

**CVAG**

**ENERGY & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE  
AGENDA**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025  
12:00 p.m.**

**CVAG Conference Room  
73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104  
Palm Desert, CA 92260**

**Members of the Committee and the public may attend and participate by  
video at the following remote location:**

**Blythe City Hall  
235 N Broadway, Room A  
Blythe, CA 92225**

**Imperial Irrigation District  
1284 Main Street  
El Centro, CA 92243**

Members of the public may use the following link for listening access and ability to address the  
Energy & Sustainability Committee when called upon:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82461418786?pwd=Ma527WMEcXpnuu0qjem0oUjV6SFLcj.1>

**Dial In: +1 669 900 9128  
Webinar ID: 824 6141 8786  
Password: 974395**

**IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO CONNECT VIA DIAL IN OPTION, PLEASE CALL 760-346-1127**

Public Comment is encouraged to be emailed to the Energy & Sustainability Committee prior to the meeting at [cvag@cvag.org](mailto:cvag@cvag.org) by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the committee meeting. Members of the public joining the meeting by Zoom can also provide comment by using the “raise hand” feature or hitting \*9 on the phone keypad.

As a convenience to the public, CVAG provides a call-in and internet-based option for members of the public to virtually observe and provide public comments at its meetings. Please note that, in the event of a technical issue disrupting the call-in or internet-based options, the meeting will continue unless otherwise required by law.

**THIS MEETING IS HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE.  
ACTION MAY RESULT ON ANY ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA.  
UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED, ALL ACTION ITEMS WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR FINAL APPROVAL.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Councilmember Oscar Ortiz, City of Indio, Chair

2. **ROLL CALL**

A. Member Roster

P4

3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

This is the first of two opportunities for public comment. Any person wishing to address the Energy & Sustainability Committee on items appearing on this agenda may do so at this time. At the discretion of the Chair, comments may be taken at the time items are presented. Please limit comments to three (3) minutes.

5. **COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

6. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

A. Approve the minutes from the November 14, 2024, meeting

P5

B. Authorize the Executive Director to take the necessary action to receive \$53,765 in grant funding for the used oil recycling program, including executing the necessary agreements with California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)

P9

6.1 **ITEMS HELD OVER FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR**

7. **DISCUSSION / ACTION**

A. Proposed Amendments to South Coast Air Quality District’s Rules 1111 & 1121 Phasing Out Gas Water Heaters & Furnaces and \$21M Go Zero Pilot Program

P10

**Supports Residents & Small Businesses Transitioning to Zero-NOx Appliances –**  
Heather Farr, SCAQMD's Planning and Rules Manager

**Recommendation:** Information

**B. Future opportunities for the Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN) – Jacob Alvarez P14**

**Recommendation:** Authorize the Energy & Sustainability Committee Chair, Vice Chair and CVAG's Executive Director to advocate for expansion of programs in the 2028 I-REN application and business plan, including the inclusion of energy efficiency programs that benefit residential homes as well as small and medium commercial buildings

**C. Cool Streets for Affordable Housing Neighborhoods Program – Julie Mignogna P25**

**Recommendation:** Authorize the Executive Director to enter into the necessary agreements to accept \$748,500 from the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation's Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program to launch the Cool Streets for Affordable Housing Neighborhoods Program

**D. Appointment of Regional Representative to SCAG Policy Committee – Erica Felci P29**

**Recommendation:** Discuss and nominate a CVAG representative to SCAG's Energy and Environment Committee

**8. INFORMATION**

**A. Attendance Record P30**

**B. 2024 Annual Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Report P31**

**C. Coachella Valley Power Agency Joint Powers Agreement P33**

**9. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

This is the second opportunity for public comment. Any person wishing to address the Energy & Sustainability Committee on items of general interest within the purview of this Committee may do so at this time. Please limit comments to two (2) minutes.

**10. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next meeting of the **Energy & Sustainability Committee** will be held on Thursday, April 10, 2025, at noon at the CVAG conference room, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104, Palm Desert, 92260.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, February 24, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. at the CVAG conference room, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104, Palm Desert, 92260.

**11. ADJOURN**

**ITEM 2A**

**Energy & Sustainability Committee  
Member Roster  
2024 – 2025**



<b>VOTING MEMBERS</b>	
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians	<b>Tribal Vice Chair Candace Patencio Anderson</b>
City of Blythe	<b>Mayor Joseph DeConinck</b>
City of Cathedral City	<b>Mayor Nancy Ross</b>
City of Coachella	<b>Councilmember Stephanie Virgen</b>
Coachella Valley Water District	<b>Director Anthony Bianco</b>
City of Desert Hot Springs	<b>Councilmember Dirk Voss</b>
Imperial Irrigation District	<b>Director JB Hamby</b>
City of Indian Wells	<b>Mayor Pro Tem Dana Reed</b>
City of Indio	<b>Councilmember Oscar Ortiz, <i>Chair</i></b>
City of La Quinta	<b>Mayor Linda Evans, <i>Vice Chair</i></b>
Mission Springs Water District	<b>Director Amber Duff</b>
City of Palm Desert	<b>Councilmember Gina Nestande</b>
City of Palm Springs	<b>Mayor Ron deHarte</b>
City of Rancho Mirage	<b>Mayor Ted Weill</b>
Riverside County – District 4	<b>Supervisor V. Manuel Perez</b>
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians	<b>Tribal Chairman Joseph Mirelez</b>
<b>Ex-Officio / Non-Voting Members</b>	
Riverside County – District 5	<b>Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez</b>

**ITEM 6A**

**Energy & Sustainability Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
November 14, 2024**



The audio file for this meeting can be found at: <http://www.cvag.org/audio.htm>

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order by Chair Oscar Ortiz, City of Indio, at 12 p.m. at the CVAG Conference Room, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104, in the City of Palm Desert. Zoom videoconferencing was available from the City of Blythe and Imperial Irrigation District’s office in El Centro.
- 2. ROLL CALL** – Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

**Members Present**

Mayor Joseph DeConinck  
Mayor Pro Tem Nancy Ross\*  
Director Anthony Bianco  
Councilmember Russell Betts\*  
Director Karin Eugenio  
Councilmember Donna Griffith  
Councilmember Oscar Ortiz, *Chair*  
Mayor Linda Evans, *Vice Chair*  
Director Amber Duff  
Councilmember Gina Nestande  
Mayor Pro Tem Ron deHarte  
Mayor Pro Tem Ted Weill  
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez  
Tribal Vice Chair Joseph Mirelez\*

**Agency**

City of Blythe (*via Zoom*)  
City of Cathedral City  
Coachella Valley Water District  
City of Desert Hot Springs  
Imperial Irrigation District (*via Zoom*)  
City of Indian Wells  
City of Indio  
City of La Quinta  
Mission Springs Water District  
City of Palm Desert  
City of Palm Springs  
City of Rancho Mirage  
Riverside County – District 4  
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

**Members/ Ex-Officios Not Present**

Vice Chair Candace Patencio Anderson  
Mayor Pro Tem Stephanie Virgen  
Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians  
City of Coachella  
Riverside County – District 5

*\*arrived at item 6.1*

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Linda Evans led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**5. COMMITTEE MEMBER / DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Chair Ortiz provided an update from his recent attendance to the State of the Business Community for Indio, held by the Chamber of Commerce.

