

# District Highlights

## April 17, 2014 Governing Board Highlights

### **Emergency Measures to Assist with Drought Relief Actions by Water Districts and Farmers**

The Governing Board, in recognition of the severe potential air quality and economic impacts of the drought, adopted a series of measures designed to assist farmers and water districts with emergency drought relief efforts.

Calendar year 2013 was the third year of the current drought and was the driest year in the 119 years that official rainfall records have been kept in California. On Jan. 17, 2014, Gov. Brown declared a drought emergency for all of California, and the recent brief periods of rain have fallen far short of replenishing reservoirs and rebuilding snow packs. The state of emergency remains in place.

The District has been approached for assistance with unusual drought-related situations several times in recent months. Water delivery systems are being modified to move water in ways not previously considered, water-well drilling activity is at an all-time high, and water used for dust suppression is becoming scarcer. Among the potential air quality impacts on the Valley discussed are increased particulate emissions from significantly increased fallowed land and reduced water for dust suppression; the potential for overwhelming air quality impacts from wildfires; and increased NOx and other pollutants from internal combustion engines used for irrigation, and for municipal and agricultural water transfers. Regarding economic impacts, one water agency industry group estimates up to \$5 billion losses to the Valley's agriculture economy, in direct costs to farmers and associated indirect losses to farm workers, processing plants and other ag-related economic sectors.

In light of these impacts, the Governing Board:

1. Directed staff to implement the following measures developed by the District to address air quality requirements related to drought-relief projects during the current emergency:
  - a. Expedite permitting processes for temporary installation of generators to produce power to run electric pumps for which the utility has not yet been able to deliver electric service.
  - b. Expedite local portable equipment registration options for projects failing to find suitable engines under the state portable equipment registration program.
  - c. Enter into and execute timely Voluntary Emission Reduction Agreements (VERAs) to mitigate air quality impacts from urgent drought relief projects, upon APCO approval and Governing Board Chair signature.
2. Authorized the Chair to send a letter to governor supporting requests by lead agencies under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to expand the governor's Drought Emergency Executive Order to waive CEQA requirements for specific drought-relief projects.
3. Directed staff to support water districts and farmers by providing material assistance, education, and consultation in finding cost-effective and expeditious options to satisfy applicable air quality requirements.

4. Directed staff to work with affected agricultural operations to promote the use of currently available, less water-intensive measures to comply with the District's Conservation Management Practices (CMP) regulations, to develop additional dust-control measures, if necessary, and to work with the agricultural community to streamline methods to revise existing CMP plans.
5. Authorized the Executive Director/APCO to investigate potential streamlining changes to the District's Portable Equipment Registration rule, as necessary for emergency actions, and to prepare such amendments for the Governing Board's consideration through an expedited rule-development process.

### **Wood Burning Curtailment Rule Continues to be Successful Despite Extreme Winter Season**

The Governing Board heard a comprehensive report on the 2013-2014 Check Before You Burn season. Due to the exceptionally severe weather conditions experienced during this past winter, the air basin and areas throughout California saw unusually high particulate matter concentrations, which overwhelmed strong air pollution control measures, and the air basin saw an increase in the number of wood-burning curtailment days. This past winter saw another successful Check Before You Burn campaign, with Valley residents expressing significant interest in air quality with more than 670,000 "hits" to the District's wood-burning website page, 715 complaints for suspected wood-burning activity, and more than 40 media inquiries. Without the District's multi-faceted program that utilizes wood-burning curtailments, incentives, public education/outreach, and strong enforcement to reduce wood smoke, air quality would have deteriorated even more severely.

### **Transboundary Ozone Research Continues as District Priority**

The Governing Board approved a \$91,245 research contract with the University of California, Davis to sustain measurement of long-distance transboundary flows of ozone at a mountaintop field station on the Central Coast for the 2014 and 2015 summer ozone seasons. Previous District funding supported the establishment of this field station in 2012, along with complementary tracking of Valley transboundary ozone flows by aircraft in 2013. The District's support for groundbreaking research on transboundary ozone is being motivated by rising concentrations of transboundary ozone delivered to the western U.S. in prevailing winds flowing across the Pacific Ocean. While some of this transboundary ozone is from natural sources, a growing proportion is the result of a substantial increase in fossil-fuel combustion in Asia over the past two decades. Under the U.S. Clean Air Act (CAA), air districts are not responsible for ozone resulting from man-made sources in foreign countries, known as transboundary anthropogenic ozone (TAO). Remote field site monitoring of flows of transboundary ozone makes it possible for the District to estimate the net contribution of TAO to surface concentrations in the San Joaquin Valley and address CAA requirements.

