

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

May 22, 2025

TO: SBCCOG Board of Directors

FROM: Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG Executive Director
Kim Fuentes, Deputy Executive Director

SUBJECT: Environmental Activities Report – April 2025

I. PROGRAMS - TECHNOLOGY, PLANNING, & RESEARCH

CivicSpark Fellows

CivicSpark Fellows, a program operated through AmeriCorps, supports the SBESC programs. The program has two Fellows: 1) Kevin who focuses on Energy Efficiency and 2) Zoran who focuses on outreach events and communications. Due to DOGE Federal program cuts, the AmeriCorps agency issued sudden terminations of 98% of state-managed AmeriCorps grants, including those that fund the CivicSpark program in California, Colorado, and Washington. As a result, all California Fellows were furloughed and ordered to pause service until further notice. An update on their status will be provided by May 24. In the meantime, the SBCCOG has hired Kevin and Zoran as part-time temporary employees for the next 16 weeks so they may continue their projects.

Energy Efficiency & Sustainability

Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN) AGENCY SUPPORT

Contract period is January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025

Contract goal: Work Plan (including goals) underway for 2025.

Cool Roof Pilot

A pilot funded by the SoCalREN to complete a feasibility study for implementing cool roofs at city facilities in the South Bay. The SBCCOG released an RFP for consultant services to conduct research and provide information and recommendations on the technology, benefits and co-benefits, funding sources, and site identification. The pre-proposal conference was held on April 17th and proposals are due May 2nd. A recommendation will be to Steering and Board in May with the project duration June through November 2025. SBCCOG Staff will work with cities to identify sites of interest and has already received positive feedback from cities who want to participate.

2025 SoCalREN Energy Efficiency Offerings

The SoCalREN offers incentives for the following pieces of equipment (*eligibility and amounts vary based on each incentive*):

- Heat Pump Water Heater
- Tankless Water Heater
- Faucet Aerator
- Laminar Flow Restrictor
- Low-flow Showerhead
- Gas dryer Modulating Valve
- Hot Water Pipe Insulation

To qualify for incentives, projects must be completed in 2025. **If your city is interested in any of the above, please contact Eleanor Murphy at Eleanor@southbaycities.org.**

Facility Equipment Inventory Program (FEI) – SBCCOG staff continue to conduct on-site visits summarized below and work with SoCalREN to implement programs. To date, SBCCOG has inventoried **57** facilities across 15 South Bay cities, 1 school district, and 1 special district. Staff have identified over **940,000** potential kWh savings from lighting retrofits and **112** HVAC units that are overdue for replacement.

Project Status: SBCCOG and SoCalREN project managers are working with the following to help move energy efficiency projects forward:

- City of Redondo Beach – Perry Park sports field lighting and Performing Arts Center indoor lighting.
- City of Inglewood – The Alliance Building Solutions (ABS), 3rd party provider, project scope was presented and approved at the March 25 City Council Meeting. Prior to that meeting, the SoCalREN technical staff reviewed the scope and made recommendations to the city staff.
- City of El Segundo – The SoCalREN has finalized its review of the lighting upgrade opportunities for the City Hall Complex. SoCalREN, SBCCOG, and City staff met to review the opportunities and identify the next steps. The city is currently understaffed, and it is difficult to move the project forward quickly.
- Lennox Elementary School District – SoCalREN is working with the district and PacWest to identify incentives for an 8-site lighting upgrade project.

57 – Site Visits Completed for Facility Equipment Inventories in the following agencies:

- BEACH CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT (1)
- CARSON (2)
- EL SEGUNDO (7)
- GARDENA (4)
- HAWTHORNE (3)
- HERMOSA BEACH (3)
- INGLEWOOD (8)
- LAWNDALE (3)
- LOMITA (4)
- MANHATTAN BEACH (3)
- PALOS VERDES ESTATES (1)
- RANCHO PALOS VERDES (3)
- REDONDO BEACH (5)
- ROLLING HILLS (3)
- ROLLING HILLS ESTATES (2)
- TORRANCE (3)
- HERMOSA BEACH SCHOOL DISTRICT (2)

Energy Resilience Action Plan (ERAP) Program – The SBCCOG is working with the cities **of Gardena, Hawthorne, Lomita, and Manhattan Beach** to develop Energy Resilience Action Plans. The city specific plans look at near to long-term strategies to support community energy resilience, develop a retrofit plan to transform city owned facilities into community resilience centers, and provide a collection of resilience planning resources and references. The SoCalREN has completed the first phase deliverable – the Resilience

Hub Opportunity Assessment (RHOA) and the SoCalREN and SBCCOG staff met with each city to present the findings. The next and current step is to conduct community surveys on site selection and community needs as well as conduct site audits. SBCCOG staff is creating and distributing community surveys online, print, and social media formats.

