

Agenda Report

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FROM: James D. Herberg, General Manager

SUBJECT:

PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE FOR THE MONTHS OF MAY AND JUNE 2022

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file the Public Affairs Update for the months of May and June 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 MONTHS OF MAY AND JUNE 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.

Tours

As COVID-19 restrictions have eased, small in-person tours, with exception, have been approved. This month we provided nine tours including a few in person tours for our Board Members. We reached a total of 69 people.

Social Media

Over the last two months, we have remained very active on our social media accounts.

- Facebook: 35 posts and reached 5.6k people
- Twitter: 19 posts and reached 5.4k people
- Instagram: 22 posts and had 3.3k reached
- LinkedIn: 8 posts and had 7.3k reached

Presentations/Events

During the last two months, employees presented to UCLA on Water Reclamation at OC San, participated in the OC Green Expo in Anaheim to provide an update on sewer construction in the city, participated in the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) - Meet the Experts panel to discuss community outreach research, presented at the Huntington Beach Southeast Council Meeting, and spoke at a Construction Networking event about OC San's Capital Improvement Program. Over 400 people were reached through these five events.

Wastewater 101 Citizens Academy

OC San held its first ever Wastewater 101 Citizens Academy to educate and inform the community on the various programs, initiatives, and efforts led by OC San. There was a total of 20 participants from throughout the service area and neighboring agencies. The Academy featured four workshops presented by OC San staff and focused on: Who We Are and What We Do, OC San in a Nutshell, Capital Improvement Program, and Environmental Services. Participants who attended all four sessions graduated from the Academy at the June Board Meeting where they virtually received a certificate of completion. The next session will be held in Fall 2022.

Construction Outreach

OC San continues to keep the communities informed of construction activities throughout our service area. There are currently active projects in Fountain Valley, Los Alamitos, Seal Beach, Westminster, Buena Park, Anaheim, and within both of our facilities. Website, email, social media, text alerts, and notifications continue to be distributed as the projects progress.

Member Agency Outreach Toolkit

Every quarter a toolkit is distributed to our member agencies with content of interest to be shared on their social media, websites, newsletters, and any other communication platforms. This quarter's topic focused on What2Flush and the impacts of using the toilet as a trash can.

Internal Communication

As part of our efforts to keep employees informed of OC San happenings, a variety of communication methods are used. There are daily posts on the intranet -The San Box, weekly emails are distributed on hot topics for the week, a monthly bathroom publication with general updates, and the employee newsletter, *The Pipeline*, which is distributed every two months.

Awards

National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)

NACWA awarded the Platinum Peak Performance Award to OC San Plant Nos. 1 and 2. The Platinum Awards recognize 100% compliance with permits over a consecutive five-year period. OC San has been a Platinum Peak Performance winner for eight years in a row.

Communicator Awards

OC San was awarded two Silver Distinction awards, one for the OC San Annual Report for 2020-2021 and the second for the CIP Annual Report for 2020-2021. The Communicator Award is the leading international awards program recognizing big ideas in marketing and communications. The Award of Distinction is presented for projects that exceed industry standards in quality and achievement. This is OC San's fourth year submitting and receiving awards.

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 - May and June 2022
- Presentation