**6. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- A. Approve the minutes from the September 12, 2024 meeting
- B. Authorize the Executive Director to advocate and take steps that ensure that CVAG’s jurisdictions’ underserved communities receive their fair share of SoCal Equitable Building Decarbonization Coalition’s deployment of the California Energy Commission’s Equitable Building Decarbonization Direct Install Program utilizing the Inland Regional Energy Network
- C. Adopt CVAG’s Legislative Platform for the next two-year legislative cycle

**IT WAS MOVED BY VICE CHAIR EVANS AND SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM DEHARTE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR.**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 11 AYES AND 4 MEMBERS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.**

Vice Chair Patencio Anderson	Absent
Mayor DeConinck	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Ross	Absent
Mayor Pro Tem Virgen	Absent
Director Bianco	Aye
Councilmember Betts	Absent
Director Eugenio	Aye
Councilmember Griffith	Aye
Councilmember Ortiz	Aye
Mayor Evans	Aye
Director Duff	Aye
Councilmember Nestande	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem deHarte	Aye
Mayor Pro Tem Weill	Aye
Supervisor Perez	Aye
Tribal Vice Chair Mirelez	Aye

**6.1 ITEMS HELD OVER FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR**

Item 6B was approved during the consent vote, but a recap with update of the item was requested by Chair Ortiz after approval of the consent calendar. Program Manager Jacob Alvarez presented an update and next steps by I-REN. Member discussion ensued.

**7. DISCUSSION / ACTION**

**A. Presentation: Electric Vehicle Charging Station in the City of Blythe**

Blythe Interim City Manager Mallory Crecelius joined the Committee meeting via Zoom and introduced WattEV Director of Grants and Government Affairs Michael Ganny, who also joined via Zoom, and presented an update regarding the Electric Vehicle Charging Station project plans in the City of Blythe.

Lengthy member discussion ensued with Mr. Ganny answering questions from the Committee about site layout, capacity and benefits to drivers.

No action was taken as this was an informational item.

**B. Model Home Energy Efficiency Reach Code for CVAG Region**

Program Manager David Freedman presented the staff report and introduced I-REN fellow Juliette Agtang from the City of Palm Springs, who provided more information on the proposed Palm Springs Reach Code. Additional information was provided by Palm Springs' Sustainability Director Lindsey-Paige McCloy.

Brief member discussion ensued.

No action was taken as this was an informational item.

**C. Urban and Community Forestry Program- Shade Trees for Southern California's Deserts**

Program Manager Emmanuel Martinez presented the staff report and details of the grant.

Robust member discussion ensued, including discussion of how the trees would be distributed across the two counties. .

**IT WAS MOVED BY TRIBAL VICE CHAIR MIRELEZ AND SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM DEHARTE TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO THE NECESSARY AGREEMENTS TO PARTNER WITH IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT TO IMPLEMENT THE SHADE TREES FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA DESERTS PROGRAM, INCLUDING PLANTING 6,000 TREES IN IMPERIAL AND RIVERSIDE COUNTIES OVER A THREE-YEAR PERIOD, PENDING FINAL AUTHORIZATION BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION.**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 11 AYES AND 2 MEMBERS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.**

<b>Vice Chair Patencio Anderson</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Mayor DeConinck</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Ross</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Virgen</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Director Bianco</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Betts</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Director Eugenio</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Griffith</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Ortiz</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Evans</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Director Duff</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Councilmember Nestande</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem deHarte</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Weill</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Supervisor Perez</b>	<b>Aye</b>
<b>Tribal Vice Chair Mirelez</b>	<b>Aye</b>

**D. Update on Coachella Valley Energy Commission and Ongoing Analysis of Regional Alternative Governance**

Mr. Martinez presented the staff report and update on the discussions of a new joint powers authority.

Brief member discussion ensued

No action was taken as this was an informational item.

**8. INFORMATION** – The following items were provided in the agenda for information only:

**A. Attendance Record**

**B. Local Government Waste Tire Amnesty Grant TA6 Annual Report**

**9. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**10. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councilmember Russell Betts announced that today was the 30th Anniversary of the California Desert Protection Act and noted that Joan Taylor of the Sierra Club was the recipient of the Minerva Hoyt California Desert Conservation Award.

Councilmember Betts also announced that after 17 years of service, he will not be returning for another term on council and thanked CVAG and the committee members.

The next meeting of the **Energy & Sustainability Committee** will be held on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at noon at the CVAG conference room, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104, Palm Desert, 92260.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, December 2, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. at the CVAG conference room, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 104, Palm Desert, 92260.

**11. ADJOURN** – Chair Ortiz adjourned the meeting at 1:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Elysia Regalado, Management Analyst*

**ITEM 6B**

Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
Energy & Sustainability Committee  
February 13, 2025



**Subject:** Funding for the Used Oil Recycling Program

**Contact:** Lisa McNeilly, Director of Energy and Sustainability ([lmcneilly@cvag.org](mailto:lmcneilly@cvag.org))

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**Recommendation:** Authorize the Executive Director to take the necessary action to receive \$53,765 in grant funding for the used oil recycling program, including executing the necessary agreements with California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)

**Background:** Since 2003 CVAG, in partnership with its member jurisdictions, has maintained recycling programs for waste tires and for used oil throughout the region. These programs are implemented through the use of consultants to provide program event coordination, public education, and staff services and are traditionally funded through grants secured from the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).

The used oil recycling program provides funds for local jurisdictions to collect and recycle used oil that would likely be discarded illegally or left on site, leading to unsafe conditions and negative environmental impacts. In Fiscal Year 2023/24, CVAG hosted eight used oil filter exchange events. CVAG collected a total of 798 oil filters at the events, compared to 682 oil filters collected at seven events in Fiscal Year 2022/23. The number of gallons of used oil collected slightly decreased, with 1,045 gallons of oil collected in Fiscal Year 2023/24 versus 1,353 gallons of oil collected the year before.

HF&H Consulting Services (HF&H) has been assisting CVAG with recycling events and other used oil grant program services since September 2011. Following the issuance of a request for proposals in September 2023, HF&H was awarded its current services contract, with options to extend for through Fiscal Years 2024/25 and 2025/26 cycles. The HF&H contract extension was contingent on receiving additional funding.

In June 2024, CVAG submitted an application for funding under the Used Oil Payment Program Cycle 15 (OPP15). Staff was notified in January 2025 that CVAG will be receiving \$53,765 by May 2025 to continue the program. CVAG and HF&H expect to use these funds to offer used oil curbside collection and collection centers in partnership with the Cities of Blythe, Cathedral City, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, and Rancho Mirage.

**Fiscal Analysis:** The OPP15 payment for CVAG will be \$53,765. CVAG staff anticipates that the grant funding will cover all program costs, including the consultant contract, necessary staff time, outreach expenses and the necessary program materials.

**ITEM 7A**

**Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
Energy & Sustainability Committee  
February 13, 2025**



**STAFF REPORT**

**Subject: Proposed Amendments to South Coast Air Quality District’s Rules 1111 & 1121 Phasing Out Gas Water Heaters & Furnaces and \$21M Go Zero Pilot Program Supports Residents & Small Businesses Transitioning to Zero-NOx Appliances**

**Contact:** Jacob Alvarez, Program Manager ([jalvarez@cvag.org](mailto:jalvarez@cvag.org))

**Recommendation: Information**

**Background:** This report provides an update on the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) proposed amendments to Rules 1111 and 1121, and their related [Go Zero Pilot Incentive Program](#). This rule change was previously mentioned at the November 14 meeting of CVAG’s Energy & Sustainability Committee meeting during a discussion of SoCal Equitable Building Decarbonization Coalition’s deployment of the California Energy Commission’s Equitable Building Decarbonization Direct Install Program. At the time, Committee members expressed general concerns about the potential costs associated with transitioning from gas to electric appliances.

