

## **Report: Valley environment improves in key areas**

The Business Journal, Thursday, July 19, 2012

The overall condition of the Central Valley's physical environment is slightly improving, but there are a lot of areas that need to get better, according to a report released on Thursday by the Great Valley Center organization.

Some of the positive aspects include certain crucial air quality indicators improved and watersheds have been recharged to near normal levels,

Coincidentally, according to the report, at least one element of the recession helped the environment. Because of the struggling construction industry, the amount of prime land used for new homes or commercial space was significantly slowed.

However the report listed a number of areas of concern, including the ozone levels, one-hour and eight-hour air quality standards, risk of respiratory problems and the level of nitrates in the drinking water.

The report also acknowledged some positive efforts, including the Tractor Engine Replacement Program, the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Program, California Department of Conservation's Statewide Watershed Program and more.

"Some of these successful programs could serve as models for similar environmental initiatives in other areas of our Valley," said Dejeuné Shelton, Great Valley Center executive director, in a release.