Smoke Advisory (9/1, 9/6-9/19, 9/28-9/30):** Pitched to media outlets resulting in coverage.
- **Windblown Dust Advisory (9/10, 9/15 & 9/19):** Pitched to media outlets resulting in coverage.

News Releases

- **South Coast AQMD Issues Wildfire Smoke Advisory Due to Record Fire Burning in Riverside County – September 1, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of a smoke advisory issued due to a wildfire.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues and Extends Ozone Advisory Due to Heat Wave – September 3 & 6, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of a multi-day ozone (smog) event and its extension due to the heat wave affecting the region.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues and Extends Smoke Advisories Due to Multiple Wildfires – September 6-19, 28-30, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of smoke advisories issued and extended due to wildfires.
- **South Coast AQMD Issues Windblown Dust Advisory for the Coachella Valley and Banning Pass – September 10, 15, & 19, 2024 (English and Spanish)** - Informed the public of a PM10 Dust Advisory issued due to high winds.
- **South Coast AQMD Expands Lawn & Garden Incentive Program (English and Spanish) – September 20, 2024** - Informed the public of the expansion of the Residential Electric Lawn & Garden Equipment Rebate Program.
- **Shenzhen, Long Beach Ports, South Coast AQMD Sign Green Framework (English and Spanish) – September 23, 2024** - Informed the public of the signing of a memorandum of cooperation to reduce emissions in the maritime industry.

Social Media Posts

- [Ozone Advisory \(9/3\)](#): 19,700 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @KTLA, @NWSSanDiego, @NWSLosAngeles, @LongBeachCity, @DiamondBarCity, @KFIAM640, @LAFDtalk, @BelenNBCLA, @longdrivesouth (30.5K followers)
- [Line + Roblar Fire Smoke Advisory \(9/8\)](#): 30,650 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @Go511, @AirResources, @AIRNow, @SoCal_RedCross, @NWSLosAngeles, @Angeles_NF, @RivCoReady, @SBCountyPH, @SanBernardinoNF, @NWSSanDiego, @SBCounty, @KFIAM640
- [Bridge + Line + Airport Fire Smoke Advisory \(9/12\)](#): 17,281 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @AIRnow, @NWSLosAngeles, @ochealth, @SenOchoaBogh, @LACoPublicWorks, @countyofLA, @PasadenaGov
- [Windblown Dust Advisory \(9/19\)](#): 5,391 Twitter Impressions
- --RT by @NWSSanDiego, @AirResources, @CodeRed001Blue

News Carousel

- **EPA Approves South Coast AQMD's Groundbreaking Rule to Reduce Southern California Air Pollution Associated with Warehouses (9/10)**: Linked to U.S. EPA's web page containing the press release.
- **South Coast AQMD Awards Greenlane \$15M Grant to Accelerate Commercial EV Charging Infrastructure (9/9)**: Linked to article announcing award.
- **The latest Annual Report on the AB 2588 - Air Toxics "Hot Spot" Program is now available (9/12)**: Linked to AB2588 Annual Report pdf.
- **Register Now for the 10th Annual EJ Conference - to be held 10/24, at USC's Town and Gown (9/19)**: Linked to the registration webpage.
- **Volvo Trucks NA has successfully delivered 70 Volvo VNR Electric trucks as part of a \$21.5M funding initiative by the U.S. EPA and South Coast AQMD (9/25)**: Linked to press release.
- **Celebrate National Drive Electric week! Attend the "Electrify South Coast AQMD" event in Diamond Bar on Sept. 28th (9/26)**: Linked to event registration webpage.

Outreach to Community Groups and Federal, State and Local Governments

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

- U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler
- U.S. Senator Alex Padilla
- U.S. Representative Pete Aguilar
- U.S. Representative Nanette Barragán
- U.S. Representative Ken Calvert
- U.S. Representative Tony Cárdenas
- U.S. Representative Judy Chu
- U.S. Representative Lou Correa
- U.S. Representative Mike Garcia
- U.S. Representative Jimmy Gomez
- U.S. Representative Sydney Kamlager-Dove
- U.S. Representative Young Kim
- U.S. Representative Mike Levin
- U.S. Representative Ted Lieu
- U.S. Representative Grace Napolitano
- U.S. Representative Jay Obernolte
- U.S. Representative Katie Porter
- U.S. Representative Raul Ruiz
- U.S. Representative Linda Sanchez
- U.S. Representative Adam Schiff
- U.S. Representative Brad Sherman
- U.S. Representative Michelle Steel
- U.S. Representative Norma Torres
- U.S. Representative Maxine Waters
- Senator Ben Allen
- Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh
- Senator Susan Rubio
- Assemblymember Laurie Davies
- Assemblymember Mike Gipson
- Assemblymember Chris Holden
- Assemblymember Tom Lackey
- Assemblymember James Ramos
- Assemblymember Eloise Gomez Reyes
- Assemblymember Freddie Rodriguez
- Assemblymember Tri Ta

