



LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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Agenda Report

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Agenda Item No: 3.

FROM: James D. Herberg, General Manager

SUBJECT:

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2021

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend to the Board of Directors to:

Receive and file the Public Affairs Update for the month of February 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 (Sanitation District) is well-recognized within the water/wastewater industry; however, as a regional provider without direct access to our customers there is opportunity to always expand knowledge or awareness within our service area of the important work we do to protect public health and the environment and the part they can have to protect our sewer lines, our treatment plants, and the quality of water we supply for the Groundwater Replenishment System.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

By providing tours, community outreach, education, and general communication via the Sanitation District's website, social media outlets, and direct mailings, we have the ability to 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 actively communicate with the community, local agencies, and area businesses about the Sanitation District, we may not have the support necessary to deliver our mission.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Activities for the month of February 2021:

Virtual Tours

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our in-person Plant tours are temporarily suspended. 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 the Sanitation District and learn how we protect public health and the environment. For this reporting period, we held 5 virtual tours reaching approximately 130 people.

Presentations

The State College Sewer Construction project team participated in a virtual community meeting for the City of Anaheim to provide a project update. Additionally, staff presented on media relations at the Association of California Cities of Orange County's Public Policy Academy with a general overview of the Sanitation District and the various career options at a virtual career day.

Board Orientation

Staff prepared a virtual Board Orientation and tour to welcome the new Sanitation District Directors and Alternate Directors.

Awards

The Santa Ana River Basin Section, the local section of the California Water Environment Association, recognized those who are making waves in the wastewater industry. The Sanitation District received the following awards:

- **Michael Huls**, Lead Plant Operator, was awarded the Plant Operator of the Year
- **Steve Grande**, Lead Mechanic, was awarded the Collections System Person of the Year
- **Collection System of the Year**- 200-500 miles
- **Gimmicks and Gadgets**- Alkaline Enhanced Iron Odor Control

ATTACHMENTS

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 January - February 2021
- Presentation