Heather Farr, SCAQMD’s Planning and Rules Manager, will attend the Committee’s February meeting to provide an update on the proposed rule amendments. SCAQMD have proposed amending both Rules 1111 and 1121 to eliminate nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions from residential gas furnaces and water heaters. These new rules would effectively phase out these gas appliances in favor of electric alternatives, such as heat pumps, when appliances are voluntarily replaced or existing ones break. The proposed rules were addressed at SCAQMD’s September 2024 meeting. Recognizing the potential financial impact on homeowners and renters, the SCAQMD Board postponed setting a public hearing and directed staff to increase public outreach and develop a public assistance program to help offset the costs of transitioning to electric appliances.

SCAQMD staff have been conducting additional outreach and coordination, so the amendments to Rules 1111 and 1121 are still a work in progress as they compile the feedback that’s being received. The SCAQMD Board could potentially discuss these amendments later this month and will subsequently set dates for public hearings until May 2, 2025 (subject to change). The proposed compliance schedule, which is subject to change, is detailed in the table below. However, SCAQMD is considering delaying the existing building compliance dates to 2029.

PAR	Type	Zero-Emission Start Date	
		New Buildings	Existing Buildings
1111	Residential & Commercial Furnaces	2026	2028
	Mobile Home Furnaces	2026	2030
1121	Residential Water Heaters	2026	2027
	Mobile Home Water Heaters	2026	2030

In addition to the proposed amendments to Rules 1111 and 1121, SCAQMD’s presentation will provide details about their Go Zero Pilot Incentive Program. This program aims to incentivize the adoption of zero-emission space and water heating appliances by offering rebates to single-family properties (\$9 million), multi-family properties (\$5 million), and small businesses (\$5 million).

These rebates will assist in replacing traditional gas appliances with electric alternatives like heat pumps. An additional \$2 million will be allocated to installer training, outreach, and

resident support to facilitate program access and reduce the overall cost of transitioning to electric appliances.

**Fiscal Analysis:** There is no cost to CVAG for this informational report.

**Attachments:** Rule 1111 & 1121 Factsheets in English and Spanish



# South Coast AQMD is Conducting Rulemaking that Could Impact Your Home Water Heaters and Furnaces

The rules will reduce emissions from residential furnaces (Rule 1111) and water heaters (Rule 1121) by transitioning to zero-emission appliances.

## How Will the Rules Impact You?

Rules will take effect in 2-5 years and will be required only when:

**Appliances are voluntarily replaced**



**Existing appliances break**



## Will There be any Flexibility?

Exceptions will be allowed for:



**Construction or utility upgrades delays**



**High-altitude areas**



**Owners of multifamily buildings**





**Considering other circumstances**

## Health Benefits

Once implemented, these rules will prevent:

 **4,000** premature deaths

 **16,000** cases of newly onset asthma

 **4,000** emergency room visits

## Will Financial Assistance be Available?

South Coast AQMD is working on an incentive program to provide rebates for residents, building owners and small businesses.

More info →



## Get Involved

Want to provide feedback on the rules or need more information? Join a working group meeting. More information can be found at: [www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/rules](http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/rules). To receive future updates on rulemaking and incentives via email newsletter: Subscribe by checking the "Building Appliances" box located under Rule Updates: [www.aqmd.gov/sign-up](http://www.aqmd.gov/sign-up).



South Coast Air Quality Management District  
21865 Copley Dr. Diamond Bar, CA 91765  
[www.aqmd.gov](http://www.aqmd.gov) • 1-800-CUT-SMOG®

@SouthCoastAQMD





# South Coast AQMD está llevando a cabo una reglamentación que podría impactar los calentadores de agua y el calefactor central de su hogar

Las reglas reducirán las emisiones de los calefactores centrales residenciales (Regla 1111) y calentadores de agua (Regla 1121) mediante la transición a electrodomésticos de cero emisiones.

## ¿Cómo te afectarán las reglas?

Las reglas entrarán en vigor en 2 a 5 años y serán requeridas solo cuando:

**Los electrodomésticos se reemplazan voluntariamente**




**Se descompongan los electrodomésticos existentes**



## Beneficios para la salud

Una vez implementadas, estas reglas van a prevenir:

 **4,000** muertes prematuras

 **16,000** casos nuevos de asma

 **4,000** visitas a la sala de emergencias

## ¿Habrà flexibilidad?

Se permitirán excepciones para:



**Retrasos en la construcción o mejoras de servicios públicos**



**Zonas de gran altitud**



**Propietarios de edificios multifamiliares**



**Teniendo en cuenta otras circunstancias**

## ¿Habrà asistencia financiera disponible?

South Coast AQMD está trabajando en formar un programa de incentivos para reembolsos a los residentes, propietarios de edificios y pequeñas empresas.

Más información →



## Involúcrese

¿Quiere enviar comentarios sobre las reglas o necesita más información? Únase a una reunión del grupo de trabajo. Encuentre más información en: [www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/rules](http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/rules). Para recibir actualizaciones (en inglés) sobre la elaboración de normas e incentivos a través de un boletín informativo por correo electrónico: Suscríbese marcando la casilla "Building Appliances" (o electrodomésticos de edificios en español) ubicada bajo "Rule Updates" (o actualizaciones de reglas en español): [www.aqmd.gov/sign-up](http://www.aqmd.gov/sign-up).



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**ITEM 7B**

**Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
Energy & Sustainability Committee  
February 13, 2025**



**STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** Future opportunities for the Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN)

**Contact:** Jacob Alvarez, Program Manager ([jalvarez@cvaq.org](mailto:jalvarez@cvaq.org))

**Recommendation:** Authorize the Energy & Sustainability Committee Chair, Vice Chair and CVAG’s Executive Director to advocate for expansion of programs in the 2028 I-REN application and business plan, including the inclusion of energy efficiency programs that benefit residential homes as well as small and medium commercial buildings

**Background:** CVAG is collaborating with Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) and San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG) on a joint Regional Energy Network (REN) for the Inland Empire, known as Inland Regional Energy Network (I-REN). I-REN is governed by an Executive Committee, with CVAG’s votes represented by the Energy & Sustainability Committee Chair, or Vice Chair as needed. Based on previous CVAG committee direction, CVAG’s Energy & Sustainability Committee reviews the items being presented to the I-REN Executive Committee and provides direction to the Chair on how to vote for the region.

I-REN is operating on a five-year Business Plan and discussions have started about forming a Business Plan that will guide programming through 2035. Staff is now seeking direction from CVAG’s Energy & Sustainability Committee about the inclusion of additional programs into that business plan.

The existing Business Plan was approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in November 2021, granting I-REN Program Administrator (PA) status and access to \$65 million in Public Goods Charge funds for energy efficiency programs from 2022-2027. The existing Business Plan divides funds into three programmatic areas: Codes and Standards; Workforce Education and Training; and Public Sector.

Market Sector	Program Name
Public Sector	Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning Program
	Public Buildings Normalized Metered Energy Consumption Program (“Cash for Kilowatts”)
Codes & Standards	Training and Education Program
	Technical Support Program
Workforce Education & Training	Training and Education Program
	Workforce Development Program

CVAG staff is now working with its partners at WRCOG and SBCOG to develop the application for 2028-2035 funding. It will require assessing the energy efficiency needs of I-REN stakeholder communities within the CPUC-defined market sectors (see table and Exhibit A) I-REN plans to serve. This assessment will be followed by determining I-REN's capacity to address those needs and developing a strong set of strategies with a justified budget request to support the chosen market sectors.

CPUC Market Sectors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Agricultural</b></li> <li>• <b>Codes &amp; Standards*</b></li> <li>• <b>Commercial</b></li> <li>• <b>Emerging Technologies –</b></li> <li>○ offered by utilities only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Finance</b></li> <li>• <b>Industrial</b></li> <li>• <b>Public*</b></li> <li>• <b>Residential</b></li> <li>• <b>Workforce Education &amp; Training*</b></li> </ul>

\*Denotes I-REN 's current market sectors.

