



MULTNOMAH COUNTY
FY 2022 Budget Work Session Follow Up – Department of County
Assets

Department of County Assets – April 28, 2021

Question 1

Commissioner Stegmann (District 4): Please provide some details regarding the \$100,000 budgeted for air filters and air scrubbers, including how many of the County's buildings are affected by these funds. What does the County's air filtration system look like now, and how will it look as the County emerges from the pandemic?

Response: The County's Facilities and Property Management (FPM) division is responsible for maintaining the heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) systems in the 83 buildings owned by the County and in some buildings leased by the County. The combination of regional fires and COVID-19 has necessitated adjustments to the filters used, and required the deployment of air scrubbers, to ensure proper air quality. FPM maintains the systems based on the particular requirements of each building's use and system. There is a lot of variation across the County's buildings; nearly every building's system is unique. Higher level filters are now being used where appropriate but can't be used in older systems (and thus, air scrubbers are sometimes needed). The higher quality filters are more expensive than what they have replaced and must be replaced more regularly. Our FY 2022 budget included an additional \$100,000 to accommodate the increased expense of purchasing higher quality replacement filters and replacing them appropriately, and purchasing and maintaining scrubbers. While the pandemic will pass, we fully recognize that our region will continue to be impacted by wildfires due to ongoing climate change and that improved air quality will be expected if not required. We are preparing for this reality by ensuring maintenance levels and supplies ensure a high level of air quality is maintained across County buildings.

In addition to the increase in our operating budget, DCA has been granted \$1M of American Rescue Plan funding to more thoroughly address our air building needs. We will use this funding to hire an outside contractor to conduct an assessment of the existing systems and identify which of these systems should be replaced or modernized. Because we will not have enough funding to replace all of the systems in the buildings, we will use a prioritization process to determine how to allocate the funds. We will work closely with our Environmental Health and Sustainability colleagues as we build out the plan. We will share the details of this assessment with the Board along with the plan to best leverage the funds.