

VALLEY AIR NEWS

March 2020

District partners to replace locomotives in Exeter

The Valley Air District recently partnered with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and San Joaquin Valley Railroad to replace four, older, uncontrolled locomotive switchers in the San Joaquin Valley with four new switchers from Knoxville Locomotive Works.

The new switchers, listed as the “world’s cleanest diesel locomotives” are 93 percent cleaner than their predecessors, reducing emissions by more than 317 tons. Funded by Assembly Bill 134 and California Climate Investments (www.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov), the \$10M project will operate on rail lines throughout the Valley including areas identified as AB 617 disadvantaged communities.

The District is currently accepting applications for the Locomotive Program. For information, visit: <http://valleyair.org/grants/locomotive.htm>.



2019-2020 winter season is cleanest on record

Despite record-breaking high winds in early November, the Check Before You Burn season, which runs from November 1 through the end of February, was the cleanest in recorded history.

The program aims to minimize the build-up of harmful fine particulate matter pollution (PM2.5), which can have adverse effects on public health, aggravating heart and lung diseases such as asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

The District credits increased cooperation and support by Valley residents, businesses, the ag industry and all who upgraded to cleaner wood, pellet and natural gas devices, as a critical element in this season’s improved air quality.

In addition, the District recently adopted amendments to the residential wood burning emissions reduction strategy, which lowered the threshold for burn curtailments in the Valley’s three counties with the biggest air pollution challenges. These “hot spot” counties are: Madera, Fresno and Kern.

Valley residents with EPA-Certified wood or pellet devices are encouraged to take advantage of the benefits of registering with the Valley Air District. Find out how: www.valleyair.org/burncleaner.

Residents interested in upgrading from an open-hearth fireplace or older, non-certified wood-burning device to a cleaner-burning stove or insert should visit: www.valleyair.org/CBYBregistration.

District services available by phone & email

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, the District is making every effort to serve stakeholders while following local, state and federal public health guidelines. District offices are currently closed to the public but staff is available by phone and email. All public meetings will be webcast or rescheduled.

Modesto: 209-557-6400 | Fresno: 559-230-6000 | Bakersfield: 661-392-5500 | More info: www.valleyair.org

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