Over the course of 2025, I-REN staff also begin evaluating its program performance to date and those findings will inform the 2028 Application. I-REN's accomplishments and lessons learned during the current funding cycle will be essential in justifying continued funding for existing sectors and any proposed new sector(s). A full outreach plan, including meetings for stakeholder input, will be utilized as I-REN prepares for the document to be submitted in February 2026.

There appears to be interest in having the next blueprint build on I-REN's existing programs in Codes & Standards, Public, and Workforce Education and Training Market Sectors. However, of the three I-REN agencies, CVAG has shown the most interest in energy efficiency programs that can directly benefit local residential properties instead of governmental buildings. Staff is now seeking the Committee's input on expanding the sectors that would be available for funding, and provide authorization to Chair Ortiz and CVAG's Executive Director to advocate for the inclusion of the residential sector and the small and medium commercial market sector programs in the 2028 I-REN Application and Business Plan.

#### *Recap of recent actions*

The I-REN Executive Committee last met in January. The highlights include:

- The I-REN Executive Committee was provided the results of an energy workforce assessment conducted in by The Energy Coalition. It looked at workforce gaps, employer needs, and existing training opportunities in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Released in December 2024, the assessment makes four key recommendations: 1) connect job seekers to training, 2) enhance support services, 3) strengthen the education-to-career pipeline, and 4) foster collaboration between employers and training providers to meet the region's growing energy workforce demands. A summary is attached to this staff report.
- Staff discussed efforts to create Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with Riverside County and San Bernardino County, to expand its Workforce Education & Training Program. These partnerships will focus on creating pathways for underserved communities, aligning training programs with industry needs, fostering hands-on learning opportunities, and leveraging resources to advance I-REN's clean energy objectives. Contracts and details of future programs will come back to the I-REN Executive Committee for future consideration.
- The Executive Committee modified their meeting schedule to meet eight times over 2025, with the next meeting scheduled for April 15.

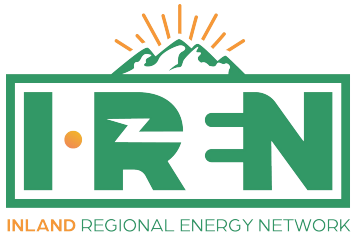
**Fiscal Analysis:** There is no additional cost to CVAG for these items. Staff time dedicated to I-REN and the costs of the services of consultants are covered through the I-REN budget.

#### **Attachments:**

1. Business Plan Sector Descriptions
2. Summary Report – Energy Workforce Gaps Assessment

## Business Plan Sectors and Descriptions

- **Agriculture** - increasing the knowledge base to aid in meeting energy efficiency program goals, coordination of regulatory, financing, and incentive mechanisms to promote increase program effectiveness, and increased utilization of integrated demand side energy management options such as energy efficiency and onsite renewable generation.
- **Codes and Standards** – Compliance enhancement, advocacy, education and training, design and promotion of REACH codes
- **Commercial** - programs to both overcome traditional market barriers and achieve optimal energy management for existing commercial buildings.
- **Emerging Technologies** (typically IOUs apply for this sector) – The Emerging Technologies Program (ETP) is a statewide 3<sup>rd</sup> party implemented program that evaluates emerging and underutilized energy efficiency technologies for possible inclusion into the portfolio. ETP's serve as a pipeline to deliver emerging technologies to ratepayer-funded energy efficiency programs to meet the state's energy reduction needs. ETP is split into both Electric and Gas Programs.
- **Energy Savings Assistance** (ESA is typically what an IOU would apply for) – Providing no-cost weatherization services to consumers who meet the CARE or FERA income limits. Typically residential programming.
- **Evaluation Measurement and Verification** (EM&V) – the collection of methods and processes used to assess the performance of energy efficiency activities so that planned results can be achieved with greater certainty and future activities can be more effective. Typically related to process, programs, and assessments to evaluate current measurement values and monitor energy efficiency calculations.
- **Finance** - financing options for projects, audits, measure determination, technical specifications, certification of auditors, post-installation inspection, billing systems, demand management, and various other forms of financial capital or programs.
- **Industrial** - integration of solutions through a one-stop shop approach, education and outreach to create awareness for continuous energy efficiency improvements, and leveraging existing workforce training initiatives and technical exchange forums to gain access to highly-skilled professionals in the field of system energy efficiency and energy management solutions.
- **On Billing Finance** (OBF) – financing options for projects by supplying capital to a customer to fund energy efficiency, renewable energy, or other generation projects which are repaid through regular payments on an existing utility bill. SCE provides this option to public agencies currently.
- **Other** - not entirely sure what programs typically fall under this category, but it is a sector that can be included in a Business Plan
- **Public** – energy efficiency upgrades, projects, audits, and software for public agency buildings and facilities.
- **Residential** – incentives, programs, and financing for residential energy efficiency upgrades, projects, and technologies.
- **Workforce Education and Training** - incorporate energy efficiency education and training in all levels of California's educational systems, as well as ensuring that minority, low income, and disadvantaged communities are fully participating in educational programs at all levels.



2024

# Energy Workforce Gaps Assessment Summary Report

Prepared by:  the Energy Coalition



[iren.gov](http://iren.gov)

[info@iren.gov](mailto:info@iren.gov)

# Introduction

I-REN has commissioned a regional energy workforce and training market assessment, which is summarized in this document. The report aimed to analyze workforce gaps within the energy sector in Riverside and San Bernardino counties, identify training needs, and address job accessibility issues to strengthen the local workforce and meet growing energy sector demands.



## *Components of I-REN's Energy Workforce Gaps Assessment*



### **Regional Energy Industry Analysis**

Current industry and forecasted changes, based on primary and secondary data on the region's energy industry



### **Energy Employer Survey**

Engagement (virtual and in-person) and a survey to collect employer and stakeholder feedback on energy employers' needs and challenges



### **Regional Training Assessment**

Analysis of training accessibility, workforce gaps, and current and future employment opportunities

The findings in these three components highlight challenges faced by energy employers, job seekers, and stakeholders in building a skilled workforce. Based on these findings, The Energy Coalition (TEC), who developed this report, has compiled four recommendations for I-REN to strengthen the local workforce and meet growing energy sector demands.



# Regional Energy Industry Analysis

The Inland Empire is projected to grow rapidly in the coming years. The youth population (ages 16-24) is projected to grow by 13.1%. This growing population presents an opportunity to meet the energy industry's growing needs by engage young people in energy careers through training and apprenticeships.

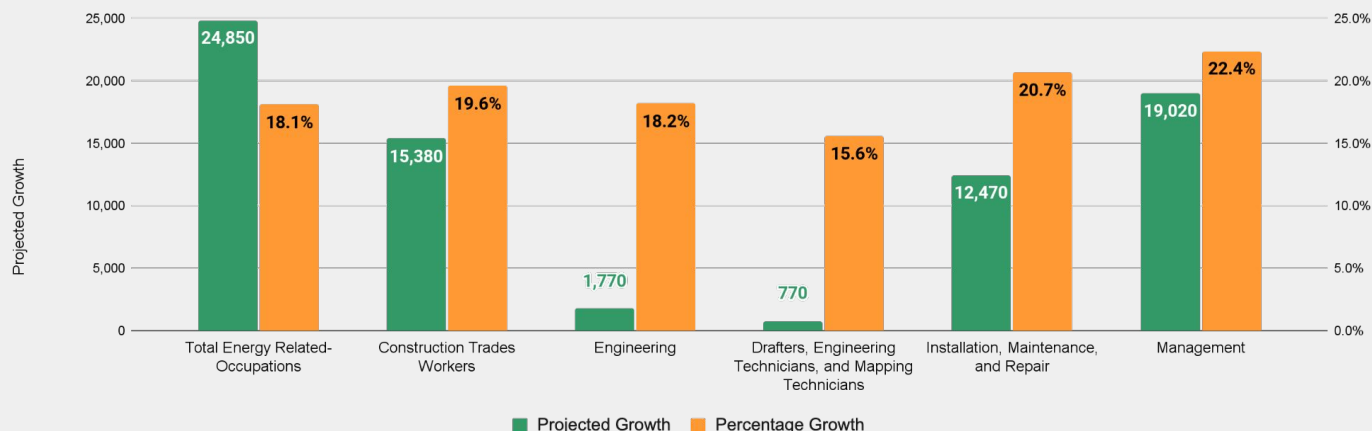
▶ **54%**

Residents identifying as Hispanic/Latino, making culturally-relevant outreach and training programs essential.

