

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

September 25, 2025

TO: SBCCOG Board of Directors

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

SUBJECT: Environmental Activities Report – August 2025

I. PROGRAMS - TECHNOLOGY, PLANNING, & RESEARCH

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.

2025 SoCalREN Energy Efficiency Offerings

The SoCalREN continues to offer the following incentives for equipment **through December 2025** (eligibility and amounts vary based on each incentive):

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

→ **Contact Eleanor Murphy at Eleanor@southbaycities.org if your city is interested in any of the above. Quantities are limited to first come first served.**

Facility Equipment Inventory Program (FEI) – SBCCOG staff continue to conduct on-site visits summarized below and work with SoCalREN to implement programs (see list below). 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.

Using information captured in Facility Equipment Inventories, the SBCCOG supported project identification for Heat Pump Water Heater replacements. Since 2023, almost **60 units** have been replaced in the South Bay, most covering the full cost. As the CPUC measure packet for water heater replacements has changed mid-2025 and the funding pool for these projects is running out, SBCCOG appreciate the SoCalREN and its cities for taking advantage of these offerings and switching to more efficient models.

Also, through FEI, as stated, multiple HVAC upgrades were identified. With limited incentives available, cities have been disappointed with the high project costs. With this in mind, the recent Energy Manager Working Group August meeting centered around HVAC opportunities, including the new Capture the Cold ductwork technology offering for as low as \$6,000 before financing and seeing as much as 40% energy savings. The SoCalREN also highlighted key funding opportunities including the Revolving Savings Fund and On Bill Financing which can be used to bring up front costs to \$0 with 0% interest loans. SBCCOG also hired a consultant to identify HVAC replacement costs and savings which will be used by the SoCalREN to help facilitate project completion.

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

- City of Carson – Vetting Heat Pump Water Heaters through the SoCalREN incentive program. Waiting for city confirmation for Veteran’s HVAC and lighting upgrade project.
- City of El Segundo – Aquatic Stadium pool heater project is wrapping up in September. City Hall HVAC replacements completed but waiting on documentation from city to complete incentive. For the city hall building, the SoCalREN has finalized its review of a significant lighting overhaul. Considerable energy and financial bill savings have been identified, and the SBCCOG team is working with the city to encourage them to move forward on this project.
- City of Hawthorne – finished installing new units in the Heat Pump Water Heater program. The Police Department lighting project is about to start construction and Memorial Center HVAC project just completed.
- City of Manhattan Beach – Heat Pump Water Heater vetted through SoCalREN program, waiting on city confirmation to begin installation.
- City of Redondo Beach – Perry Park sports field lighting incentive application is not moving forward due to missing information on existing equipment. The city is having difficulty obtaining the information from their records and it is required to move the project forward. Other identified projects (new chillers, PAC overhaul) are not moving forward due to high project costs.
- City of Rolling Hills – Vetting Heat Pump Water Heater in SoCalREN incentive program.
- Lennox Elementary School District – Lighting upgrades at five schools are moving forward under the Metered Savings Program. The district is also installing more free Heat Pump Water Heaters. Finally, the district enrolled in the Strategic Energy Management Cohort, which provides energy and facility upgrade support specific to their facility.

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 SBCCOG and participating cities surveyed residents on what they would like to see at a potential resilience center – information useful to the city and for funding applications. 302 residents across all cities responded. 12 respondents were randomly selected to win energy efficiency gift baskets, provided by the

SoCalREN and distributed by SBCCOG. SBCCOG staff will be presenting the findings from this community outreach to city staff in September.

FDEEE & Commercial Direct Install

Through the SoCalREN's new commercial programs, administered by Wildan, the SBCCOG is implementing a 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 at hard-to-reach and low-income low-access businesses. Gardena is 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.

SBCCOG staff continue to conduct door-to-door outreach to eligible businesses. The team has audited 50 business facilities, and 23 projects have been signed off and are underway. After permitting, installations will begin in September. The SBCCOG staff, in coordination with city staff, is also working with the Wildan team to create recognition communication items such as videos.

Cool Roof Pilot

Funded by the SoCalREN, the SBCCOG consultant AESC Inc., is conducting the cool roof feasibility study. At the end of the project, up to 15 site plans will be developed with information and recommendations on the technology, benefits and co-benefits, funding sources, and site identification. The initial literature review has been completed and is on the SBCCOG website.

AESC presented at the recent Energy Manager Working Group on site selection criteria and top-ranking sites. Feedback from city staff was positive. The SBCCOG will be soliciting city input on the criteria and site selection.

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 and Hard-to-Reach-Direct-Install Energy Efficiency

SBCCOG continues to share program information with eligible multifamily housing properties. The SBCCOG and the County team have developed co-branded materials to bring to community outreach events. SBCCOG and County Staff are working to identify new customers in the program.

