

AirMail



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Fall 2019 Volume 2, Issue 3

WHAT'S INSIDE

CDAWG heads to Palm Springs

MDAQMD's annual California Desert Air Working Group Conference returns to the Coachella Valley for the first time in eight years for the 2019 installment.

Page 3

Air District staff marks big achievements, adds new members

Staff at MDAQMD has experienced a strong 2019 for multiple reasons, including professional advancement, completing top-level certifications and welcoming new faces.

Page 2

PERMITS & COMPLIANCE

Oct. 10, 2019:

Active Permits: **4,205**

Permitted Facilities: **1,238**

July – September 2019

Applications received: **79**

Complaints: **32**

Violation notices: **15**

Certificates of Occupancy: **146**

Northwest Pipe in Adelanto HONORED FOR EXCELLENCE



Northwest Pipe Company in Adelanto was recognized with Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District's prestigious Exemplar Award for 2018-19.

The award is presented annually to entities or individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the prevention and/or control of air pollution within the District's numerous communities. MDAQMD Executive Director Brad Poiriez presented the award to Northwest Pipe officials at the District's regular Governing Board meeting in September.

"Northwest Pipe Company is on the leading edge of a growing movement of social responsibility and environmental sustainability that aims to protect our fragile environment for future generations," Poiriez said. "The company strives to reduce its impact on people and the environment through all phases of their manufacturing activities by seeking methods to control pollutants in storm water runoff and air emissions, and to minimize waste."

One of the ways the company benefits the environment is inherent to the products it produces: steel is readily recycled. According to the Steel Recycling Institute, steel is North America's most recycled material, with more recycled annually than paper, plastic,

aluminum and glass combined. In fact, the company manufactures their pipe with a combination of raw and recycled materials.

"Northwest Pipe Company's Adelanto facility has been a fixture here in the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District for more than 30 years, employing approximately 130 personnel, most of whom are residents of the Air District," said Bruce Akana, Operations Manager at Northwest Pipe. "Northwest Pipe Adelanto is uniquely committed to being a responsible employer and community member by following our core values of Accountability, Commitment, and Teamwork (ACT). We gladly accept the Exemplar Award with pride."

Members of the public nominate entities and/or individuals for the annual Exemplar Award. Northwest Pipe distinguished themselves from local, highly deserving nominees for the 2018-19 award year with their commitment to the environment and their employees.

District staff celebrates, grows in 2019

The people who comprise the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District staff have marked numerous achievements this year — and the year's still not over.

• In July, Lake Arrowhead resident **Samantha Lopez** joined the agency as an Air Quality Engineer I. Lopez's background in engineering and environmental science is extensive, including a two-year internship with NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, analytical instrumentation, and hazardous waste and materials transportation and management.



Lopez

Lopez even has a patent pending for the invention of a water treatment process, "Process water sulfate and calcium removal by sodium aluminate."

Lopez says she's enjoying the collaborative environment at MDAQMD, both within the agency and interactions with constituents.

Lopez and her husband will celebrate 12 years of marriage at the end of October. When she's not playing taxi driver for her 11-year-old daughter, Lopez enjoys working on home-related projects and training in semi-contact kickboxing.

• In addition to the enormous efforts in MDAQMD's jurisdiction, agency staff through contract also operate the Antelope Valley AQMD.



Lods

Barbara Lods, who has worked as both Air Quality Specialist and Air Quality Planner for the District's contract with AVAQMD for the past seven years, has assumed the newly created Operations Manager role to continue helping businesses and the public navigate the best ways to protect air quality in the growing

Antelope Valley.

"I love working with the sources in our community," said Lods. As far as what she sees as the biggest challenge for the district going forward: Trying to reverse the negative perception of the district being thought of as just another government regulator.

Prior to joining the District, Lods worked in the compliance department for Proctor & Gamble. She loves sports and has three children with her husband.

• The district also welcomed its newest Air Quality Specialist **Jonathan Svay** in October. Svay, who worked as an intern at MDAQMD over the summer, graduated from Cal State University, San Bernardino with a bachelor's degree in health science.



Svay

During his internship, he completed more than 200 hours assisting the operations section with work that included compliance, engineering, air monitoring and rule and plan development.

Svay has been assigned to the Antelope Valley jurisdiction.