▶ **83%**

Population with high school diploma, opening opportunities for entry-level jobs, apprenticeships, and certifications.

**Projected Growth of Energy-Related Occupations in the Inland Empire (2020-2030)**



Meanwhile, retirees (ages 55+) are projected to grow by 10.3%. The region will need enhanced training, certification, and knowledge transfer to retain a skilled workforce in high-demand energy sectors as large numbers of workers retire. Energy-related occupations are projected to see an average 25% retirement rate and 57% transfer rate of skilled workers from 2020-2030. This poses a significant challenge for maintaining a skilled energy workforce.

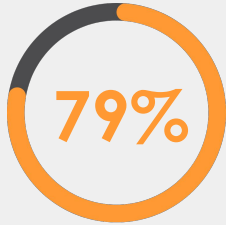
▶ *Over 75% of workers in critical energy-related roles are projected to retire or transfer between 2020 and 2030, highlighting the need for immediate recruitment and retention strategies.*

Energy-related occupations, which will require a skilled workforce, are projected to grow by an average of 20% through 2030. Significant job growth is expected in energy-related fields, such as solar photovoltaic installers (81.3%), electricians (22.3%), engineers (19.8%-25%), and maintenance workers (16.4%-35.4%).

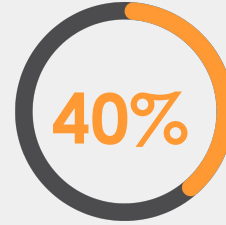


# Energy Employer Survey

The survey, conducted from May to November 2024, received **385 responses**, 28.9% of respondents were from community-based organizations (non-profits, education, local governments, consultants), and 71.1% were from energy employers in the electrical, mechanical, construction, and HVAC sectors.



Employers who identified retention challenges as a barrier to maintaining a stable and skilled workforce



Employers who provide or pay for training, focusing on safety requirements and essential technical skills

Energy employers perceive a **shortage of relevant industry experience and insufficient training or certifications** among potential hires. Survey respondents indicated that job applicants and employees lack technical, workplace, and interpersonal skills equally. This indicates the importance of addressing workforce skill gaps in the region's energy sector with a multifaceted approach.

Employers emphasized the importance of a combination of foundational education, specialized certifications, and hands-on experience when looking to hire new employees. They often prioritize experience over formal education, which limits their ability to fill job openings locally.

## QUESTION

What's driving employee retention challenges in the energy industry?

## ANSWER

- Limited financial and career growth opportunities
- Skill gaps
- Competitive labor market
- Retirements

## QUESTION

What's keeping employees and job seekers from accessing certifications/ training?

## ANSWER

- High training costs
- Limited access to relevant programs
- Insufficient opportunities to address skill gaps

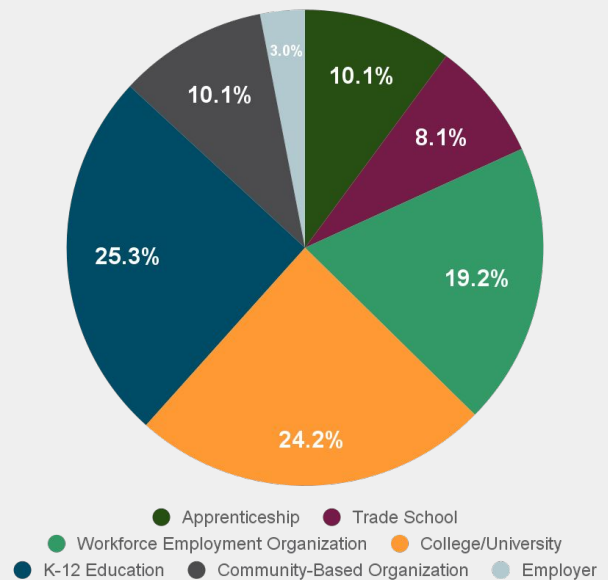


# Regional Training Assessment

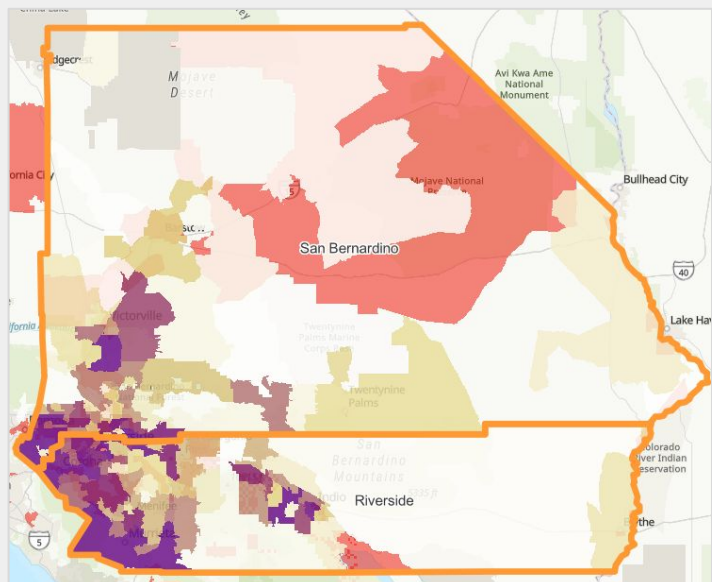
The assessment identified over 100 training providers offering 360 energy-related training opportunities in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Collaboration between these training providers, workforce development agencies, community organizations, labor unions, and employers is crucial for developing a skilled energy workforce.

Most training programs concentrate on technical and foundational skills in traditional energy sectors such as welding, electrical work, construction, and HVAC, with limited offerings in advanced clean energy technologies.

**Identified Trainings in the Inland Region by Type**



**I-REN regional equity map and energy-related employer heat map**



● - higher concentration of employers  
● - lower concentration of employers  
 Rural regions have limited energy employment opportunities and fewer training programs.

To meet the growing demand for energy-related jobs, more training and updated curricula is needed in the clean energy sector, including energy storage, EV infrastructure, energy auditing, green building standards, and other clean energy skills.

Most regional energy training (57%) is delivered in person, which presents challenges related to travel, time commitment, and costs, particularly for rural workers. Only 10-13% of regional training is offered online or through self-paced courses, which can be flexible, but lacks hands-on experience and can have access barriers depending on technology requirements. Training access in underserved communities must be expanded.



# Recommendations



## 1. Connect job seekers to training providers

Job seekers—particularly in underserved and rural areas—face significant barriers in acquiring the necessary skills, training, and certifications to secure stable employment in the energy industry.

