



South Coast Air Quality Management District

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NEWS

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SCAQMD Recommends Communities for Air Monitoring and Emission Reductions Plans

The South Coast Air Quality Management District today recommended several disadvantaged communities for deployment of enhanced air monitoring and/or the development of emission reduction plans. These communities, subject to approval by the California Air Resources Board and available funding from the state Legislature, will be the focus of the first year of a multi-year air quality effort initiated by Assembly Bill 617.

“We selected these communities based not only on the best scientific evidence but also extensive community input,” said Wayne Nastri, SCAQMD’s executive officer. “If chosen by the state, these communities will be the focus of an intensive effort aimed at improving their air quality.”

SCAQMD’s Governing Board today approved a staff recommendation to focus on the following four areas -- each containing one or more communities with common air quality challenges -- during the first year of AB 617 implementation:

- Wilmington, west Long Beach and Carson, near the ports and home to several oil refineries;
- East Los Angeles/Boyle Heights, a goods movement hub with several rail yards as well as schools and homes near major freeways;
- San Bernardino and Muscoy, communities with major rail yards and distribution warehouses; and
- South Gate, Huntington Park, Florence-Firestone and Walnut Park in southeast Los Angeles County, an industrial area with a major cargo rail line.

Recommendations approved today will be forwarded later this month to CARB, which, in September, is expected to select five to 10 areas statewide for the first year of the AB 617 program.

During the past five months, SCAQMD conducted extensive public outreach to develop these recommendations, including 10 focused community meetings as well as presentations at an additional 40 meetings with community groups and government agencies. Several community members and groups nominated their own communities for consideration.

SCAQMD evaluated possible communities using air quality data from its extensive air monitoring network, its Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study IV (MATES IV), information on schools near freeways and industrial areas, and CalEnviroScreen 3.0, a statewide mapping tool that helps identify communities most susceptible to sources of pollution, using environmental, health and socioeconomic data.

Using these criteria, 55 communities were identified for possible inclusion in the AB 617 program. For the first year, SCAQMD narrowed this number to several communities in four areas with the largest air pollution and socioeconomic impacts as well as those where existing resources could leverage the rapid implementation of air monitoring and/or emission reduction plans. The AB 617 program anticipates that the communities selected for the first year will serve as models for those in subsequent years.

SCAQMD also identified 14 additional areas for possible inclusion in year 2 through year 5 or 6 of the program.

AB 617 specifies that the highest priority areas shall be disadvantaged communities with high cumulative exposure burden for criteria pollutants and toxic air contaminants. For more information on SCAQMD's AB 617 activities, see www.aqmd.gov/ab617.

The SCAQMD is the air pollution control agency for Orange County and major portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside counties.