School District Outreach

SoCalREN Enrollments to Date: Centinela Valley Union High School District, El Segundo Unified School District, Hawthorne School District, Hermosa Beach City School District, Lennox Elementary School District, Manhattan Beach Unified School District, Palos Verdes Peninsula School District, Redondo Beach Unified School District and Torrance Unified School District. Some school district Board members attended the SBCCOG General Assembly.

FDEEE & Commercial Direct Install

Through the SoCalREN's new commercial programs, administered by Wildan, SBCCOG is supporting the pilot program for the Food Desert Energy Efficiency Equity (FDEEE) and Commercial Direct Install programs in the City of Gardena. These programs provide free energy efficiency measures and installation to hard to reach and low-income low-access businesses. SBCCOG Staff will be on the ground in Gardena in May reaching out to businesses to participate. Gardena will be the first full implementation of the program which will be rolled out to the rest of the SoCalREN territory for specific selected sites that meet program criteria.

ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager (ESPM)

SBCCOG staff has contacted all South Bay cities to confirm buildings that require Building Energy Benchmarking (AB802) reporting for buildings greater than 50,000 square feet. These reports are due to the California Energy Commission by June 1. For the 4th year in a row, SBCCOG staff has drafted energy use reports and coordinated city review and approval prior to submitting them to the California Energy Commission on behalf of the cities in an effort to reduce city staff time and resources while meeting compliance.

Institute for Local Government Beacon Awards

SBCCOG is offering support to cities in applying for the Institute for Local Government's annual Beacon Awards. This program honors voluntary efforts by local governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save energy, and adopt policies that promote sustainability. Applications are due by July 15. If you are interested in the SBCCOG staff helping your city, reach out to Shawn at Shawn@southbaycities.org.

Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN) Multifamily & Kits for Kids

Contract period is January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025

Contract goals: Contact, track progress, and outreach to local community organizations; track number of virtual events held and attendees; distribute program collateral to local community organizations.

SoCalREN Multifamily Energy Efficiency

SBCCOG continues to share program information with eligible multifamily housing properties. The SBCCOG is working with the County's team to develop case studies highlighting the successful projects in the South Bay region as well as co-branded marketing materials.

Kits for Kids

All school districts are eligible to participate in the LA County Kits for Kids program, which provides energy efficiency kits (LEDs, faucet aerators, and games) to third- and fourth-grade students to implement at home and \$1000 to teachers who implement in their classrooms. This program is completely free. This fall, SoCalREN is increasing program enrollment by 300%. SBCCOG staff is working to get South Bay schools involved targeting Lennox ESD, Inglewood USD, and Torrance USD. Staff may need assistance identifying a point person in each district to administer the program and assistance from our elected officials is welcomed.

Southern California Gas Company Energy Pathways

Contract period is May 19, 2024 – May 22, 2025

SBCCOG staff continues to work with SoCalGas to promote gas energy efficiency assistance program opportunities and financing support to cities, school districts, and residents. Greg Stevens, Energy Engineer, is reviewing like-for-like replacements for gas-powered HVAC units identified in the Facility Equipment Inventory (FEI) program and the report was completed in April 2025. Recommendations will be shared with cities in May.

South Bay Cities Energy and Climate Recognition Program

Q1 updates have been sent to city staff and presented at the April Board Meeting. Congratulations to the cities of Gardena and Torrance for earning Gold in Q1. SBCCOG Staff can assist in earning or documenting points. Reach out to Eleanor Murphy. eleanor@southbaycities.org for more information.

Water Conservation

West Basin Municipal Water District Programs (West Basin)

The contract period is July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025

SBCCOG and West Basin staff met on April 14 and April 27 to discuss the implementation of programs. New contract is expected in June.

Educational Outreach Support - Exhibit Events

Contract goal: 100 exhibition events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Status of goal: 99 event exhibits, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Speakers Bureau

Contract goal: identify and coordinate up to 14 speaking opportunities

Status of goal: waiting on West Basin staff for an update on the presentation topics

Support for Workshops, Events, & Webinars Educational Classes

Contract goal: Up to 10 physical classes or virtual webinars

Status of goal: 5 completed

Completed Classes:

Friday, April 18, 2025, WB\WRD Goodbye Grass, Hello Garden: Qualify for Rebates

Upcoming Classes:

Tuesday, May 6, 2025, WB/WRD Garden Design

Thursday, May 8, 2025, Firescaping Workshop

Commercial Water Efficiency Program

Contract goal: Assist West Basin staff in promoting MWD's rebates for the Commercial, Industrial and Institutional (CII) sectors

Status of goal: On Hold

Rain Barrel Giveaway

Contract goal: 5 Rain barrel distribution events.

Status of goal: 6 Rain barrel program distribution GOAL met

SBCCOG staff assisted West Basin staff with registration and email reminders for the City of Topanga rain barrel event, which was held on Saturday, April 26. Additionally, SBCCOG staff have responded to phone inquiries on the dedicated West Basin line and enrolled customers on the Interest List for 2025.

Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD)

The contract period is January 1-December 31, 2026

Contract goal: promote WRD programs and support in-person events

Status of goal: ongoing

Ongoing promotion of WRD programs continues through SBCCOG's e-newsletters and other social media channels. In addition, SBCCOG posts WRD events on the website and sends out e-blasts to increase attendance at events.

Completed Classes:

- 4/18/ 2025, "Goodbye Grass, Hello Garden: Qualify for Rebates" class., IN PERSON, 111 W Mariposa Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245. (NOTE: done in conjunction with West Basin)

Upcoming Classes:

- 5/6/2025, Garden Design – IN PERSON, West Basin & WRD, Carson
- 5/10/2025, Small Space Gardening, IN PERSON, Madrona Marsh, Torrance
- 5/20/2025, Edible Gardening, IN PERSON, Nakaoka Community Center, Gardena

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) under SoCalGas

The contract period is July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025

Task – Community Outreach and Promotional Events

Contract goal: Exhibit or present at 10 targeted special events

Status of goal: 15 exhibit events completed

In addition to these events, SBCCOG staff continued to research new community event opportunities in District 15 and to communicate with event planners to secure in-person participation as well as provide information virtually.

Task - Commercial Kitchen Water Assessments

Contract goal: Conduct 8 commercial water kitchen assessments in CD15

Status of goal: 8 water assessments completed, and materials and packages were distributed

SBCCOG staff conducted outreach walks in District 15 and completed three water assessments during the month of April.

Waste Reduction

Sanitation Districts of LA County (LACSD)

Contract period is July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025- Educational Outreach Support Exhibit Events

Contract goal: 100 exhibition events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Status of goal: 107 Exhibition events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Contract goal: Schedule up to 3 Sanitation Districts-related presentations.

Status of goal: 3 presentations scheduled - COMPLETED

Presentations Scheduled:

- LACSD Speaker Presentation to Torrance Environmental Quality & Energy Conservation Commission – April 4, 2025 – POSTPONED to June or July
- LACSD Speaker Presentation to Redondo Beach's Public Works and Sustainability Commission – June 23, 2025

The SBCCOG staff conducted research, updated the speaker's bureau master list, and reached out to organizations to schedule presentations on behalf of the Sanitation Districts.

Rolling Hills Organic Waste

Contract period is April 8, 2024 – April 1, 2026

The SBCCOG is working with the City of Rolling Hills to facilitate public education and outreach for their residents on organic waste recycling and food waste prevention. This work is funded by a CalRecycle SB1383 grant. Staff is working with EcoNomics, Inc, technical consultant, who will provide outreach content. Kickoff meeting with the EcoNomics, Inc will be held in May.

Green Business

South Bay Green Business Assist Program (GBAP): *Ongoing*

The SBCCOG continues to provide information to local businesses on opportunities to implement sustainability programs maintaining relationships and communication channels with business that have self-identified as environmentally conscience. Businesses receive information on the status of SBCCOG utility partners' programs, information posted on the SBCCOG website, and a quarterly e-newsletter. Conversations with LA County and the California Green Business Network were conducted this month to help identify more resources for businesses. The CGBN program, provided by SoCalREN is now open to all South Bay cities.

GBAP by city: Carson (18), El Segundo (55), Gardena (26), Hermosa Beach (12), Hawthorne (83), Inglewood (20), Lawndale (30), Lennox (10), Lomita (9), Manhattan Beach (10), Palos Verdes Estates (9), Rancho Palos Verdes (11), Redondo Beach (6), Rolling Hills Estates (6), Torrance (92), Los Angeles County – Community of Westmont (1) and District 15 (11) for a total of 409 businesses in the program as of April 2025.

Climate Action

SBCCOG staff, the CivicSpark Fellow, and volunteers are currently finalizing the draft greenhouse gas inventory (GHG) reports and distributing them to cities for review. Additionally, the SBCCOG hosted an online webinar to city staff on Thursday, April 17 to walk through the methodology and review process for the GHG inventories. The Fellow will be available to present findings to city committees and commissions in Q2 2025.

Transportation

Metro Express Lanes (MEL) (*Contract period November 18, 2022 – November 17, 2025*)

South Bay events are being held both virtually and in-person. SBCCOG staff continue to prepare, update, and share the SBCCOG outreach calendar for events that provide opportunities to support the mission and goals of the Metro Express Lane program. For March the SBCCOG/SBESC distributed MEL materials at twenty events.

II. VOLUNTEERS

Status of Program: **83.25** hours for April 2025

Zoran, Project Coordinator, has been updating program materials and hour tracking systems to streamline processes.

III. MARKETING, OUTREACH, & IMPLEMENTATION

Outreach Events

In April 2025:

3 - Networking Event	2- Workshops Event
16- In Person Community Event	
1 - Business Event	

Total for the period July 1, 2024, to date:

34- Networking Event
72- In Person Community Event
9- Business Event
8- Workshops Event