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

Agoura Hills	Bradbury	Corona
Alhambra	Brea	Costa Mesa
Aliso Viejo	Buena Park	Covina
Anaheim	Calabasas	Cudahy
Arcadia	Calimesa	Culver City
Artesia	Canyon Lake	Cypress
Azusa	Carson	Dana Point
Baldwin Park	Cerritos	Diamond Bar
Banning	Chino	Downey
Beaumont	Chino Hills	Duarte
Bell	City of Industry	Eastvale
Bell Gardens	Claremont	El Monte
Bellflower	Colton	El Segundo
Beverly Hills	Commerce	Fontana
Big Bear Lake	Compton	Fountain Valley

Fullerton
Garden Grove
Gardena
Glendale
Glendora
Hawaiian Gardens
Hawthorne
Hemet
Hermosa Beach
Hidden Hills
Highland
Huntington Beach
Huntington Park
Inglewood
Irvine
Irwindale
Jurupa Valley
La Canada Flintridge
La Habra
La Habra Heights
La Mirada
La Palma
La Puente
La Verne
Laguna Beach
Laguna Hills
Laguna Niguel
Laguna Woods
Lake Elsinore
Lake Forest
Lakewood
Lawndale
Loma Linda
Lomita
Long Beach

Los Alamitos
Los Angeles
Lynwood
Malibu
Manhattan Beach
Maywood
Menifee
Mission Viejo
Monrovia
Montebello
Monterey Park
Moreno Valley
Murrieta
Newport Beach
Norco
Norwalk
Ontario
Orange
Palos Verdes Estates
Paramount
Pasadena
Perris
Pico Rivera
Placentia
Pomona
Rancho Cucamonga
Rancho Palos Verdes
Rancho Santa
Margarita
Redondo Beach
Rialto
Riverside
Rolling Hills
Rolling Hills Estates
Rosemead

San Clemente
San Dimas
San Gabriel
San Jacinto
San Juan Capistrano
San Marino
Santa Ana
Santa Fe Springs
Santa Monica
Seal Beach
Sierra Madre
Signal Hill
South El Monte
South Gate
South Pasadena
Stanton
Temecula
Temple City
Torrance
Tustin
Upland
Vernon
Villa Park
Walnut
West Covina
West Hollywood
Westlake Village
Westminster
Whittier
Wildomar
Yorba Linda
Yucaipa

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

Arroyo Verdugo Communities Joint Powers Authority
Bear Valley Community Healthcare District
Bear Valley Electric Service, Inc.
Big Bear Chamber of Commerce
Carson Chamber of Commerce
Clean Power Alliance
Gardena Valley Chamber of Commerce
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Greater Irvine Chamber
Greater Ontario Business Council
Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce
Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau
Hollywood Chamber of Commerce
Inglewood Airport Area Chamber of Commerce
Inland Empire Regional Chamber of Commerce
Inland Valley Development Agency
Lake Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce
Lomita Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Los Angeles World Airports
Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce
Metrolink
Monday Morning Group
Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council
Mountain Transit
Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce
Omnitrans
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Transportation Authority
Palos Verdes Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce
Riverside Transit Agency
San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
San Pedro Chamber of Commerce
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

SunLine Transit Agency
Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Green Building Council
Upland Chamber of Commerce
Valley Industry and Commerce Association
Western Riverside Council of Governments

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

Breathe Southern California
California State University, San Bernardino
Casa Blanca Community Action Group
Chapman University
Coalition for Clean Air
Cool OC
Friends of the Coliseum
Loma Linda University
Los Angeles Boys & Girls Club
Los Angeles Unified School District
People's Collective for Environmental Justice
Plaza de la Raza
Reach Out Jurupa Valley
Rim of the World Unified School District
Rio Hondo College
San Bernardino City Unified School District
San Bernardino Valley College
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, Riverside
University of Redlands
Vecinos de South Pasadena