

## **Storm to bring 40% chance of rain Friday System also expected to help improve air quality**

Staff report

Visalia Times-Delta, Thursday, June 4, 2009

An unusual June storm will bring 70-degree temperatures and a 40 percent chance of Valley rainfall Friday, the National Weather Service reports.

There's a 20 percent chance of Valley rain today, meteorologist David Spector said.

"This [kind of storm] seems to happen once every five years or so," Spector said. "Usually we stop getting these kind of systems by early to mid-May."

Unstable conditions in the upper atmosphere also have swept away air that earlier in the week was labeled "unhealthy for sensitive groups" by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

Air quality today is expected to be "good," meaning air pollution poses little or no risk.

The cold Pacific storm is expected to result in the following high temperatures through the weekend:

Today 80.

Friday 70.

Saturday upper 80s.

Sunday mid- to upper 80s.

Friday's expected high represents a refreshing break from the historical pattern.

Visalia-area highs this time of year are usually in the upper 80s, said Cal Sisto, consulting meteorologist with Cal Sisto Weather Services.

The storm could drop the snow level from around 10,000 feet to 8,000 feet, Sisto said. The chance of showers in the mountains is 30 percent today, 60 percent Friday.

The chance of Valley rain is expected to fall to 20 percent on Saturday.

"It's going to dry up [this weekend]," Spector said.

Next week will see close-to-normal temperatures, Sisto said.

## **Port of Long Beach takes 'giant step' toward pollution reduction Port officials unveil what is billed as the world's first electrical shore-side power system for tankers, which are notorious fuel guzzlers and air polluters.**

By Ronald D. White, staff writer

L.A. Times, Thursday, June 4, 2009

Docked in Long Beach on Wednesday with a fresh load of oil from Valdez, the Alaskan Navigator didn't look like much of a trailblazer.

The massive tanker sat silently, with a few thin cables draping down to some gray metal boxes. Missing was the incessant rumble of diesel engines, which on an average cargo ship would be running constantly to keep electrical systems going -- burning quite a bit of diesel fuel and generating a significant amount of pollution.

But the 941-foot Navigator, anchored at the BP oil terminal's Pier T on the Long Beach port's main channel, isn't average. The vessel, owned by Alaska Tanker Co. of Portland, Ore., was plugged into what is billed as the world's first shore-side electrical grid.

Only the Navigator's sister ship, the Frontier, is similarly equipped. Oil tankers are notorious fuel guzzlers and air polluters because of the power that's needed to pump vast amounts of crude out of a ship. It's the rough energy equivalent of a day's worth of driving by 187,000 cars, according to the Port of Long Beach.

At a ceremony formally unveiling the port's dockside power system, port Executive Director Dick Steinke described it as "another giant step" toward cleaning up the air.

The project cost \$23.7 million and took three years to complete, port officials said. The port contributed about \$17.5 million to the project and BP paid the rest.

Roger Brown, regional vice president of BP, said the emissions reductions amounted to 50% even when factoring in pollution created by power plants in generating the electricity.

[Letter to the L.A. Daily News, Thursday, June 4, 2009:](#)

### **Park closures give nature a break**

Everyone's fiscal ox is being gored. The latest being led to California's financial slaughterhouse is the state's parks and beaches, with Gov. Schwarzenegger saying that closing as many as 220 of the state's 279 parks and beaches will save about \$70 million this year and \$143 million next year. Opponents say savings will be outweighed and wiped out by losses from various sources of park and beach revenue.

Maybe closing them won't kill the ox, but give it a much needed rest, free from human contamination, air pollution, the mess visitors leave in their wake, and be an unexpected boon for the environment.

*Sandy J. Sand, West Hills*