• Air Quality Specialist II **Jason Mentry**, who is assigned to Antelope Valley, received the Rodney Swatzenruber Outstanding Inspector Award during a ceremony at the Enforcement Managers Committee's Fall Conference of the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA).

The award recognizes individual inspectors throughout the state who have performed outstandingly or made significant contributions that have benefited air pollution control efforts in an exemplary way.

Mentry has rectified some of AVAQMD's most problematic facilities, all while consistently displaying the characteristics and high



Antelope Valley AQMD Executive Director Bret Banks, left, and Air Quality Specialist II Jason Mentry.

integrity of an excellent inspector.

• Air Quality Engineer II **Chris Anderson** recently passed the Certified Permitting Professional Exam.

The CPP is an elite classification aimed at certifying individuals who are knowledgeable in all aspects of permit application preparation including rule assessments, emission offset requirements, Best Available Control Technology (BACT) assessments and more specific to air quality permitting in California.

"This is probably one of the most specific certifications related to the permitting work that engineering conducts, and requires the passing of a rigorous examination (the pass rate for the exam is about 20 percent)," said Permit Engineering Supervisor Sheri Haggard. "I couldn't be prouder of Chris for this accomplishment as this certification further echoes his well-rounded and accomplished engineering competency."

• Several District staffers hit milestones in 2019:

- Deanna Hernandez, Senior Executive Analyst, 20 years;
- Sam Oktay, Air Quality Engineer II, 20 years;
- Michelle Zumwalt, Air Quality Planner I, 20 years;
- Jennifer Jochim, Records Management Specialist, 10 years;
- Julie McKeehan, AVAQMD Grants Analyst, 10 years.

Palm Springs to host 2019 CDAWG

Featured presentations to include Air Resources Board executive officer, EPA, local transit agency



The 2019 California Desert Air Working Group (CDAWG) Conference is set to return to Palm Springs on Nov. 6 and 7.

This year's event will feature speakers from various industries, including Richard Corey, Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board, who will be featured as the keynote speaker. Presentations will also include:

- Dustin Strandberg, senior fleet analyst with the Victor Valley Transit Authority, will talk about the agency's conversion of its CNG buses to battery-electric;

- Tina Suarez-Murias, air pollution specialist at the California Air Resources Board, will present on regional haze (the degradation of visibility due to air pollution);

- Dr. Philip M. Fine from South Coast Air Quality Management District will focus on efforts in

ozone planning;

- Charles Humphrey and Darrell Johnson from Southern California Gas Company (Sempra Utilities) will give a different perspective on oil and gas regulations;

- Matt Lakin, deputy director of the air and radiation division for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, will talk about the latest news from U.S. EPA Region 9;

- Jackie Ferlita, vice president of Air Quality Consultants based in Orange County, will update attendees on the cap-and-trade market.

MDAQMD hosts the annual conference and proceeds from it go to support the activities of the Mojave Environmental Education Consortium, an educational resource non-profit

serving High Desert communities in San Bernardino, Los Angeles and Riverside counties.

"We're looking forward to bringing CDAWG back to the Coachella Valley and hearing the great information CDAWG is known to provide," said Brad Poiriez, MDAQMD Executive Director. "This conference continues to be the ideal place for leaders and officials in air quality and related industries to gather, share ideas and form strategies to ensure we're educating constituents and permit holders on the best ways to reduce and prevent air pollution."

**View the full agenda,
and register at
mdaqmd.ca.gov/cdawg**



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Kari Leon
Town of Apple Valley

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County of Riverside

Supervisor Robert Lovingood
County of San Bernardino, 1st District

Supervisor Dawn Rowe
County of San Bernardino, 3rd District

Dan Mintz
City of Twentynine Palms

Jim Cox
City of Victorville

Merl Abel
Town of Yucca Valley

Barbara Cram Riordan
Public Member

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2020 Calendars available Nov. 12



Winning student artists in this year's Clean Air Month Poster Contest are featured in the 2020 MDAQMD Calendar. The students' winning creations, chosen from hundreds of submissions in the 2019 "A Flair for Clean Air" Clean Air Month Poster Contest, will adorn the pages of the 2020 months along with photos of the students and representatives of contest cosponsors. Pick up your free copy of the calendar beginning Tuesday, Nov. 12 at MDAQMD's main offices, 14306 Park Ave. in Victorville. Visit MDAQMD.ca.gov for more information.