

NEWS RELEASE

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West Oakland community action plan to improve air quality approved by California Air Resources Board

SAN FRANCISCO – The California Air Resources Board voted unanimously last week to approve *Owning Our Air: The West Oakland Community Action Plan*, co-authored by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project.

Owning Our Air lays out a series of strategies and measures to be implemented over the next five years by state, regional and local agencies to further air pollution reductions in West Oakland. The Air District's Board of Directors adopted the plan on October 2, 2019.

"The state's affirmation of this bold community action plan will deliver cleaner air in West Oakland and public health improvements for its residents," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. "The implementation of this comprehensive plan will continue decades of efforts to improve air quality in West Oakland and reduce the risks associated with long-term community exposure to air pollution."

"Owning Our Air is a monumental resource for community members to improve the conditions of the place they call home," said Ms. Margaret Gordon, co-director of the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project. "Today is a victory in the longstanding effort to achieve emission reductions and eliminate the disparity in air pollution for our most impacted and vulnerable residents."

"The implementation of this ambitious plan will make meaningful improvements to our health and quality of life in West Oakland," said Brian Beveridge, co-director of the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project. "AB 617 is unprecedented in addressing inequities and empowering communities to set high standards for air quality and health. *Owning Our Air* offers solutions that will lead to measurable air quality improvements and will likely serve as a model in future emission reduction plans throughout California."

West Oakland is bounded by the Port of Oakland, the Union Pacific rail yard and the I-580, I-880 and I-980 freeways. Elevated levels of air pollution in West Oakland are the result of concentrated industrial activity including maritime freight, a rail yard and rail lines, large distribution centers, cement and asphalt plants, a power plant, metal facilities, and small to medium industrial and manufacturing operations. Trucks, cars and the road dust they generate also contribute to elevated emission levels.

The plan was developed as a requirement of AB 617, a state law passed concurrently with re-authorization of California's cap-and-trade program, the centerpiece of the state's efforts to reduce climate change. AB 617 recognizes that while California has seen tremendous improvement in air quality, not all communities have benefited equally, and some communities located close to freeways, ports, industry or other large pollution sources need additional focus and resources to reduce exposure levels.

A copy of the *Owning Our Air* plan, a plan summary and appendices can be viewed and downloaded online at the link below: <http://www.baaqmd.gov/ab617woak>.

The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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