

Top Air, Climate, and Energy Stories for February 2026



Please reach out to Sarah Deslauriers with any questions or if you would like access to any documents referenced. If you are not already a member of the ACE Workgroup and would like to be, let us know!

1. **Clean Water Summit Partners (CWSP) Host 'BACEN' Webinar** – On February 11, the CWSP hosted a webinar for members, policymakers, and regulators focusing on Biosolids, Air, Climate, Energy and Nutrient (BACEN) issues. Municipal wastewater agencies provide services essential to community and environmental protection and critical to national security 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The presentations (linked below) were designed to give legislators, policymakers, and regulators a peak into the challenges and opportunities we face in maintaining reliable services, our core role in community resilience, and the need to collaborate going forward. We are working to balance the challenges of complying with near-term BACEN regulations with the opportunities that a more coordinated, holistic regulatory approach offer - supporting climate mitigation goals, maintaining affordability, and strengthening community resilience for future generations. Copies of the presentations are posted on CASA's Resources Page and links to the recordings are provided below:
    - Getting the Waste Out of Water: Wastewater Treatment 101 – Sarah Deslauriers, CASA

- Intersection of Nutrient Removal & Air Emissions at Wastewater Treatment Facilities – Lorien Fono, BACWA and Mike Falk, HDR
- Intersection of Organic Waste Diversion & Wastewater Treatment – Steve Jepsen, Clean Water SoCal and Rashi Gupta, Carollo Engineers
- Wastewater Biogas: A Resource to Support the Circular Economy, Sarah Deslauriers, CASA and Ali Chehrehsaz, TerraVerde Energy

2. **CARB to Formally Release 15-Day Changes to the Advanced Clean Fleet (ACF) Regulations in March**. On December 15, CASA submitted comments on, as well as specific edits to, the "preview" version of the 15-Day Changes in the ACF regulations for consideration by staff. We then met with CARB Board Member Lynda Hopkins in January to discuss public agency needs for the regulation to be workable, which she then presented to CARB's Executive Officer. As written, the ACF regulation limits use of biogas as a low carbon (biomethane) fuel in our own fleets, limiting our ability to qualify for LCFS credits as well as public agency access to the regulatory exemptions needed while truck manufacturers roll back or halt production of zero-emission vehicle options. CASA continues its outreach to CARB staff and Board Members, with a meeting scheduled with staff March 4 and an invite to speak on their Drive Forward panel March 9. CASA is reconvening its Advanced Clean Vehicle Subgroup to develop guidance for regulatory compliance and a forum for connecting members.

3. **CA Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Holds First Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) Summit On January 29**, CNRA held their inaugural NBS Summit and released their 2025 Progress Report. The report outlines what CNRA considers as NBS (ways to manage CA lands to keep them healthy and resilient while achieving climate goals) as well as steps taken to set, track, and position CA to achieve carbon sequestration targets by 2045 (including implementing healthy soils practices on croplands, such as land application of biosolids). CASA staff met with CNRA's Deputy Secretary for Climate Change, Amanda Hansen, and OPC's Executive Director, Jenn Eckerle, to discuss the wastewater sector's role in nature-based solutions, the circular economy, and ultimately community resilience. They are eager to work with stakeholders to resolve permitting issues for co-digestion and composting facilities whose products are used in NBS.

4. **CARB Releases Updated Natural & Working Lands (NWL) Carbon Inventory on. February 10** – The NWL Carbon Inventory is meant to

quantitatively estimate levels of organic carbon stored in and across CA's eight (8) landscapes. The Inventory was updated with the intent to reflect conditions as of 2022. It now captures the influence of climate, wildfire, land-use change, and management of carbon stocks and stock change, including in vegetation, soils, and harvested wood products. Integrating these conditions was necessary to evaluate the impact of implementing nature-based solutions (NBS) and CA's progress toward meeting its carbon neutrality targets by 2045. CASA asked CARB whether they incorporated land application of biosolids as an NBS and CARB said it could be a future update if we can provide more land-based data.

5. **CalRecycle Releases Final Zero Waste Plan February 13 -** The Plan focuses on "circular materials management", acknowledging that to achieve zero waste requires coordinated action across state agencies, local governments, businesses, and communities, an action that CASA has been advocating for since the early 2000's. We were also pleased to see that wastewater facilities were recognized as "Infrastructure of Circularity", acknowledging the available anaerobic digestion capacity at wastewater treatment facilities for receiving and co-digesting with diverted food waste (which also serves as a climate mitigation pathway). CASA is scheduling a meeting with CalRecycle to discuss follow-on actions, including SB 1383 implementation as part of their Plan.

6. **CA Air Districts Reviewing Wastewater Sector's Proposed Plan for Statewide Air Toxics Source Testing -** On November 18, the wastewater sector achieved a major milestone – Steering Committee members representing the CA municipal wastewater sector presented the Proposed Plan for complying with CARB's air toxics source testing requirements to Air Districts for their review and approval. Air Districts are now reviewing the Proposed Plan to provide their collective feedback that we will address before final submission to CARB in 2026. We are hoping to begin source testing in 2026 and end in 2027, assuming approval of the Proposed Plan in early 2026. If your agency receives 5 million gallons per day or more and you have not been involved in this effort, please reach out to Sarah Deslauriers and Shacara Gamboa to ensure you are in compliance.