The Governing Board also authorized District staff to proceed in developing, with EPA cooperation, a transboundary pollution summit in May 2015. The summit meeting will bring together top scientists, air quality agency staff and stakeholders with a focus on (1) a scientific assessment of impacts by transboundary pollutants on ground-level concentrations in the western U.S., (2) the development of EPA guidance on how air districts can formally account for the impacts of transboundary pollutants in their future state implementation plans (SIPs), and (3) how transboundary pollutant impacts can be accounted for in the development of new national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS).

### **April Healthy Air Living Tip**

Each week, approximately 54 million Americans mow their lawns. According to the federal EPA, one gas-powered push mower produces as much VOC and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in an hour as a typical car driven 45

miles. This means that lawnmowers in the U.S. generate as much pollution every year as driving a car an incredible 63 billion (63,000,000,000) miles, or more than 2.5 million trips around the Earth!

Ref: <http://www.epa.gov/nonroad/documents/21a2001.pdf>

**Tip: Trade in your old gas-powered mower and receive up to \$250 toward the purchase of a new cordless electric mower. For more information about the District's Clean Green Yard Machine program, click on: [www.valleyair.org/lawnmowers](http://www.valleyair.org/lawnmowers).**

For more clean air tips, click on [www.healthyairliving.com](http://www.healthyairliving.com)

## March District Activities *Outreach and Communications*

- In March, Outreach and Communications attended spring events, gave presentations, and created and produced new collateral for Healthy Air Living.
- OC staff responded to 26 media calls and 66 public calls and emails, attended four events and presentations, and issued five news releases in March.

## *Grant and Incentive Programs*

- The District received 382 incentive program applications in March. 26 were for the Wood Stove Change-Out Program and 83 were for the Heavy Duty Engine Program.
- \$4,907,631 was placed under contract in the Heavy Duty Engine Program in March and 83 claims were paid.
- In March, \$338,683 was paid out in REMOVE II program claims.
- \$75,650 was paid in Burn Cleaner program claims in March and 141 claims were processed.

March 2014	Applications	Grants Offered		Grants Executed		Amount Paid	
Program	Number Received & Entered	Number of Contracts sent out	Sum of Grant Funding	Number of Contracts Executed	Sum of Grant Funding	Number of Claims paid	Sum of Grant Funding
Heavy Duty	83	124	\$5,083,324.29	120	\$4,907,631.52	83	\$4,681,226.31
School Bus	75	4	\$271,951.16	6	\$530,189.37	6	\$198,352.54
On-Road Prop 1B	0	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	1	\$10,000.00
Lawn and Garden	11	7	\$1,450.00	7	\$1,450.00	5	\$950.00
REMOVE	185	378	\$275,293.12	377	\$265,293.12	968	\$338,683.49
Burn Cleaner	26	31	\$18,000.00	31	\$18,000.00	141	\$75,650.00
Technology Advancement	0	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Public Benefit	2	16	\$948,637.26	8	\$390,683.00	27	\$359,408.69
<b>Totals</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>\$6,598,655.83</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>\$6,113,247.01</b>	<b>1,231</b>	<b>\$5,664,271.03</b>

Reductions from Executed Contracts (tons)			
Nox	PM	ROG	Total
647	38	71	756

Smoking Vehicles	17
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## ***Operations Overview***

- **Compliance** completed 3,122 inspections in March. 142 NOVS were issued. Mutual settlement case completions totaled 191.
- **Permits** received 197 applications in March. 481 permits were issued.
- **Strategies and Incentives** received 17 smoking vehicle reports in March.
- **The District** received 167 environmental documents for review in March.

## ***Upcoming Meetings***

**Governing Board\***

**9 a.m. Thursday, May 15**

**Citizens Advisory Committee\***

**10 a.m. Tues., May 6**

**Environmental Justice Adv. Grp.**

**5 p.m. Thurs., April 24**

*Meetings are held in the Fresno office Governing Board Room and via video teleconference to the Modesto and Bakersfield offices. Details: [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) \*Webcast*