

Agenda Report

File #: 2022-2261

Agenda Date: 4/27/2022

Agenda Item No: 16.

FROM: James D. Herberg, General Manager

SUBJECT:

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2022

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file the Public Affairs Update for the month of March 2022.

BACKGROUND

Staff will provide an update on recent public affairs activities.

RELEVANT STANDARDS

- Maintain influential legislative advocacy and a public outreach program
- Build brand, trust, and support with policy makers and community leaders
- Maintain collaborative and cooperative relationships with regulators, stakeholders, and neighboring communities
- Listen to and seriously consider community input on environmental concerns

PROBLEM

The Orange County Sanitation District (OC San) is well-recognized within the water/wastewater industry; however, within our service area there is limited knowledge by our customers of the important work we do to protect public health and the environment. In general, the customers we serve do not realize that when they improperly dispose of waste into the sanitation system, it can negatively affect our sewer lines, our treatment plants, and the quality of water we supply to the Groundwater Replenishment System.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

By providing tours, community outreach, education, and general communication via OC San's website, social media outlets, and direct mailings, we can educate the community, local agencies, and businesses on our messaging such as the What2Flush program, energy production, water recycling, biosolids, and our source control program. This, in turn, helps improve the quality of wastewater that is recycled or released to the ocean.

RAMIFICATIONS OF NOT TAKING ACTION

If we do not educate the community, local agencies, and area businesses about OC San, we may not have the support necessary to deliver our mission.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Activities for the month of March 2022:

Outreach Report

An outreach report that includes tours, website postings, social media postings, construction notifications, speaking engagements, and more is included as an attachment to this Agenda Report.

Virtual Tours

To continue engaging with the community and our stakeholders, staff conducts virtual tours of Plant No. 1 which has allowed participants an opportunity to remotely visit OC San and learn how we protect public health and the environment. For this reporting period, we held two virtual tours reaching 24 people.

Social Media

Over the last month, OC San remained active on our social media accounts to continue connecting with our audience. This is a quick snapshot of what we did:

- Facebook: 19 posts and reached 2.6k people
- Twitter: 13 posts and reached 3.4k people
- Instagram: 14 posts and had 2k reached
- LinkedIn: 4 posts and had 6k reached

Presentations

This month staff provided a presentation to the Huntington Beach Southeast Council Committee Meeting to give an update on Plant No.2 activities; and at the American Council of Engineering Companies - Orange County Chapter regarding OC San's Capital Improvement Program.

March Retirees

This year, as of the publication of this agenda packet, OC San has had over 30 retirements. Due to existing social distancing guidelines, in-person gatherings are not feasible which required creativity to celebrate and recognize those who have dedicated so many years to OC San. Each retiree is receiving a congratulatory card signed by the General Manager and Board Chairman, kudos boards signed by their co-workers, and a retirement plaque.

OC Science and Engineering Fair (OCSEF)

In March, nine OC San staff members participated in the fair to judge projects submitted by 6th to 12th grade students from local schools. OC San has been participating in OCSEF for over 13 years.

Heritage Museum

OC San has been working with the Heritage Museum of Orange County for the 2021-22 school year by providing virtual content focused on OC San messaging. The material is intended to be used by teachers to discuss with the students the importance of the work performed by OC San. With in-

person visits resuming for the museum, we have developed additional material including an interactive game for the students to learn about protecting the environment.

Construction Outreach

Outreach efforts are ongoing for construction activities occurring as part of our various Capital Improvement Program projects. Construction is actively taking place in Fountain Valley, Los Alamitos, Seal Beach, Westminster, Buena Park, Anaheim, and within both of our treatment plants. Website updates, email and text alerts, and notifications continue to be distributed as the projects progress.

Internal Communication

During the month of March, we have continued to keep our employees informed of everything happening at OC San by providing information through various platforms. We continue to post to our internal website *The San Box*, working on our bi-monthly newsletter *Pipeline* (which will go out next month), and we published the *Digester* which is a one page communication located in the bathroom stalls.

Awards

American Academy of Environmental Engineers and Scientists (AAEES) Award

OC San recently won the Honor Award from AAEES for OC San's contribution of Optimized Odor Control and Cleaning in Sewer System.

California Water Environmental Association (CWEA)

OC San was recently awarded the Safety Plant of the Year by CWEA, and one of our Operators, Anthony Chang, was awarded the Operator of the Year. Anthony won at the regional level and then won at the state level beating out all the other states.

ATTACHMENT

The following attachment(s) may be viewed on-line at the OC San website (www.ocsan.gov) with the complete agenda package:

- Outreach and Media Summary Report - March 2022
- Presentation