San Diego Regional
POLICY PRIORITIES

ACCESS TO WATER
CLIMATE ACTION PLAN
PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS
STORM WATER CHANNEL MAINTENANCE
SANDAG 2050 REGIONAL PLAN
PRIME INDUSTRIAL LAND

Industry Impact
San Diego County’s life science cluster employs 50,000 people in five sectors: biopharmaceuticals, medical devices and diagnostics, research and lab services, industrial biotechnology and biofuels, and life science trade. The County’s life science employees support an additional 133,000 jobs, for a total countywide impact of over 183,000 jobs. These jobs pay an average wage of $107,484, and generate $34 billion in annual economic activity. Biocom represents more than 1,000 member companies in California; we focus on initiatives that positively influence the region’s life science community in the development and delivery of innovative products that improve health and quality of life.

ACCESS TO WATER
Since its inception, Biocom has communicated with legislators and regulators about how the life science industry uses water, and why reliable, constant access to water is necessary for our member companies to conduct daily business activities. California recently experienced prolonged drought conditions, and mandatory water cutbacks were implemented throughout the state. While shutoffs were avoided, they are a continuing possibility during drought conditions.

Developed by Biocom and city staff, the Guaranteed Water for Industry Program was adopted by the San Diego City Council in 1998. The city recognized valuable industries such as manufacturing and Research and Development operations are significant water users, and, as these companies are leaders in the implementation of water conservation methods, they need assurances that their mitigation efforts will be taken into account when considering future mandatory conservation measures. This program provides that when such firms implement voluntary conservation measures, they can be exempted from mandatory Level 2 conservation measures in the event of a drought.

Request: The city could increase advertising for the Guaranteed Water for Industry Program, consider alternative measures before implementing mandatory shutoffs to businesses, and continue to support nontraditional water resources.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN
In December 2015, San Diego City Council approved the city’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 in accordance with state law. The plan seeks to do this in a variety of ways, including through energy and water efficient buildings, clean and renewable energy, increasing transit options, zero waste, and preparing for actual effects of climate change.

Biocom supported approval of the CAP and applauds the inclusion of cost-benefit analysis of any regulations that are implemented during the next phase of the plan, which includes regulatory language to achieve the targets the plan outlines.

Request: Minimize unfunded mandates for businesses during the implementation of the Climate Action Plan.
STORM WATER CHANNEL MAINTENANCE

Most recently in January 2017, flooding in Sorrento Valley during storm events threatened many businesses, especially along Roselle Street. There are several Biocom member companies located on Roselle Street, and many more throughout the affected area. Floods cause physical damage to businesses and result in interruptions to research and manufacturing when workers are evacuated and then businesses are closed for repairs.

Request: Ensure the city regularly clears storm channels and works with State Parks to maintain clearing of the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon.

SANDAG 2050 REGIONAL PLAN

An efficient transportation system is an important part of business attraction and retention. In October 2015, the board of the San Diego regional planning agency voted unanimously to approve a spending plan that will fund transportation projects for the next 35 years. The plan includes transit and freeway expansion, changing land use patterns, plans for sustainability, and economic benefits.

Request: During implementation of the Regional Plan, transit and road/freeway expansion should receive balanced consideration in order to accommodate all types of commuters.

PRIME INDUSTRIAL LAND

Preserving Prime Industrial Lands (PIL) for manufacturing, research and development, and distribution is vital to regional long-term economic stability and encouragement of industry growth. Land zoning plans are created to provide space between industry and housing to avoid compatibility conflicts. There is a slow erosion of prime industrial lands with by right “limited use” ministerial decisions and “discretionary” conditional use permit decisions by the Planning Commission and City Council, which allow incompatible land uses for new facilities or by extending the presence of existing incompatible uses in prime industrial areas. Since 2011, there have been several discretionary approvals which have removed PIL sites from the PIL land map. Land available within the city for scientific research is over 92% built out, and should be safeguarded for its intended use.

Request: Support community plan updates that preserve Prime Industrial Lands, and prevent incompatible land uses by voting against collocated projects.

PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS

Biocom supports efforts to make city and county permitting processes predictable, transparent and efficient. Inconsistent standards for inspections have been an ongoing issue for our members, and one that we have been working on with government staff for many years. We appreciate efforts to ensure inspections are done consistently and in collaboration with businesses.

Please direct any questions to Biocom’s Director of Regional Policy and Government Affairs, Melanie Cohn, at mcohn@biocom.org or 858.832.4158.