

# South Bay Cities Council of Governments

June 26, 2025

TO: SBCCOG Board of Directors

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

SUBJECT: Environmental Activities Report – May 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 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

Heat Pump Water Heater program incentives will decrease for 75–120-gallon units after **July 31, 2025**. Please contact SBCCOG immediately to take advantage of this opportunity. The incentive is 100% coverage for disadvantaged areas. **If your city is interested in any of the above, please contact Eleanor Murphy at [Eleanor@southbaycities.org](mailto:Eleanor@southbaycities.org).**

#### Cool Roof Pilot

Funded by the SoCalREN, SBCCOG is hiring a consultant to complete a feasibility study for implementing cool roofs at city facilities in the South Bay. Final site plans will provide information and recommendations on the technology, benefits and co-benefits, funding sources, and site identification. Proposals and interviews were conducted in early May, and a firm was approved by the Board in the May meeting. AESC has been selected as the implementing firm, and a kickoff meeting will be held in the coming weeks.

City staff at the Energy Manager Working Group were briefed on the pilot and potential involvement, including data sharing and site visit coordination.

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 El Segundo – The SoCalREN has finalized its review of multiple projects. The SoCalREN, SBCCOG, and City staff met to review the opportunities and identify the next steps. While considerable energy and financial bill savings have been identified, the city is currently understaffed and having difficulty moving forward on the projects.
- City of Redondo Beach – Perry Park sports field lighting and Performing Arts Center indoor lighting, are waiting on the city to decide if they would like to move forward.
- LA County Sanitation Districts – Lincus, a technical consulting firm with SoCalREN, has identified 33 projects throughout their district. SBCCOG staff are supporting the potential projects located inside the South Bay territory.

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

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

Greg Stevens, Energy Engineer, recently reviewed like-for-like replacements for gas-powered HVAC units identified in the Facility Equipment Inventory (FEI) program and prepared an analysis with recommendations. SBCCOG and SoCalREN will share this analysis and actionable next steps with cities.

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.

SoCalREN is beginning the process of conducting site audits for up to four facilities per city. SBCCOG Staff in coordination with city staff are beginning community outreach with recently finalized flyers and surveys. Surveys will be distributed to residents throughout the summer at events and facilities to garner feedback on what types of services would be helpful for a resilience hub and create community engagement.

### 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.

SBCCOG Staff recently met with California State University Dominguez Hills to discuss SoCalREN enrollment and project potential.

### 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 too hard to reach and low-income low-access businesses. 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.

SBCCOG Staff has begun door-to-door outreach to eligible businesses. The team audited seven businesses within a week from kick-off, and the first round of project proposals should be returned to businesses this month.

### Residential Direct Install Program

Through the SoCalREN's residential program, administered by ICF, SBCCOG is supporting implementation of a direct install program this summer in one of the first "rapid start" communities: Wilmington, City of LA in the South Bay. The program hopes to complete installs in over 1,200 homes in the Southern California Region in the first year. The program will expand to other eligible cities and neighborhoods after Summer 2025.

The MOU was recently finalized by the SBCCOG, LA County, and California Energy Commission.

### 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](mailto: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

Schools in disadvantaged areas or which receive Title 1 funding 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 the program in their classrooms. This program is completely free. This fall, SoCalREN is increasing program enrollment by 300%.

SBCCOG staff is working to encourage South Bay schools to take advantage of this program. The team is targeting Hawthorne SD, Lennox ESD, and Inglewood USD. There are also eligible schools in Torrance USD, Redondo Beach USD, PVPUSD, Lawndale ESD, and Wiseburn USD, but these districts have not responded to notifications regarding program offerings.

### 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. Long time SBCCOG associate, Paulo Morais, SoCalGas Energy Programs Supervisor, Customer Programs, is retiring. Paulo has been a great support for the SBCCOG programs. The SBCCOG does not expect any change in SoCalGas support due to this change and expects to know who will be replacing him by the end of summer. Current day-to-day activities are continuing with the support of Alma Briseno, LA Regional representative.

## **CivicSpark Fellows**

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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 in April. As a result, all California Fellows were furloughed and ordered to pause service until further notice. The SBCCOG hired both Fellows as temporary part-time employees to help ensure there would be no program implementation lapses. As of May 22, new funding was identified by CivicSparks to support their

program, and Kevin has been transferred to CivicSpark's AmeriCorps National Direct Award and will continue service. The SBCCOG has retained Zoran as a part-time temporary employee for the next 16 weeks allowing for more flexibility in his work assignments.

## **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 May 12 and May 27 to discuss the implementation of programs. A new contract is expected in June. SBCCOG Chair Rodney Tanaka, along with Martha Segovia, attended the West Basin Board meeting to thank them for our continued partnership.

#### Educational Outreach Support - Exhibit Events

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

*Status of goal: **112** event exhibits, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc. **GOAL EXCEEDED***

#### Support for Workshops, Events, & Webinars Educational Classes

*Contract goal: Up to 10 physical classes or virtual webinars*

*Status of goal: 8 completed*

#### Completed Classes:

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

Thursday, May 8, 2025, Firescaping Workshop

Wednesday, May 21, 2025, WB Chat: Grass Replacement

SBCCOG staff assisted West Basin with registration and email reminders for May 6, West Basin/Water Replenishment District Garden Design; May 8, Firescaping Workshop; and May 21, WB Chat: Grass Replacement classes and workshops.

#### June Events:

Saturday, June 7, 2025, Philippine Independence Day Celebration -Carson

Saturday, June 7, 2025, Bring It on the BLVD – Downtown Street Fair -Gardena

#### Rain Barrel Giveaway

Contract goal: 5 Rain barrel distribution events.

Status of goal: 6 Rain barrel program distribution GOAL met

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

*Completed 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:* **16** exhibit events completed **GOAL EXCEEDED**

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; materials and packages were distributed **GOAL MET**

SBCCOG staff will conduct outreach walks in District 15 in the month of June.

## **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. **GOAL EXCEEDED**

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

*Status of goal:* 3 presentations scheduled – COMPLETED **GOAL MET**

*Presentations Scheduled:*

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

The SBCCOG staff conducted research, updated the speakers' 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. Funded by a CalRecycle SB1383 grant, staff is working with EcoNomics, Inc, technical consultant, to provide outreach content. A kickoff meeting with the EcoNomics, Inc was conducted in May. The first workshop is proposed for July 16 or 22, 2025.

## **Green Business**

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### 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. Conversations with LA County and the California Green Business Network were conducted this month to help identify more resources for businesses.

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 May 2025.

### California Green Business Network

SBCCOG staff have been advocating for the California Green Business Network to be open to all cities and, recently, the SoCalREN announced that they will be paying membership fees for all cities. SBCCOG Staff is discussing roll-out of program promotion and support and met with the City of Rolling Hills Estates to discuss program opportunities.

## **Climate Action**

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SBCCOG staff and the CivicSpark Fellow, with support from volunteers, continue to work with cities to finalize the draft greenhouse gas inventory (GHG) reports. Several drafts are under review by city staff. The Fellow is available to present findings to city committees and commissions.

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

II. VOLUNTEERS

Status of Program: **49.5** hours for May 2025

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

III. MARKETING, OUTREACH, & IMPLEMENTATION

Outreach Events

In May 2025:

- 3- Networking Event
- 8- In Person Community Event
- 1- Business Event
- 4- Workshops Event

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

- 37- Networking Event
- 80- In Person Community Event
- 10- Business Event
- 12- Workshops Event