AGN. NO.____

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS KATHRYN BARGER AND JANICE HAHN

DECEMBER 20, 2022

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR INCENTIVES TO GAS-POWERED LEAF BLOWERS

On June 14, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved a motion directing the Chief Sustainability Officer to work in collaboration with the Department of Economic Opportunity, Departments of Public Health, and Public Works, and the Office of Immigrant Affairs within the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, to report back on opportunities and incentives for emissions-free leaf blowers. This motion came on the heels of the state of California announcing a ban on the sale of gas-powered leaf blowers in 2024, and multiple local municipalities banning the use of such equipment.

Los Angeles County has a thriving and diverse economy of landscaping professionals, and policies restricting the use of certain types of lawn equipment have a significant impact on their operations. In recognition of this, the state has approved many grant, rebate, and buy-back opportunities to incentivize businesses of all sizes and types to transition from gas-powered leaf blowers to electric alternatives. The report back to the June 14 motion identified the following:

1. AB 1346, the legislation prohibiting the sale of gas-powered small off-road engines (SORE), includes $30 million in funding for sole proprietors and other small landscaping businesses to encourage transitioning to zero-emission SORE, including leaf blowers.
2. The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) launched a Commercial Electric Lawn and Garden Program as an equipment incentive and exchange program that offers up to 75 percent off commercial lawn and garden equipment when trading in an existing gas-powered tool.
3. The Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD) offers a 20 percent rebate on electric lawn equipment for residents who exchange operable gas-powered lawn equipment
4. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) announced over $27 million in funding through their Clean Off-Road Equipment Voucher Incentive Project (CORE) which will generate point-of-sale discount vouchers for zero-emission professional landscape service equipment.

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With multiple state and local incentive programs available for businesses and residents to affordably transition to alternatives to gas-powered lawn equipment, it is incumbent on this County to ensure our local residents and businesses are aware of these programs. This must include a multi-faceted messaging campaign to ensure we are communicating with all landscaping professionals. Los Angeles County is home to both large landscaping corporations and small independent unlicensed landscaping professionals, and the County should utilize our extensive and diverse communications platforms to ensure those that most need financial incentives to transition are able to access them.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors move the recommended communications plan from the November 14, 2022 report and direct the Department of Economic Opportunity in collaboration with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs and their Office of Immigrant Affairs, Chief Sustainability Officer, and the Chief Executive Office Countywide Communications, to develop and implement a public communications plan on the financial incentives available to purchase electric alternatives to gas-powered leaf blowers, and report back to the board on the progress of the plan in 60 days. This plan should include, but not be limited to:

1. Information on the state's ban of sale of small off-road engines and other municipal restrictions on gas-powered lawn equipment.
2. All grants or rebate programs for gas-powered leaf blower alternatives, and buy-back programs for gas-powered leaf blowers, including funding from AB 1346 and programs through the SCAQMD, AVAQMD, and CARB.
3. Specific outreach strategies to reach the diverse sectors of the landscaping market, including outreach to both licensed and unlicensed landscaping businesses, and businesses and property owners who hire landscapers.
4. Creative targeted outreach programs to unlicensed landscapers, including but not limited to, contacting community-based organizations, hardware and landscaping stores, and property owners.
5. Utilizing the Contractors State License Board, the California Landscape Contracts Association and other County and State databases to contact all licensed landscaping contractors in Los Angeles County.
6. Ensuring that outreach and engagement is conducted in a multilingual, culturally appropriate, and immigration sensitive manner that is responsive to the needs of all members of the landscaping industry.

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