

State of California Air Resources Board

Board Item Summary

Item # 25-2-3: Public Meeting to Hear an Informational Update on CARB's Los Angeles Fire Incident Response Activities

Staff Recommendation:

This is an informational item only. No action is required.

Discussion:

CARB's Incident Response program was established in 1991 and has expanded via Gubernatorial directives in response to events like the 9/11 terrorist attack and Hurricane Katrina. The Program provides air quality monitoring coordination and support for incidents such as wildfire, prescribed fires and uncontrolled industrial releases. Although all emergency responses are initiated at the local government level, some jurisdictions lack the resources or technical expertise to assess the air quality during an incident. In these cases, CARB support may include deploying air monitoring, providing air quality information to support decision-making, and assistance in formulating messaging for public communication.

In the wake of the January 2025 LA Wildfires, CARB has been supporting the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) to understand and address air quality concerns. Although CARB's responsibilities usually end once the incident is over, CARB is continuing to assist South Coast AQMD in their mobile air monitoring for air toxic metals and volatile organic compounds in areas where air quality was potentially affected by both the Eaton and Palisades fires. CARB has also loaned South Coast AQMD stationary monitoring equipment to evaluate toxic metals and asbestos in these areas.

In addition, CARB is providing air monitoring expertise to the Joint Field Office, has eased requirements on portable generators to meet increased demand, and has collaborated with state and local agencies on communicating with the public.

Wildfires are becoming more frequent, so CARB staff are considering ways to build capacity so that we are better prepared to address future incidents.

Summary and Impacts:

Not applicable. This is an informational item only and does suggest any regulatory changes that would have an economic or environmental impact.