

Stockton meeting encourages public to work for cleaner air

By Joe Goldeen

Stockton Record, Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2020

STOCKTON — San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District officials will update the public on the implementation of AB617 that aims to improve air quality in a defined area of southwest Stockton during a meeting from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the San Joaquin Council of Governments Regional Center, 555 E. Weber Ave., Stockton.

The air district is seeking input from residents and businesses to help it understand the specific air quality needs of the area. Participants will have the opportunity to get more information on the program, ask questions and apply to join the Southwest Stockton AB617 Steering Committee.

The public is being encouraged under this statewide program to help the Valley air district develop strategies to make the air cleaner and identify opportunities for investment of newly available clean air funding.

Assembly Bill 617 — AB617 — requires the California Air Resources Board and the regional air districts to develop and implement additional emissions reporting, monitoring, reduction plans and measures in an effort to reduce air pollution exposure in disadvantaged communities.

Since 20 of the 30 most disadvantaged communities in California are in the San Joaquin Valley, this process is expected to bring additional clean air resources to Stockton and many other Valley communities.

The Southwest Stockton AB617 Steering Committee has been created to help the air district:

- Establish the final community boundary.
- Establish the Community Steering Committee Charter.
- Understand community concerns, including socioeconomic burdens and locations of sensitive receptors.
- Identify sources of emissions, including mobile and stationary sources.
- Develop a community monitoring plan necessary to determine whether local emission sources are impacting community air quality.
- Identify and evaluate emission reduction opportunities, including socioeconomic considerations.
- Continually engage the public. A majority of the steering committee membership must be community residents, although representatives from city and county planning agencies, transportation and health organizations, faith-based groups and schools may also be included.

Those interested in applying for the steering committee can visit the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District website, email AB617@valleyair.org or call (559) 230-6000.