



# LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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## Agenda Report

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**File #:** 2021-1863

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**FROM:** James D. Herberg, General Manager

**SUBJECT:**

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST 2021**

**GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION**

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file the Public Affairs Update for the months of July and August 2021.

**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 MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST 2021**

#### **Outreach Report**

An outreach report that includes tours, website postings, social media postings, construction notifications, speaker 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 the Plant 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 five virtual tours reaching 61 people.

#### **Presentations**

We had three speaking engagements during this reporting period. Staff participated in the California Water Environmental Association Women in Water, and presentations were made to the Cypress City Council and the Los Alamitos City Council on the upcoming construction of the Western Orange and Los Alamitos Trunk Sewer Projects.

#### **Plant Nos. 1 and 2 Newsletters**

As part of the ongoing outreach efforts to keep our neighbors informed and engaged, the summer issue of the Neighborhood Connection Newsletter was distributed to residents around Plant Nos. 1 and 2. The newsletters include updates on the ongoing construction of the Groundwater Replenishment System Final Expansion project, the new permitter wall, heal the bay report card, and more. The current and previous issues are available on our website at [www.ocsan.gov/construction](http://www.ocsan.gov/construction).

#### **Construction Outreach Efforts**

Outreach has started for the upcoming Los Alamitos Trunk Sewer Project which will take place in Los Alamitos, Seal Beach, and Cypress. As part of our efforts to keep the community informed, notifications have been distributed to encourage the public to sign up for text and email alerts and to frequent our website for project updates. Project details can be found at [www.ocsan.gov/LosAlamitos](http://www.ocsan.gov/LosAlamitos).

#### **Awards**

##### **Organizational Excellence from CASA**

OC San's Asset Management Program won the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) Organizational Excellence- Large Agency award. Winners were announced at the CASA Conference on August 12. OC San's Asset Management Program was recognized for its thoroughness, efficiency, and in-house development that has created an example for others to follow.

**National Procurement Award**

OC San received the National Procurement Award from the National Procurement Institute. OC San is one of only 182 agencies in the US and Canada, and one of only 36 special districts to receive this award.

**ATTACHMENT**

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

- Outreach and Media Summary Report - July and August 2021
- Presentation