7. **California Air Resources Board (CARB) Holds Virtual Public Workshop – On February 27,** CARB held a virtual workshop to discuss potential standards for off-road new diesel engines, referred to as Tier 5 standards. The Tier 5 rulemaking aims to reduce oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and particulate matter (PM) emissions from new off-road

compression-ignition engines sold in CA. CARB released documents (including draft amendments) on the following topics for discussion purposes and requests written feedback by May 4, 2026:

- Off-road new diesel engine emissions standards, including changes to the On-Board Diagnostics, Off-Road In-Use Testing, and Tier 5 elements.
- Applicability of the Large Spark-Ignition engine standards regulation to hydrogen internal combustion engines.
- Potential amendments to the Off-Road In-Use Fleet regulation.
- Potential changes to Tier 4 In-Use Test Procedures.

8. **CARB-Funded Research Leads CalHealthMap** - This new online tool is meant to be a resource for you to visualize, track, and communicate information on health conditions that are sensitive to changes in air quality for CA neighborhoods. CalHealthMap differs from other web-based dashboards such as CalEnviroScreen, the Happy Places Index (HPI), and Tracking California. CalHealthMap includes a wider range of health outcomes related to air pollution, with estimates of excess mortality and ER visits using historical and age-adjusted data at the zip-code level, which could be used to identify health trends at the community level.

9. **DWR Engages Stakeholders to Understand Benefits & Impacts of Water Conservation Per SB 1157 -** The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is holding meetings to inform stakeholders (via a Working Group) and gather technical feedback (via a Technical Advisory Panel, TAP) regarding their approach to evaluate the potential economic benefits and impacts associated with achieving the 2030 indoor residential water-use standard (42 gallons per capita per day). The focus is on impacts to water, wastewater (collection and treatment), and recycled water systems. A research team is collecting responses to surveys and conducting interviews to assess both direct and indirect effects on equipment and infrastructure within each system. The TAP held its fourth meeting March 5 and the Working Group will convene periodically to support the collection of information, modeling, and the follow-on evaluation process.

10. **Department of Treasury and IRS Issued New IRA Related Regulations -** The proposed regulations are designed for domestic producers of clean transportation fuel to determine eligibility for and calculate the Clean Fuel Production Credit (Section 45Z) enacted by the Inflation Reduction Act. They extend eligibility for this credit through 2029 (vs 2027) for fuel that is produced between January 1, 2025, and December

31, 2029. Stakeholders can review and comment on the proposed regulations by April 6, as well as participate in the public hearing scheduled for May 28.

11. **OPC's Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning & Implementation Grant Solicitation Remains Open -** The Ocean Protection Council (OPC) issues Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning and Implementation Project Funding quarterly under the SB 1 Sea Level Rise Adaptation Grant Program, but its future is uncertain. The program seeks competitive applications to support nature-based shoreline adaptation projects along CA's coastal zone and in San Francisco Bay. Projects include site assessment, preliminary design, final design, permitting, and construction—ranging from $500,000 to $2,500,000 over a maximum 3-year grant period. OPC's next deadline for submissions is March 20 by 5 pm. At least 40% of funds must benefit vulnerable or disadvantaged communities, 10% for severely disadvantaged communities, and encourages partnership with CA Native American tribes. OPC's website offers helpful resources including application materials, an informational webinar, and fact sheet on the Grant Program.

12. **Announcement for Associate Members** - **CARB conducted a public hearing February 26** (Item 26-1-3) to approve the proposed CA Corporate GHG Reporting and Climate-Related Financial Risk Disclosure Initial Regulation. This regulation requires businesses formed under the laws of CA, any other state of the US or DC, or under an act of the US Congress, with total annual revenues >$1,000,000,000 that do business in CA to annually disclose their Scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions for the prior fiscal year. The first-year annual emissions disclosures (for 2026) include Scopes 1 and 2 emissions, and subsequent years (beginning 2027) must also include Scope 3 emissions. The Disclosure Program authorized by SB 261 also applies to both public and private US companies that do business in CA with annual revenues >$500 million.

CASA Calendar

March 12	CASA ACE Workgroup
March 19	CASA Regulatory Workgroup Meeting (Virtual)

April 16	CASA ACE Workgroup
April 23	CASA Regulatory Workgroup Meeting (Virtual)
May 14	CASA ACE Workgroup
May 21	CASA Regulatory Workgroup Meeting (Hybrid)
June 11	CASA ACE Workgroup
June 25	CASA Regulatory Workgroup Meeting (Virtual)
August 4–7	71st CASA Annual Conference – Napa, CA

Upcoming Events

March 8-11	WateReuse Symposium
March 11-12	California Bioresources Summit; Sacramento, CA
March 17	Clean Water SoCal Air Quality Committee
March 24-26	WEF-AWWA Utility Management Conference
April 7-10	CWEA Annual Conference
April 21	Clean Water SoCal Air Quality Committee
May 11-14	WEF Residuals, Biosolids, & Treatment Technology Conference; Kansas City, MO
May 15	BACWA Annual Meeting
May 20	BACWA AIR Committee
June 8-9	CA Hydrogen Summit

July 12-16	USDA W5170 Research Committee + Mid-Atlantic Biosolids Association Summer Symposium; Albany, NY

For more information please reach out to the CASA Regulatory Team:

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