

Air quality board in San Diego facing shakeup under new law mandating environmental justice member



Todd Gloria
(Hayne Palmour IV/The San Diego Union-Tribune)

Assemblyman Todd Gloria wins support for new law overhauling San Diego Air Pollution Control District board

The San Diego region's top government watchdog agency for air pollution is headed for a shakeup under [a law](#) approved over the weekend by Gov. Gavin Newsom.

The legislation, [authored by Assemblyman Todd Gloria](#), overhauls the governing board of the San Diego Air Pollution Control District starting March 2021.

Under the new law, the air district will be the first in the state to require a board member to represent what are known as “environmental justice” communities — those living in low-income neighborhoods highly impacted by toxic air pollution.

“San Diegans have waited too long for this reform and we are grateful to Assembly member Gloria for championing clean air for everyone,” said Diane Takvorian, executive director of the San Diego-based Environmental Health Coalition, in a statement.

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The five-person County Board of Supervisors has long served as the air district's decision-making panel.

The state has 35 such districts, overseen by the California Air Resources Board in Sacramento. Most larger air pollution districts include a mix of city and county officials, many with members of the public serving as well.

The new rules call for San Diego's air district board to include 11 people, including two supervisors, six elected officials from various cities and three members of the public.

Government officials on the board will appoint the public representatives, including an individual with scientific or technical expertise in air pollution, a public health official and an environmental justice representative.

The law also requires the air district to maintain a separate website, where it posts information on public meetings and other information.

The move comes as the state has prioritized cleaning up neighborhoods directly impacted by air pollution. In the San Diego region, the [portside communities](#) of Barrio Logan, Logan Heights, Sherman Heights and west National City have, this year, been the focus of increased air monitoring efforts.