
File #: 2023-3118

Agenda Date: 7/26/2023

Agenda Item No: 12.

FROM: Robert Thompson, General Manager

SUBJECT:

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2023

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file the Public Affairs Update for the month of June 2023.

BACKGROUND

Included in this report are recent activities of interest managed by the Public Affairs Office for the month of June 2023.

RELEVANT STANDARDS

- Maintain influential legislative advocacy and a public outreach program
- 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, as we do not have direct communications through a billing method, there may be limited knowledge by our customers of the important work we do to protect public health and the environment. In general, the customers we serve may 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 for the GWRS.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

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

RAMIFICATIONS OF NOT TAKING ACTION

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

PRIOR COMMITTEE/BOARD ACTIONS

July 2022 - Public Affairs Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year 2022-2024 approved.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Activities for the month of June 2023:

Outreach Report

An outreach report that includes tours, website, social media posts, construction notifications, speaker engagements, and more is attached to this Agenda Report.

Social Media

OC San messaging, announcements, and program updates were posted across OC San's social media platforms.

- Facebook: 17 posts reaching 3k people
- Twitter: 15 posts reaching 1k people
- Instagram: 22 posts reaching 4.3k people
- LinkedIn: 9 posts and reaching 7k people

Media Coverage

During the month of June, OC San was mentioned in several articles including in the *OC Register*: How safe LA and Orange County beaches are in 2023, as graded by Heal the Bay; and Heal the Bay: Wet winter fouled the water for Southern California beaches. Heal the Bay also posted their Annual Beach Report Card & River Report Card 2022-2023. There was also an article on the GWRS in the OC Hispanic Chamber of Commerce newsletter and the 97th Award Ceremony for the California Water Environment Association in Investors Observers. These and other articles can be found in the Outreach Report.

Tours, Presentations, and Industry Coverage

In June, OC San hosted eight tours and three speaking engagements including the OC Green Expo. Staff gave a presentation on Asset Management during the CWEA Conference and presented at the Municipal Information Systems Association of California South California chapter on Creating, Implementing, and Testing Your Disaster Recovery Plan. Details can be found in the Outreach Report.

Honor Walk Recognition

On June 28, OC San hosted the Honor Walk Ceremony recognizing former employees Marc Dubois and Jack Ellis and former Board Members Larry Crandall and James Ferryman for their contributions to OC San over their tenure. The Honor Walk recipients have engraved bricks at the front entrance of OC San's Administration Building at Plant No. 1.

Construction Outreach

Outreach efforts continue for OC San construction activities throughout the service area. Projects are ongoing in Fountain Valley, Seal Beach, Westminster, Buena Park, Anaheim, and within both of OC San's treatment plants. Website updates, email text alerts, and direct notifications continue to be distributed as the projects progress. In June, over 2,500 people in Seal Beach, Los Alamitos, Rossmore, and Anaheim received notifications.

Internal Communication

In June, there were 62 posts on the employee intranet -*The San Box*, four weekly emails distributed on hot topics for the week, and the employee newsletter, *The Pipeline*, was published at the end of June.

Awards

- The Government Finance Officers Association awarded OC San with the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 2021-2022 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by OC San and its management.
- OC San and OCWD won the Project Achievement Award for the GWRS from the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA).

Upcoming Activities for July:**Neighborhood Connection Newsletter**

The summer issue of OC San's community newsletter was distributed in July. The issue includes updates on infrastructure projects throughout the service area and both plants, OC San's budget process, the start of OC San in-person tours, and much more. The newsletter is distributed electronically to approximately 4,500 readers and shared on OC San's social media platforms.

Joint GWRS Staff Appreciation luncheon

OC San and OCWD are partnering to host a joint luncheon for staff to recognize their efforts in successfully completing the GWRS.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

All items mentioned are included in OC San's FY 2022-2024 Budget.

ATTACHMENT

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

- Outreach & Media Report - June 2023