



ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Agenda Report

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File #: 2025-4309

Agenda Date: 5/28/2025

Agenda Item No: 21.

FROM: Robert Thompson, General Manager
Originator: Jennifer Cabral, Director of Communications

SUBJECT:

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS UPDATE FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL 2025

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file the Legislative Affairs Update for the month of April 2025.

BACKGROUND

The Orange County Sanitation District's (OC San) legislative affairs program includes advocating for OC San's legislative interests; sponsoring legislation (where appropriate); and seeking local, state, and federal funding for projects and programs.

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

PROBLEM

Without a strong advocacy program, elected officials may not be aware of OC San's mission, programs, and projects and how they could be impacted by proposed legislation.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Continue to work with local, state, and federal officials to advocate for OC San's legislative interests. Help to create and monitor legislation and grants that would benefit OC San, the wastewater industry, and the community. To assist in relationship building efforts, OC San will continue to reach out to elected officials through facility tours, one-on-one meetings, and trips to Washington D.C. and Sacramento.

RAMIFICATIONS OF NOT TAKING ACTION

If OC San does not work with Local, State, and Federal elected officials, legislation could be passed that negatively affects OC San and the wastewater industry. Additionally, a lack of engagement may result in missed funding opportunities.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**Activities in April:****Sacramento Advocacy Day**

On April 8, Board Chairman Ryan Gallagher, General Manager Rob Thompson, OC San staff Rebecca Long, and State lobbyist, Townsend Public Affairs, Inc. traveled to Sacramento for an Advocacy Day to meet with Legislators to discuss current legislation and funding opportunities for OC San's current and future projects. The meetings included OC San's Orange County Delegation. These meetings gave us an opportunity to discuss various bills, including but not limited to:

- Senate Bill 682: This bill would, beginning January 1, 2027, prohibit a person from distributing, selling, or offering for sale a covered product that contains intentionally added PFAS, except for previously used products and as otherwise preempted by federal law.
- Senate Bill 317: This bill would require each county to establish and maintain at least one wastewater surveillance site to monitor for pathogens and public health indicators. OC San currently estimates the operational impact to be as high as 2.5 hours per week of staff time (for one location) to collect and ship samples to the State laboratory.
- Assembly Bill 643: This bill would authorize a local jurisdiction to include organic material used as a beneficial agricultural amendment towards its recovered organic waste procurement target. This would apply if the material were processed at a facility authorized by the department using specified approved technologies and if the material is licensed for end use as an agricultural fertilizer by the Department of Food and Agriculture.

CASA State and Federal Legislative Committee Meetings

On Friday, April 11 OC San staff and our State lobbyist attended the virtual CASA State Legislative Committee Meeting where topics discussed included bill updates, the current State budget, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) bills, and proposed legislation related to environmental concerns.

Additionally, OC San staff participated in the CASA Federal Legislative Committee Meeting held virtually on Monday, April 14. Discussions included Executive Branch actions such as EPA and FEMA initiatives, federal workforce reductions, and tariffs. Updates were also provided on key legislation, including permit term legislation (HR 2093), wipes legislation (HR 2269/S 1092), and PFAS liability legislation (HR 1267). Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations and federal reconciliation and tax policy packages were also reviewed.

Meeting with Assemblywoman Cottie Petri Norris

On Friday, April 18 Board Chairman Ryan Gallagher, General Manager Rob Thompson, Director of Communication Jennifer Cabral, and OC San's State lobbyist, Townsend Public Affairs, Inc., attended a virtual meeting with Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie Norris. The purpose of the meeting was to brief the Assemblymember on Supercritical Water Oxidation and Deep Well Injection and request the

inclusion of funding for innovative biosolids management solutions as a priority strategy in the state Cap-and-Trade Expenditure Plan.

Local Lobbyist

During the month of April, Whittingham Public Affairs Advisors (WPAA) OC San's Local Lobbyist has continued to monitor the various City Council agendas of each of OC San's member agencies and highlighted issues and items of relevance to OC San. Additionally, Peter Whittingham from WPAA presented at the April 9 Administration Committee where he discussed regional issues for the County and provided a forecast along with an update on the March 13 Waste Management Commission Meeting.

Washington D.C Advocacy Days

OC San staff and lobbyist have begun the process of organizing the July 15-17 Federal Advocacy Days. During the advocacy meetings OC San staff and lobbyist plan to speak with our OC Federal Delegation and their staff regarding OC San's innovative proposed projects, funding opportunities, and OC San's response to contaminants of emerging concern.

Activities in May:**WIPPES Act Letter**

A letter of support for the Federal Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention and Environmental Safety (WIPPES) Act (H.R. 2269) was issued. The bill proposes to create a uniform federal "Do Not Flush" labeling requirements for non-flushable wipes packaging. This proposed bill mirrors California's wipes labeling law and is supported by CASA and its membership.

ATTACHMENT

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

- Federal Legislative Update
- Federal Matrix
- State Legislative Update
- State Matrix
- Local Legislative Update
- Presentation