

# District Highlights

## March 20, 2014 Actions by the Governing Board

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### **Pilot Program for Replacing High-Polluting Vehicles**

The Governing Board approved up to \$100,000 for a pilot program to replace high-polluting vehicles in the Valley's disadvantaged communities. This pilot program will utilize the District's existing award-winning Tune-In Tune-Up weekend repair events to identify suitable candidates for replacement. Targeted vehicles will be identified using several key criteria, including model year, registration status and emissions level. In lieu of vehicle repair, owners of identified vehicles will be offered up to \$5,000 to retire their existing vehicles and replace those vehicles with newer, cleaner vehicles from a participating dealership.

Based on lessons learned from this pilot study, the District will then develop a comprehensive vehicle replacement program with a focus on disadvantaged communities throughout the Valley. Members of the state legislature and the California Air Resources Board will be observing the District's pilot program with great interest and have expressed desire to use the District's program as a model for crafting enhancement to the state's fleet modernization program. Additionally, with a successful pilot program, the District expects to secure a significant portion of the \$3 million currently available through State AB118 funding.

### **Ozone Saturation Study in Kern County**

The ozone saturation study was designed to build a scientific foundation for estimating ozone concentrations at the neighborhood level and to address issues related to the state Air Resources Board's action to relocate an old air monitoring station near the city of Arvin. The District retained an independent contractor to install and operate a network of temporary, small-scale ozone monitors at 21 sites in Kern County with a focus around Arvin to collect ozone readings for approximately six weeks, 24 hours a day, during the 2013 summer ozone season. Data collected under this study has undergone rigorous quality assurance review by an independent contractor in accordance with established scientific protocols.

The study evaluated ozone levels in multiple locations and enabled the District to develop equations and relationships between measurements at the new air monitoring location (Arvin-Di Giorgio), old Bear Mountain air monitoring location, City of Arvin, and other points in the area. The saturation study demonstrates that the Arvin-Di Giorgio air monitoring station actually measures higher concentrations than the old Bear Mountain site and is representative of concentrations experienced in the city of Arvin.

The Governing Board authorized the Air Pollution Control Officer to finalize the report for an ozone saturation study in the Kern County/Arvin Area.

### **Annual Air Toxics Report**

The Governing Board reviewed and approved the annual air toxics report, which describes efforts undertaken to reduce air toxics from existing sources of pollution and to prevent the creation of new air toxic risks from new and expanding facilities. The District implements an efficient air toxics program that integrates local, state and federal air toxics mandates. Under this program, the District has quantified toxic emissions and performed public health risk analysis for more than

5,900 facilities throughout the Valley. For facilities that were initially designated as high-risk facilities, the District held neighborhood meetings to communicate potential risk to the neighbors, discuss potential means for reducing risk and receive public input. All high-risk facilities implemented risk-reduction measures and there are no longer any facilities in the San Joaquin Valley that are considered high risk.

The District continues to track potential toxic emissions and health risk from all facilities throughout the San Joaquin Valley on a regular basis. Over the past two decades, emissions of air toxics and the associated health risk in the San Joaquin Valley have been reduced by more than 90 percent. The report is publicly available on the District website ([www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org)) and is distributed to county boards of supervisors, city councils and public health agencies.

### **Scientific Survey Measuring Public Opinion and Behavior Related to Key Air Issues**

The District's Governing Board has consistently asked for and relied on sound science in formulating policies and air quality-management strategies. Toward that end, the District routinely conducts scientific surveys to help refine and measure effectiveness of the District's public education and outreach strategies. In 2013, the District issued an RFP to select an independent contract to conduct a public opinion survey. One thousand telephone interviews with owners and renters of single-family homes throughout the Valley were conducted in English and Spanish. Surveying was conducted Jan. 3-19, 2014, during the middle of the worst winter on record for air quality. The survey focused on residential wood burning, lawn care and driving habits among Valley residents. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate and guide the District's outreach efforts regarding key activities throughout the air basin that affect the Valley's air quality. Survey highlights include:

- 8 out of 10 respondents were aware of the District's Check Before You Burn Program.
- Of those respondents aware of the Check Before You Burn Program, 78 percent have reduced wood-burning activity in response to the program.
- While 32 percent of respondents reported having a wood-burning device, more than half of those households reported not using their device.
- The northern region (San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Merced counties) has the highest percentage of homes with wood burning devices at 37 percent compared to 28 percent in the other regions of the Valley.
- 29 percent of residents indicated willingness to upgrade to cleaner device if allowed to burn on certain "No-Burn" days.
- 24 percent indicated they would be willing to upgrade if they received up to a 50 percent rebate or incentive.
- 64 percent of Valley households take care of their own lawn and garden areas, as opposed to hiring a yard-care service.
- 73 percent of those who care for their own lawns and gardens use gas-powered equipment, most frequently walk-behind lawn mowers (84 percent), lawn edgers (39 percent), string trimmers (38 percent) and leaf blowers (35 percent).
- For those respondents with school-age children in the home, 46 percent reported that someone in the household drove the children to school.
- When asked why their children do not walk or bike to school, 77 percent reported that it was either too far to school or they were concerned about safety.
- Although nearly half of the respondents drive their children to school, 69 percent believe that idling is a source of air pollution affecting children.