### Recommended I-REN Actions

- ❑ **Build partnerships** with leading training providers and local labor unions
- ❑ Integrate third-party training providers, **offering flexible learning formats** to connect job seekers to workforce education and training (WE&T) programs.
- ❑ **Organize job fairs and informational sessions** to raise awareness about training opportunities.
- ❑ Develop a **clear, data-driven framework** to measure the **effectiveness of training programs and partnerships**.



## 2. Provide support services to make training and certification more attainable

Job applicants often need more skills/certifications to meet the region's energy workforce needs but they face barriers to obtaining the required certifications.

### Recommended I-REN Actions

- ❑ Collaborate with trainers and employers to offer financial support for energy sector training and certifications. For example:
  - subsidizing certification costs
  - offering training stipends
  - paying for materials and exams fees
  - covering transportation costs
- ❑ Support employers in developing specific incentives or initiatives for underserved communities.





### 3. Strengthen the regional education and training pipeline from K-12 to energy employment

I-REN should collaborate with K-12 educational institutions to create a seamless education-to-career pipeline, offering localized training programs that focus on the skills needed for in-demand energy roles.

#### Recommended I-REN Actions

- Collaborate with educational institutions to **enhance or develop new energy-related CTE pathways.**
- Introduce **certification programs** in high school education.
- Create **mentorship** opportunities where experienced employees guide new hires.
- Incorporate **entrepreneurial skills and business development into K-12 training.**
- Develop **internships and career fairs** to connect students with energy industry jobs.



### 4. Strengthen collaboration between employers and workforce development organizations to assess training effectiveness

There are currently few opportunities for key training stakeholders to collaborate directly on building an energy-focused workforce. I-REN should foster stronger partnerships to ensure training programs align with regional industry needs.

#### Recommended I-REN Actions

- Organize regular **meetings with employers, workforce development organizations, and educational institutions.**
- Engage energy employers, workforce organizations, and educational institutions to develop and improve training programs.
- **Develop and monitor clear, measurable metrics** to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of energy-related training programs.



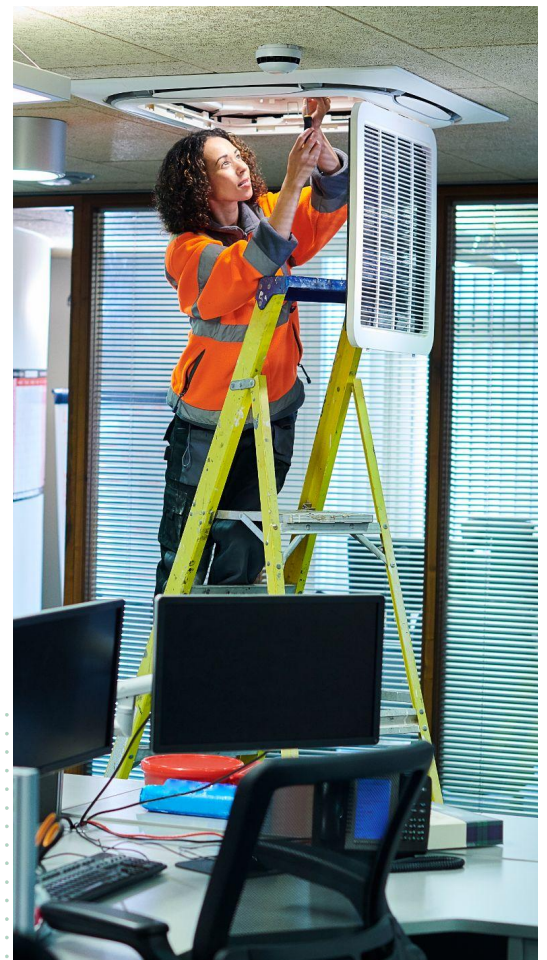
# Thank you!

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Thank you to the community-based organizations, educational institutions, local governments, consultants, and energy industry employers who contributed their experiences and input to develop this report. For questions or request for additional information based on this report summary, please contact Tyler Masters at [tmasters@wrcog.us](mailto:tmasters@wrcog.us).

## What Comes Next?

*This space will be updated with the I-REN Executive Committee's recommended next steps.*



## **ITEM 7C**

**Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
Energy & Sustainability Committee  
February 13, 2025**



### **STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** Cool Streets for Affordable Housing Neighborhoods Program

**Contact:** Julie Mignogna, Transportation Program Manager ([jmignogna@cvag.org](mailto:jmignogna@cvag.org))

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**Recommendation:** Authorize the Executive Director to enter into the necessary agreements to accept \$748,500 from the Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation’s Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program to launch the Cool Streets for Affordable Housing Neighborhoods Program

**Transportation Committee:** Concurred (Meeting of February 3)

**Background:** A top priority of CVAG’s Energy and Sustainability Committee has been addressing climate change and mitigating increasing extreme heat temperatures. As part of this priority, and to help ensure effective strategies are implemented, CVAG has invested in developing an Urban Greening Guide to meet the needs of the Coachella Valley by identifying native drought tolerant plant species that cool surrounding areas and provide reprieve from the heat for residents and visitors. CVAG staff has also looked at ways to implement some of these sustainable initiatives into its transportation projects.

The State of California Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation’s Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (EHCRP) supports the state’s comprehensive response to extreme heat. EHCRP provides funding and technical support to build capacity for heat action planning and project implementation to mitigate the impacts of extreme heat or urban heat island effect in the most heat-vulnerable communities. The program also supports the state’s work to implement California’s Extreme Heat Action Plan. The Extreme Heat Action Plan is a comprehensive, coordinated response across state agencies for advancing equitable outcomes, including reducing economic and health disparities associated with extreme heat. This was the first round of the program with \$20 million available for small and large planning grants and small and large implementation grants.

In May 2024, CVAG staff submitted a grant proposal for a new Cool Streets for Affordable Housing Neighborhoods Program. Developed in partnership with Coachella Valley Housing Coalition (CVHC) and Kounkuey Design Initiative, Inc. (KDI), CVAG proposed a planning project that will develop a regional blueprint for deploying pavements with lower heat producing characteristics, like lighter colors and less heat-absorbing materials. The grant application proposes implementing a pilot project at a CVHC affordable housing project, which will allow the team to test the cool pavement technology.

In addition to the pilot project, the program deliverables include a Cool Streets Master Plan, extreme heat education, community engagement, integration with the ongoing regional pavement condition study, a GIS mapping tool, and post-project site and energy consumption

assessments. Ultimately, the findings could complement the work CVAG is doing under the regional pavement management analysis that the Executive Committee authorized in June 2024.

In November 2024, staff participated in a grant application interview with the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation staff. In December, CVAG was notified the project was selected for an EHCRP large planning award in the amount of \$748,500.

Staff is now recommending that the Executive Director be authorized to execute agreements to accept the funding and to implement the program with State of California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, CVHC, KDI, and other partners.

**Fiscal Analysis:** CVAG will receive \$748,500 in grant funding from the State of California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation's Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program.

KDI and the CVHC were identified as partners in the project and both were part of the grant application process. KDI has previous experience in this field, most recently with the Eastern Coachella Valley Shade Equity Master Plan, which provides a roadmap for the unincorporated communities of Mecca, North Shore, Oasis, and Thermal to invest in new shade infrastructure and adapt to extreme heat. Based on the grant proposal, KDI will receive \$167,500 of the budget to develop and lead the community outreach and engagement efforts.

CVHC is a leader in affordable housing for the region and will benefit directly from the cool pavement pilot project. CVHC will receive approximately \$52,000 in funding allocated to staff time, incentives, and meals for households to participate in the community engagement workshops.

Both KDI and CVHC will bill on a time and materials basis.

