

Meeting Highlights*
AB 617 Shafter Community Steering Committee Meeting #23
September 14, 2020, 5:00pm-7:00pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Action items for the Shafter Community Steering Committee (CSC):

- Contact SJVAPCD to request specific agenda items for future meetings
- Email SJVAPCD if you want a printed copy of the draft Annual Report that will go to CARB later this year

Action items for San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD):

- Send solar outreach materials via email or mail if requested

Welcome and Introductions

Hanna Stelmakhovych, Facilitator, Institute for Local Government (ILG)
Ryan Hayashi, Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer, Valley Air District

Hanna welcomed the Shafter CSC participants and introduced herself and the ILG team. She gave an overview of Zoom instructions and Spanish translation services then reviewed the agenda, presentations, and timeline of the meeting. Hanna outlined Zoom controls and chat box etiquette. She also reminded CSC members about the attendance requirements to qualify for a stipend for the meeting. Ryan thanked everybody for attending and for their continued support of programs like AB 617 to improve air quality.

Monitoring Plan Update

Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer, Valley Air District
Jon Klassen, Director of Strategy & Incentives, Valley Air District

Jaime and Jon presented an update on current air quality, the monitoring plan, and the school filtration and bus subcommittee. Presentation highlights include:

- Wildfire smoke is having significant air quality impacts across the Valley, while still significant, the impacts in Kern County have been slightly less than other parts of the Valley
- To date, 3.2 million acres have burned across the state, which is a new record
- The District advises the public to limit outdoor activity, stay inside as much as possible, and change HVAC filters as often as possible
- For homes without HVAC systems, the District has shared how to make a DIY air filter using an air filter and box fan
- N95 masks are the best masks to protect against smoke and air pollution
- Many serious diseases are linked to this bad air quality
- The CSC requested an air monitoring subcommittee meeting, which is scheduled for Sep. 22 at 4:00pm
- The District has been working with the Richland School District to install air monitoring equipment at the Sequoia Elementary School and Golden Oak Elementary School and hopes to have it up and running soon
- In response to CSC feedback, the District has modified the use of the air monitoring van to ensure that air quality data is collected across all time periods with the highest expected readings

- The District took measurements of the almond harvest in Mexican Colony area and presented this information in the weekly air monitoring updates posted to the website
- The District has contacted all the schools in the Shafter AB 617 community about their interest in air filtration at the schools, and all are very receptive to additional air filtration at the schools
- The District has three electric school buses in the Shafter area approved for funding

Question: Where on the Valley Air webpage are the directions for building your own air filter? When did the Air District start promoting that? I think it is important to promote the better air filters; the \$20 filter is the best you can get.

District Response: We just started promoting it and we put the link in the chat. Good point, thank you.

Question from Spanish-speaker: Can you provide an air quality report, especially since the almond harvest is underway and kids are returning to school?

District Response: The air pollution levels of PM10 and PM2.5 is elevated, primarily due to the wildfires. To respond to the concerns about dust from the almond harvest, the District has moved the air monitoring van to the harvest area to take measurements near the almond orchards.

Pesticide Regulation Update

Nan Singhasemanon, Assistant Director, Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR)

Nan gave an update on various DPR efforts and pesticide monitoring. Presentation highlights:

- Last week the CSC had a kickoff of the pesticide subcommittee meeting, which went well.
- DPR was able to provide participants with a list of pesticide monitoring data specific to Shafter and answer technical questions and this data (the data was added to the community air monitoring page)
- DPR is presenting about the 1, 3-D mitigation pilot to a scientific review panel on Oct. 9. This topic will be related to AB 617 areas, specifically Shafter
- DPR is working more directly with 1, 3-D applicators and growers to identify the fields where it can conduct field monitoring
- DPR does not have an update yet on the statewide notification but is trying to determine if it will be legislative or rulemaking

Comment: The tactic by the local Ag. Commissioner seems to be stall and delay for the notification. I think CARB and DPR need to jointly stand up to the Commissioner so we can get going. What happened around January of 2020 to give that high reading of 1, 3-D? It is unfortunate that the CSC had to discover the data ourselves.

District Response: The District is always looking to make information easier for the CSC to find. On the air monitoring page of the Shafter CSC page, we included all of the pesticide information.

DPR Response: It is important to evaluate anomalous readings like mentioned. DPR tries to look at the wind speed, direction and environmental factors. We put together a summary and I can see us sharing that in the future when we finish.

CARB Update

Skott Wall, Office of Community Air Protection, CARB

Skott presented about the September CARB Board Meeting. Presentation highlights:

- CARB Board meeting is on Thursday, Sep. 24

- The CSC may want to tune in for an informational update that CARB staff will be providing to the Board on the status of AB 617 implementation in all Year One communities that have had their CERPs approved, including Shafter.
- There are other items on the agenda starting at noon, such as a presentation on the California Air Toxics Program and ongoing efforts to reduce community exposure to toxic air contaminants.
- The meeting will be on Zoom and webinar and the AB 617 agenda item will begin at 4pm.

