

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

March 9, 2026

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee

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

SUBJECT: Environmental Activities Report – February 2026

I. PROGRAMS - TECHNOLOGY, PLANNING, & RESEARCH

Energy Efficiency & Sustainability

Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN) AGENCY SUPPORT

Contract period is January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2026

Contract goal: Work Plan (including goals) underway for 2026

Energy Managers Working Group Meeting

SBCCOG staff hosted the first quarter Energy Management Working Group (EMWG) on February 26, 2026. The meeting was well attended with 10 cities (Carson, El Segundo, Gardena, Hawthorne, Lawndale, Lomita, Manhattan Beach, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, and Torrance) and 1 school district (Lennox Elementary SD). Meeting topics included the cool roof feasibility study results, updates on SoCalREN and SoCalGas energy efficiency offerings, and a presentation on the guidelines for the South Bay Energy and Climate Recognition Program (SBECRP).

South Bay Cities Energy and Climate Recognition Program

2026 will be the fourth year of the South Bay Energy and Climate Recognition Program. The guidelines have been updated and sent out to city staff. For this program year, cities have more opportunities to earn points through new activities and activity point maximums. A new distinct Partners' Award has also been added, in which cities can earn special recognition from Water Replenishment District and West Basin Municipal Water District partners for water stewardship and conservation activities. The SBCCOG and city staff are excited to kick off the program year!

Energy Efficiency Project Status: SBCCOG and SoCalREN project managers are working with the following agencies to advance energy efficiency projects:

- City of Carson – Carson Park's water heater project has been finalized for a total incentive value of \$10,398. For the Community Center, the Heat Pump Water Heater project has been approved for 100% cost coverage and can be installed at the city's request. Also, HVAC units for Capture the Cold technology upgrades have been approved and the contractor is waiting on city notice to proceed.

- City of Hawthorne – The Police Department lighting project and Memorial Center HVAC project have completed construction. Final reporting is almost done, with the SoCalREN awaiting final city signatures. Once project paperwork is completed, savings numbers will be available.
- City of Inglewood – The City Hall lighting and pump project is under construction, to be completed by December 2026.
- City of Lawndale – The Capture of the Cold HVAC technology proposal was developed and delivered to the city. Project is currently waiting on city notice to proceed.
- City of Rancho Palos Verdes – Water heaters eligible for incentives for upgrades to Heat Pump Water Heaters have been identified and the city is deciding on pricing and timelines. The Interpretive Center unit is approved for 50% cost coverage, \$3,180 out-of-pocket to the city and \$1,667 in annual energy savings. The Ryan Park unit is approved for 17% cost coverage, \$7,107 out-of-pocket to the city and \$2,800 in annual energy savings.
- City of Torrance – The Capture of the Cold HVAC technology proposal has been developed and delivered to the city. The project is waiting on city notice to proceed.
- Lennox Elementary School District – Lighting upgrades and Heat Pump Water Heater replacements are in the data collection period under the Metered Savings Program. The agency is also enrolled in the Schools Strategic Energy Management Cohort which provides additional support for projects.
- Manhattan Beach Unified School District – The agency is working with Energy Systems Group to downsize a water heater at Mira Costa High School.
- West Basin Municipal Water District – 33 pumps are being vetted for overhauls with significant savings. The projects are moving forward with collaboration between the agency and SoCalREN. The agency is also enrolled in the Water District Strategic Energy Management Cohort.

Facility Equipment Inventory Program (FEI) – SBCCOG staff continue to work with agencies to update FEI workbooks to capture projects that have been completed and to add additional equipment replacement needs. To date, **59** facility audits across 15 South Bay cities, 1 school district, and 1 special district have been completed and resulted in identification of over **940,000** potential kWh savings from lighting retrofits and **112** HVAC units that are overdue for replacement. From this work, staff were able to quickly facilitate installation of almost 60 Heat Pump Water Heater replacements since 2023 with no costs to the agency. In addition, SBCCOG staff continue to facilitate installation of the Capture the Cold ductwork technology offering (as low as \$6,000 before financing with as much as 40% energy savings). The SBCCOG is also looking to audit new facilities. Please reach out to shawn@southbaycities.org if your agency is interested in completing a facility audit.

FDEEE & Commercial Direct Install

SBCCOG staff presented at the Association of Energy Services Professions annual conference on the strategies used to implement the SoCalREN's commercial program. The pilot program for the Food Desert Energy Efficiency Equity (FDEEE) and Commercial Direct Install programs in the City of Gardena was completed in 6 months and serves as an example of best practices working with cities and implementers. Over 100 individuals attended the session. In addition, SBCCOG has developed a story map that highlights program accomplishments that can be accessed on the SBCCOG website [here](#).

City Staff Accreditation Pilot: LEED GA and AP

The SBCCOG was approved for a pilot program with SoCalREN funds which will fund the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification of 2 staff members per member city. This program will support training, studying, and cover test registration fees for agency staff to earn a LEED Green Associate and/or Accredited Professional credential. The preparation for the credential will build agency expertise in sustainable building design related to energy efficiency and internal environmental quality at the agency level. LEED accredited staff can assist in city, commercial, and residential building development and design and provide expert information to the community that will lead to lower utility bills. As LEED v4 is being released in April, SBCCOG staff will promote this program to city staff next month.

Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN) Multifamily

Contract period is January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2026

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 – The SBCCOG continues to identify multifamily property owner customers for the SoCalREN Multifamily program which enrolls eligible properties opportunities for energy- and cost-saving. Contacts are being identified through Chambers of Commerce and city business lists. SBCCOG continues to share co-branded materials at community outreach events and coordinate with other agencies to help identify opportunities. Promotion to property owners has been conducted with help from chambers and the Niles Foundation.

Southern California Gas Company Energy Pathways

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

The SBCCOG continues to work with SoCalGas to promote gas energy efficiency assistance program opportunities and financing support to cities, school districts, and residents. Program offerings were shared with businesses and residents at community events. Current day-to-day activities continue with the support from SoCalGas staff. Program offerings and related marketing materials have been shared with agencies to support outreach to residents and businesses.

- Restaurant Energy Efficiency Starter Kit: 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 for food service businesses.
- 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.

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 met on February 2 and February 17, to discuss the implementation of ongoing programs. SBCCOG staff also continue to respond to phone inquiries on the dedicated West Basin line.

Educational Outreach Support - Exhibit Events

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

Status of goal: 73 exhibit events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Support for Workshops & Webinars Educational Classes@

Contract goal: Up to 17 physical classes or virtual webinars

Status of goal: 8

Completed Workshops:

- *Wednesday, February 25, 2026 – 11:00 am – 12: 30 pm - Transforming Gardens, Rolling Hills*

Rain Barrel Giveaway

Contract goal: 6 Rain barrel distribution events.

Status of goal: 6 Rain barrel program distributions: All events have been completed

GIS maps were created that identify households that received the rain barrels in this program cycle.

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 social media channels. SBCCOG also posts WRD events on its website and sends e-blasts to help boost attendance. The SBCCOG staff attend events and distribute marketing materials to city halls, libraries, senior centers, and other community locations. In addition, WRD Eco-Gardening classes and workshops were promoted. SBCCOG staff coordinated with WRD staff to present at the SBCCOG volunteer training, which was held on Tuesday, February 24, from 4:30–6:00 pm in SBCCOG's Board Room.

Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD)

The contract period is January 1-December 31, 2026

Educational Outreach Support - Exhibit Events

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

Status of goal: 74 exhibit events, presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, etc.

Ongoing promotion of LACSD programs continues through SBCCOG's e-newsletters and social media channels as well as website postings and coordinating LACSD upcoming 2026 events and sending e-

blasts to help boost attendance. SBCCOG staff attended events and distributed marketing materials to city halls, libraries, senior centers, and other community locations. SBCCOG staff coordinated with LACSD staff to present at the SBCCOG volunteer training, which was held on Tuesday, February 24 in SBCCOG's Board Room.

Task - Speakers Bureau

Contract goal: identify and coordinate up to 3 speaking opportunities.

Status of goal: 3/3 Identified and Scheduled

- Carson Gardena Dominguez Rotary Club – January 14, 2026 – Completed
- City of Gardena's Planning and Environmental Quality Commission – February 17, 2026 – Completed
- City of Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission – Postponed to May

Waste Reduction

Rolling Hills Organic Waste

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

The SBCCOG continues to work with the City of Rolling Hills to provide residents with education on organic waste recycling and food waste prevention. Funded by a CalRecycle SB 1383 grant, the technical consultant, EcoNomics, Inc., completed three educational videos and conducted two workshops for Rolling Hills residents. As part of this program, interested residents also received a compost bin and kitchen pail for organic waste. Staff focus this month is to get more residents to sign up for compost equipment. This program will continue through Fall 2026.

Green Business

South Bay Green Business Assist Program (GBAP): Ongoing

GBAP – The SBCCOG continues to provide information to local businesses on opportunities to implement sustainability actions and West Basin programs. In addition, businesses also receive updates on resources from SBCCOG's utility partners. SBCCOG staff began conducting green certification outreach walks in January 2026 with the goal of certifying three businesses per city. LA County is covering the cost of membership for all South Bay cities in California Green Business Network program – the tool used to conduct the certifications. This work is in addition to the GBAP information program.

In February, SBCCOG staff completed one audit in the City of Carson and assisted businesses with information on available programs and resources. Information was also shared with the Chambers of Commerce for Carson and Hawthorne regarding \$550 mini grants available to businesses in those cities. Information regarding these grants is also being shared during staff outreach to businesses.

GBAP by city: Carson (18), El Segundo (55), Gardena (55), 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 (8) for a total of 435 businesses participating as of February 2026.

Climate Action

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories: SBCCOG, with support from volunteers and prior CivicSpark Fellows, has finalized the city specific 2019-2020 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory reports and sent them to each jurisdiction. SBCCOG staff will be developing a sub-regional inventory by first of April.

Transportation

Metro Express Lanes (MEL) (Contract period January 23, 2026 – January 22, 2026)

The SBCCOG continues to prepare, update, and share the outreach calendar events to provide opportunities for Metro to share their Express Lane program. In February, the SBCCOG/SBESC distributed MEL materials at three events.

II. VOLUNTEERS

Status of Program: 52.5 hours for February 2026

In February, volunteer hours doubled compared to January. Volunteers supported several recurring projects, including office assistance, database research, and outreach events. In addition, volunteers attended a partner training to help them get familiarized with their programs. The partners that presented at the training were WRD and LACSD. The volunteer program also continues to grow, with new volunteers interviewed and beginning work on new projects.

III. MARKETING, OUTREACH, & IMPLEMENTATION

Outreach Events

In February 2026:

3 - Networking Event

3 - In Person Community Event

1 – Presentation

1 - Business Event

1 – Workshops Events