**Attachment:** December 5, 2024 Grant Award Letter



**State of California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation**  
1400 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento, California, 95814  
lci.ca.gov

December 5, 2024  
Tom Kirk  
tkirk@cvag.org

RE: Award Notification – Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program Round 1, Large Planning Grant Award, Coachella Valley Association of Governments, Cool Streets for Affordable Housing Neighborhoods Program

Dear Tom Kirk and partners,

The Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation is pleased to inform you that Coachella Valley Association of Governments has been selected as a Round 1 Grantee for the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program award of \$748,500.00 for the project Cool Streets for Affordable Housing Neighborhoods Program. The Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program funds planning and implementation projects to mitigate the impacts of extreme heat. The Program will build frameworks for change and invest in local, regional, and tribal projects that strengthen communities that are vulnerable to extreme heat. Congratulations on your successful application!

In the coming weeks, staff from the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (EHCRP) will schedule a kickoff meeting to discuss and address any outstanding issues identified by staff and an interagency review panel, as well as to finalize the partnership and grant agreement. This includes submitting adequate financial capacity documentation for all co-applicants, which is currently missing from your application package.

Grantees and Partners will need to work closely and collaboratively with staff to address all issues prior to grant execution. Please note, this is a preliminary award, and LCI reserves the right to rescind or make changes to awards before the agreement is executed. This award is contingent on the execution of a grant agreement.

We ask that you keep the awards announcement confidential until LCI posts the information publicly on our website.

We look forward to our partnership in the coming years. If you have any questions, please contact Braden Kay, EHCRP Program Manager, at [braden.kay@opr.ca.gov](mailto:braden.kay@opr.ca.gov); and Kelly Meza Prado, EHCRP Senior Adaptation and Resilience Planner, at [kelly.mezaprado@opr.ca.gov](mailto:kelly.mezaprado@opr.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam Assefa".

Sam Assefa  
Director, Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation

**Governor's Office of Land  
Use & Climate Innovation**  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814



Governor's Office of  
**Land Use and  
Climate Innovation**

**State of California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation**

1400 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento, California, 95814

[lci.ca.gov](http://lci.ca.gov)

Governor's Office of Land  
Use & Climate Innovation  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**ITEM 7D**

**Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
Energy & Sustainability Committee  
February 13, 2025**



**Subject:** Appointment of Regional Representative to SCAG Policy Committee

**Contact:** Erica Felci, Chief Operating Officer ([efelci@cvag.org](mailto:efelci@cvag.org))

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**Recommendation: Discuss and nominate a CVAG representative to SCAG's Energy and Environment Committee**

**Background:** The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization (MPO), representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 19 million residents. SCAG's policy is set by the 86-member Regional Council, with CVAG member jurisdictions representing Regional Council Districts 2 and 66. CVAG appoints members to represent the region on SCAG's policy committees: Community, Economic, and Human Development; Energy and Environment; and Transportation.

The mission of SCAG's Energy and Environment Committee is to consider "environmental and energy issues of regional significance, including but not limited to air quality, water quality, solid and hazardous waste, habitat preservation, environmental justice, and environmental impact analysis."

The Executive Committee in 2019 acknowledged that the appointments should be reviewed on occasion and established a two-year term for each of the committee representatives. In spring of 2019, CVAG's Executive Committee appointed Indio Councilmember Oscar Ortiz to SCAG's Energy and Environment Committee. In April 2023, at the recommendation of CVAG's Energy & Sustainability Committee, CVAG appointed Coachella Councilmember Stephanie Virgen to the sub-regional seat.

CVAG staff is now seeking input from the Energy & Sustainability Committee on appointing a representative for the next two-year term on SCAG's Energy and Environment Committee. Councilmember Virgen has expressed interest in continuing to serve. In advance of this discussion, CVAG staff also provided a notification to the Committee members and did not receive any additional nominees. The nomination will then be presented to the CVAG Executive Committee along with the nominees for SCAG's Community, Economic, and Human Development and its Transportation Committees.

**Fiscal Analysis:** There is no financial impact to CVAG, and any per diems for these meetings are paid for by SCAG.



**ITEM 8B**

Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
Energy & Sustainability Committee  
February 13, 2025



**STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** 2024 Annual Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Report

**Contact:** Emily Langenbahn, Management Analyst ([elangenbahn@cvag.org](mailto:elangenbahn@cvag.org))

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**Recommendation: Information**

**Background:** Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs provide financing to property owners to implement energy saving, renewable energy, water conservation, and seismic strengthening improvements to their homes and businesses, with little or no money out of pocket. Financing for these improvements is paid back through a lien placed on the property and collected through the annual property tax bill. CVAG staff provides annual updates on the PACE program to the Energy & Sustainability Committee. The attached report details the annual PACE activity in the Coachella Valley for the 2024 calendar year.

Current active residential and commercial PACE providers in Coachella Valley consist of CaliforniaFIRST/Renew Financial (Renew), HomeRun Financing/PACE Funding (HomeRun), and FortiFi (formerly known as Energy Efficient Equity or E3). Residential and commercial installations have slowed in the Coachella Valley overall. However, there are homeowners who still opt to use the program to implement clean energy upgrades.

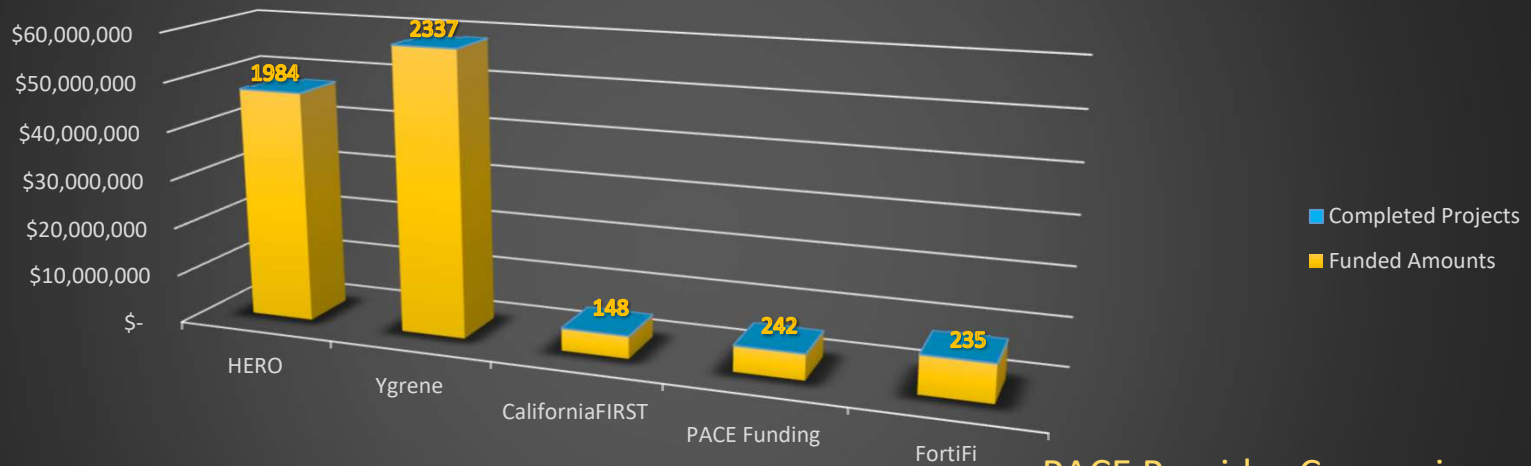
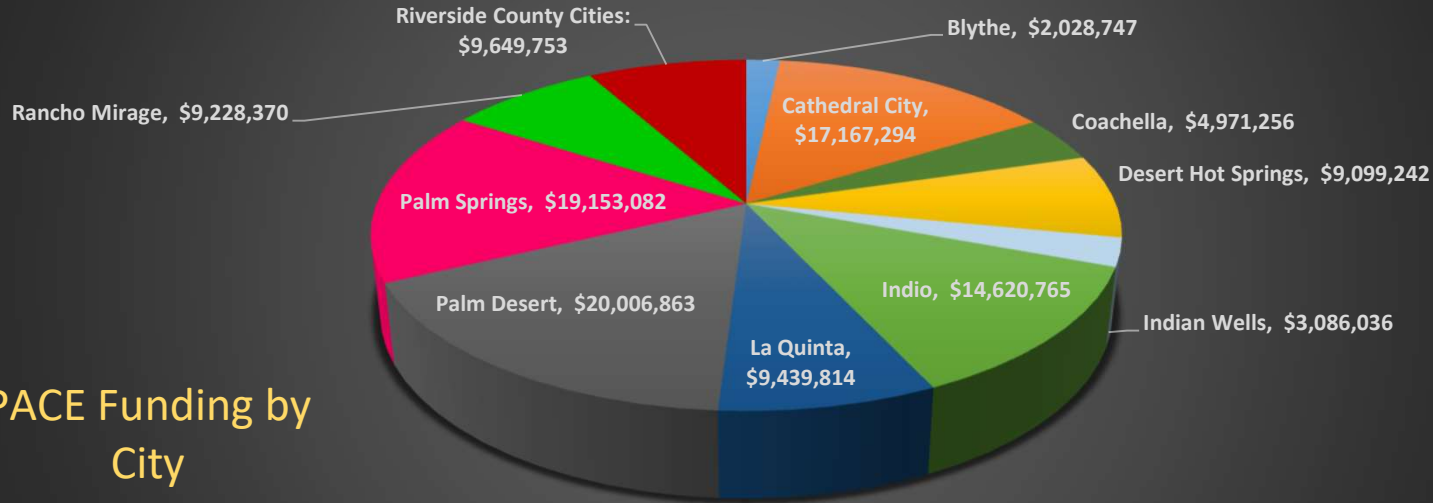
CVAG will continue to track and report on the status of the PACE residential and commercial PACE providers that operate in CVAG's member jurisdictions.