Kits for Kids

Schools in disadvantaged areas or those that receive Title 1 funding are eligible to participate in the LA County Kits for Kids program, which provides free energy efficiency kits (LEDs, faucet aerators, and games) to third- and fourth-grade students to implement at home and \$1,000 to teachers who implement it in their classrooms. SBCCOG staff continues to facilitate South Bay school enrollments into the program. Inglewood USD, Hawthorne SD, Lennox ESD have confirmed participation for Fall 2025 amounting to approximately **60** classrooms!!! Wiseburn USD is interested in participating in 2026.

Southern California Gas Company Energy Pathways

Contract period is May 19, 2024 – December 31, 2027

SBCCOG staff continues to work with SoCalGas to promote gas energy efficiency assistance program opportunities and financing support to cities, school districts, and residents. Current day-to-day activities continue with the support from SoCalGas staff.

New program offerings and related marketing materials are being shared to support outreach to residents and businesses.

- Restaurant Energy Efficiency Starter Kit: Designed specifically for food service businesses, this kit includes energy- and water-saving tools such as a pre-rinse spray valve, faucet aerators, gas valve handles, a Turbo Pot aluminum frying pan for efficient cooking, and a pocket thermometer.
- Commercial Building Energy Solutions and Technologies (C-BEST) Program: Provides technical assistance and incentives for businesses to implement natural gas-saving measures in commercial buildings.

CivicSpark Fellows

CivicSpark, a program operated through AmeriCorps, supports the SBESC programs. The 2025-26 program year will start in October, and the SBCCOG will bring on board three new Fellows working on: 1) Energy, 2) Communications, and 3) Transportation. The Energy fellow will support and manage various SoCalREN initiatives such as residential direct installation of energy-efficient appliances. The Communications fellow will support and manage various community engagement and communication initiatives to better inform the community of sustainability opportunities and SBCCOG programs. The Transportation fellow will assist SBCCOG staff with design and implementation of the South Bay Local Travel Network and promotion of micromobility.

Water Conservation

West Basin Municipal Water District Programs (West Basin)

The contract period is July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026

SBCCOG and West Basin staff met on August 11 and August 28 to discuss the implementation of programs and schedule of events for the new program year.

Educational Outreach Support - Exhibit Events

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

Status of goal: 15 exhibit events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Support for Workshops, Events, & Webinars Educational Classes

Contract goal: Up to 17 physical classes or virtual webinars

Status of goal: 2

Completed: Wednesday, August 13, 2025, West Basin Chat – Virtual and Thursday, August 14, 2025, Transforming Lawns: A Sustainable Approach Gardena

Rain Barrel Giveaway

Contract goal: 5 Rain barrel distribution events.

Status of goal: 0 Rain barrel program distribution

SBCCOG staff have responded to phone inquiries on the dedicated West Basin line and set up the new registration system for upcoming events in September.

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. SBCCOG and WRD staff meet to coordinate communication efforts and upcoming informational campaigns.

Waste Reduction

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. Funded by a CalRecycle SB1383 grant, staff are working with EcoNomics, Inc, technical consultant, to provide outreach content. The first workshop, on July 16, 2025, was a success with 13 attendees filling the City Chambers. SBCCOG staff have ordered and received the first round of composting equipment and are preparing to distribute it to the City of Rolling Hills residents. One final compost workshop is scheduled to be in October 2025 as well as another round of equipment purchasing.

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 while maintaining relationships and communication channels with businesses that have self-identified as environmentally conscience. Businesses receive information on the status of SBCCOG utility partners' programs and information posted on the SBCCOG website through a quarterly e-newsletter.

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 August 2025.

Climate Action

SBCCOG staff (and the former CivicSpark Fellow), with support from volunteers, continue to work with cities to finalize the draft 2019-2020 greenhouse gas inventory (GHG) emissions reports. Multiple drafts are under review by city staff, and SBCCOG has been working to incorporate city feedback into final drafts. 11 cities' final reports have been sent out and are available on the SBCCOG website. SBCCOG is available to present findings to city committees and commissions.

Biodiversity grant opportunity: In support of the SBCCOG subregional adaptation plan, SBCCOG staff has been working with the LA County's Chief Sustainability Office and Jacobs consulting firm to submit an application to Rivers and Mountains Conservancy for developing a biodiversity plan and demonstration projects within the South Bay.

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 outreach calendar events to provide opportunities for Metro to share their Express Lane program. In August, the SBCCOG/SBESC distributed MEL materials at 12 events.

II. VOLUNTEERS

Status of Program: 28.5 hours for July 2025

Some of the volunteer projects for the month of August included supporting outreach events and SBCCOG meetings, updating databases, and conducting program research.

III. MARKETING, OUTREACH, & IMPLEMENTATION

Outreach Events

In August 2025:

6 - Networking Event

2 - Workshops Event

13- In Person Community Event

1 - Business Event