- Of respondents who work outside the home, more than 70 percent responded that they drive to work alone, more than 20 percent carpool, bike or walk to work and about 3 percent use mass transit.
- The District also received positive marks from the public with 68 percent of respondents indicating a favorable opinion of the District.

The full report of the survey's finding can be found here:

[http://www.valleyair.org/Board\\_meetings/GB/agenda\\_minutes/Agenda/2014/march/final/09.pdf](http://www.valleyair.org/Board_meetings/GB/agenda_minutes/Agenda/2014/march/final/09.pdf)

Although the survey was conducted in January 2014, during the worst winter on record for air quality, about 50 percent of respondents felt that air quality has stayed the same over the last three years. As a result, the Board directed staff to place a greater focus on educating the public with respect to the significant improvements in air quality that the Valley has experienced in recent years. The Board also asked staff to increase public education concerning the health impacts of wood burning. Furthermore, staff was directed to expand public outreach on the financial assistance offered through the District's "Burn Cleaner Wood Stove Change-out" and Clean Green Yard Machines grant programs.

The District will also be developing and implementing a work plan to engage schools and community stakeholders to solicit ideas for developing District's strategy for reducing vehicle emissions at schools. This will include face-to-face meetings, and workshops with teachers, parents, school administrators and other interested parties.

### **March Healthy Air Living Tip**

The energy needed to deliver water to your home is significant, and that energy comes at a cost to air quality (air pollution emissions from power plants). According to the EPA, outdoor water use can exceed the amount used for all other household purposes, especially in dry climates, so overwatering your lawn wastes water and creates unnecessary pollution.

Ref: <http://www.epa.gov/greenhomes/ConserveWater.htm#landscaping>

**Tip: Under the current extreme drought conditions, minimize the amount of water used in landscaping by:**

- Installing drought-tolerant landscaping,
- Installing a drip system to further increase your water efficiency,
- Watering as little as possible and only late at night or early in the morning thus reducing the amount of water lost to evaporation.

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

## **February District Activities**

### ***Outreach and Communications***

- In February, Outreach and Communications wrapped up the 11<sup>th</sup> wood-burning season, organized the District's attendance at the annual World Ag Expo in Tulare and held news conferences in each region to publicize the Healthy Air Living Schools program. Staff also conducted presentations and staffed events throughout the Valley.
- OC staff responded to 18 media calls and 177 public calls and emails, and issued five news releases in February.

## Grant and Incentive Programs

- The District received 267 incentive program applications in February. 73 were for the Wood Stove Change-Out Program and 74 were for the Heavy Duty Engine Program.
- \$2,078,768 was placed under contract in the Heavy Duty Engine Program in February and 150 claims were paid.
- In February, \$509,156 was paid out in REMOVE II program claims.
- \$99,800 was paid in Burn Cleaner program claims in February and 188 claims were processed.

February 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	74	79	\$2,644,450.46	61	\$2,078,768.58	150	\$4,794,798.61
School Bus	11	3	\$179,677.66	5	\$434,224.40	25	\$596,019.73
On-Road Prop 1B	0	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	27	\$660,000.00
Lawn and Garden	1	4	\$635.00	4	\$635.00	5	\$885.00
REMOVE	104	209	\$250,788.57	209	\$250,788.57	1,561	\$509,156.39
Burn Cleaner	73	87	\$52,600.00	87	\$52,600.00	188	\$99,800.00
Technology Advancement	0	0	\$0.00	1	\$417,050.00	1	\$15,208.81
Public Benefit	4	1	\$40,000.00	0	\$0.00	30	\$481,093.84
<b>Totals</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>\$3,168,151.69</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>\$3,234,066.55</b>	<b>1,987</b>	<b>\$7,156,962.38</b>

Reductions from Executed Contracts (tons)			
Nox	PM	ROG	Total
258	18	17	293

## Operations Overview

- **Compliance** completed 2,726 inspections in February. 172 NOVS were issued. Mutual settlement case completions totaled 319.
- **Permits** received 168 applications in February. 419 permits were issued.
- **Strategies and Incentives** received 14 smoking vehicle reports in February.
- **The District** received 123 environmental documents for review in February.

## Upcoming Meetings

Governing Board\*

9 a.m. Thursday, April 17

Citizens Advisory Committee\*

10 a.m. Tues., April 1

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