**Fiscal Analysis:** There is no cost to CVAG for this informational update. CVAG's staff time spent on these programs is recovered by a participation fee collected from each provider.

**Attachments:** PACE Activity Report for January through December 2024

# CVAG PACE REPORT

PACE Funding by City



PACE Provider Comparison

**CARS REMOVED FROM ROAD: 42304**

**JOBS CREATED: 1077**

PACE providers have interest rate ranges from 5.99%-10.98%

Updated January 17, 2025

## **ITEM 8C**

# Coachella Valley Association of Governments Energy & Sustainability Committee

February 13, 2025



## **STAFF REPORT**

**Subject:** Coachella Valley Power Agency Joint Powers Agreement

**Contact:** Emmanuel Martinez, Program Manager – External Affairs ([emartinez@cvaq.org](mailto:emartinez@cvaq.org))

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### **Recommendation: Information**

**Background:** Addressing the unique and growing electrical infrastructure for the communities in the Coachella Valley served by Imperial Irrigation District (IID) is a top priority for the region. Over the last three years, CVAG staff have provided regular progress reports to the Energy & Sustainability Committee on this matter. The key milestones accomplished so far include, but are not limited to, establishment of the Coachella Valley Energy Commission (CVEC) and its sub-committees to address representation on IID's electrical matters and energy service needs; the CVAG-managed contract for facilitation services from Leading Resources Incorporated, to build upon the joint-Local Agency Formation Commission study and narrow governance options; and most recently, CVAG-facilitated efforts to establish a joint powers authority (JPA), which would serve to focus energy infrastructure investment and planning to meet the immediate and future energy needs of the region.

Since the Committee's last meeting, the Coachella Valley Energy Commission has taken a few key actions to facilitate transition into the proposed Coachella Valley Power Agency (CVPA) JPA. In November 2024, the Coachella Valley Energy Commission adopted Resolution No. 1-2024, which provides CVEC's endorsement of the CVPA JPA. As part of the resolution, CVEC recognized the collaboration between IID and Coachella Valley stakeholders to reach a mutually agreeable governance solution. Additionally, the resolution recognizes CVAG as the entity with the capability to create, operate, administer and manage the CVPA JPA. With these actions, the CVEC process is now complete. However, the CVEC is considered dormant until the CVPA JPA is formally created, at which point the CVEC will dissolve. The CVEC members decided to take this action in the event it was necessary to convene to discuss any issues related to the CVPA JPA.

Leading up to the CVEC's meeting in November, CVAG's Executive Director and staff led efforts to draft the CVPA JPA agreement. Although the CVEC formally voted to endorse the agreement and the creation of the JPA, a few CVEC members expressed desire for further review of the agreement language. Specifically, the Twenty-Nine Band of Mission Indians and Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians requested further review of the Tribal Sovereignty language in the agreement. In addition, a few members requested their respective executive staffs to review the agreement before making a determination to be a member of the CVPA JPA. In December, CVAG staff reached out directly to all the city managers and tribal administrators and provided a copy of the draft CVPA JPA agreement and associated materials. As part of this engagement, staff requested feedback related to agreement from the city

managers and tribal administrators as well as their interest to be founding members of the CVPA JPA.

Regarding JPA membership, CVAG staff received communications from the Cities of Indio and La Quinta, and the County of Riverside, to be founding JPA members. Other cities requested additional time to review and discuss this matter with their respective councils, especially given new makeup on the local city councils after the November election. CVAG staff also heard from Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians' Chairman Joseph Mirelez that the Tribal Nations will not be joining at this time but will be monitoring the CVPA JPA once formed for future consideration.

The CVPA JPA agreement provides the ability for additional members to join at a later date. Any other city or party may request to join by submitting a resolution adopted by its governing board. However, such a request shall be subject to approval by two-thirds of the CVPA Board. As written in the agreement, any of the agencies listed below can be members of the CVPA JPA:

- Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians
- City of Coachella
- Coachella Valley Water District
- City of Indio
- City of Indian Wells
- City of La Quinta
- City of Palm Desert
- City of Rancho Mirage
- County of Riverside
- Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
- Twenty-Nine Palms of Mission Indians

CVAG staff will be working with its legal counsel to provide the final draft of the agreement. The amendments largely address comments received from Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability related to the frequency of meetings, the composition of the ad-hoc committee members, public participation and procedural process for invoking the optional, weighted vote.

Staff will continue to track the decisions of the potential JPA members. Once the JPA is formed, it will coordinate an agreement between IID and the JPA, defining the responsibilities of each entity. Once established, funding for CVPA operations, programs, and projects may be derived from multiple sources including but not limited to Member assessments, borrowing and/or issuance of debt, grants, surcharges on retail electric rates in affected jurisdictions, development impact fees, or other sources which may be available to the CVPA now or in the future.

Staff also anticipates an agreement between the JPA and CVAG, which would come back to CVAG's Committees for review and approval at a later date. This staffing agreement will likely be similar to the staffing arrangement that CVAG already has for two other JPAs: the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) and Desert Community Energy (DCE). Those staffing agreements allow CVAG to be reimbursed for staff time, administrative costs and overhead related to the specific agency. It has proven to be a successful model, as it eliminates the need for each JPA to have its own staff and benefit from economies of scale related to legal, auditing, and other support that are pooled across the agencies.

**Fiscal Analysis:** CVAG staff time related to this work is covered under the existing MOU with IID, which is billed on a time and materials basis. The strategic planning costs related to LRI's work are covered by an agreement that is funded by Coachella Valley Water District and IID.

The costs associated with a staffing agreement would be further analyzed and presented when the agreement comes back to CVAG's committees for approval.