Comment: If CARB is looking for people to provide a community perspective of the 6-month update or what the CSC has accomplished so far, I am happy to help.

CARB Response: Thank you.

Question from Spanish-speaker: How often do you read the monitors in Shafter?

District Response: The District is continuously evaluating the monitors in Shafter. We visit our sites at least once a week performing maintenance, filter exchanges, and making sure all the instruments are calibrated to ensure that accurate data is being collected and shared with the community.

Question: Why weren't we notified at the beginning of the year?

District Response: The District has been doing updates to this CSC for a while and that is how we have made adjustments based on suggestions. The information is also on the website. The District measures certain things through the air monitoring equipment and DPR measures other things through their equipment.

DPR Response: DPR measures mainly pesticides. COVID obstructed our lab capacity, staff travel and safety and we have made adjustments for the last few months. The frequency of sampling is weekly.

Outreach Strategy for Solar Measures

Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer, Valley Air District

Jaime gave an update on the previous solar measures presented to the CSC. Presentation highlights:

- CSC submitted great ideas for how the District can promote solar programs within the Shafter community
- The District put a communications and outreach plan together to accomplish those goals
- The plan targets homeowners who live within a one-mile radius of Shafter
- The District pulled mailing lists of almost 2,000 homes in Shafter
- Based on feedback from the CSC, the District will be developing and sharing a draft postcard that will be used to inform residents about solar programs and how they can call to get more information; the postcard will be in both English and Spanish
- The postcard will cost about \$1,500; this money comes out of District's outreach funds
- The District will also buy social media ads targeted at all Shafter residents, which is about \$800 to reach roughly 17,000 users in the community
- The District will also advertise in the Shafter Press newspaper, which will cost a little more than \$1,000

Comment: The Shafter Press is a great way to get it out to the community. Because of COVID, they have combined Shafter and Wasco.

District Response: The good thing is, even though we are focused on Shafter residents taking advantage of this program, it is also open to Wasco residents.

Question: When the solar information comes out, will you send the information to the CSC or do we have to look for it on the social media platforms?

District Response: It was emailed and/or hard mailed out before the last meeting, but SJVAPCD is more than happy to send it out again.

Annual Report Review and Discussion

Jessica Olsen, Program Manager, Valley Air District

Jessica provided a thorough overview of the draft Annual Progress Report that is required by CARB. Presentation highlights include:

- Printed copies of a Spanish version of the draft report were mailed to the Spanish speakers and should have arrived before the CSC meeting
- Other CSC members should have received an electronic version of the draft report via email
- The Annual Progress Report is a culmination of all the effort and work from the CSC and other community members; it is required but not due for a few weeks
- It has been 7 months since CARB approved the Shafter CERP and the CSC has accomplished a lot in this time frame
- The draft Annual Progress Report is posted on the Shafter community webpage
- The report includes a table of measures along with a status update
- The CARB Enforcement Report for 2019 and Statewide Measures is also posted on the CSC webpage
- CSC members have plenty of time to review the report and provide feedback to the District

Comment: The seven mile radius is stated as not official in this report, but I thought we settled a year ago that the seven mile radius is indeed in the Shafter boundary. The report mentions PM 10 monitoring is temporary, but it was never intended to be temporary. The appendices aren't included yet and I would like to see what is included in them. Last, since this report is concentrating on the last 6 months, the District should have a clear response to the CARB resolution, which did make some changes.

District Response: Thank you for your comments, we will look to make these changes to the report.

Comment from Spanish-speaker: I got my hard copy on Saturday. Is it expected that I should have read it and be ready by this meeting?

District Response: The District does not expect anyone to have read any or all of this by today's meeting. We just wanted to get it in your hands so we could discuss it together. We will be discussing this at the next CSC meeting in October and for however much longer the CSC wants to give feedback.

Question: Is the District looking for the CSC to give verbal feedback on the report or written comments; what are the expectations? If the CSC finds an error in the report, are you open to changing it?

District Response: We will accept whatever kind of feedback and in any type of format you prefer. We are looking to see if the way we put this report together conveys the work that has been done on each of these measures and all of the meetings and efforts that you as a CSC have put forth. Yes, this report is in draft form.

Question: Why is it that you are mentioning the report to be done by next month if the District is going to report back on the 24th?

Answer: The meeting on September 24th is a CARB update to their own CARB Board; it is not related to this annual progress report.

Wrap Up/Next Steps

Hanna Stelmakhovich, Facilitator, ILG

Hanna reiterated the opportunities for engagement for the CSC. Erica Manuel, CEO of ILG, reminded CSC members about the stipend program and encouraged residents to contact ILG with any questions. Sign-ups are still being accepted.

Hanna notified the CSC that this would be Jessica Olsen's last meeting for a few months since she plans to depart for maternity leave in late September.

Reminders:

The Shafter Air Monitoring subcommittee meeting is September 22 at 4:00pm. CARB's Board Meeting is September 24 at 4:00pm. The next CSC meeting is October 12 via Zoom. All the presentations, meetings highlights, transcripts and the Zoom meeting recording will be posted online.

**Refer to meeting audio to review the full details and comments from the meeting.*