

Valley's Air District gets \$10 Million in grants

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Some \$10 million in U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grants to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District will be used to replace older, high polluting agricultural trucks and tractors with much cleaner equipment for Valley farmers and businesses, the district says. Of the total, \$5 million will be used to replace 26 older heavy-duty diesel yard trucks with zero-emission trucks and the other \$5 million to replace 131 Tier 1 and Tier 2 tractors with new, cleaner Tier 4 tractors. The project will reduce 1,350 tons of nitrogen oxide, volatile organic compounds and particulate matter pollution, combined, the district claims.

"While the San Joaquin Valley is already subject to the most stringent air quality regulations in the nation, innovative grant programs that assist in deploying the latest clean air technologies play a vital role in addressing the Valley's air quality challenges. These programs are particularly critical with respect to mobile sources that fall outside of the District's regulatory authority," says Samir Sheikh, the district's executive director and air pollution control officer. The Valley Air District will pay out the money within the guidelines of its existing Agricultural Tractor Program, which has replaced 5,300 tractors and its Truck Replacement Program, which has replaced 2,400 heavy-duty trucks in the San Joaquin Valley to date. Interested agricultural equipment operators in the San Joaquin Valley can learn more about this funding and other available grants by visitingwww.valleyair.org/grantsor by calling program staff at (559) 230-5800.

Businesses Getting into the EV Charger Race

By Frank Lopez

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As California moves to become a greener state, the vehicles that move Californians around are also becoming greener.

With more electric vehicles (EVs) on California roads, drivers need charging stations to keep the cars moving.

According to Sacramento-based Veloz, a nonprofit working to support the transition to electric vehicles, as of November 2018, the number of EVs sold in California reached more than 512,000.

The organization has a near-term goal of having 5-million zero-emission vehicles in California by 2030.

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy pins California as the state with the highest number of charging stations with more than 15,000 units, with 10 percent of them being fast chargers.

In July, the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) released an Electric Vehicle Charging Station Permitting Guidebook to accelerate the transition to plug-in electric vehicles by simplifying the deployment of EV charging stations. Go-Biz aims to create a foundation of understanding for how cities, counties, and developers can work together to streamline EV planning and installation.

"About half of the zero-emission vehicles in the U.S. are in California. Access to charging stations is fundamental to building a zero-emission vehicle system for all drivers, and it's a key piece to us building an economy that is inclusive, resilient and sustainable," said Lenny Mendonca, Gov. Gavin Newsom's chief economic and business advisor and director of GO-Biz. "The Guidebook will empower our local leaders across the state as California continues to lead in an industry of the future that creates jobs as it improves the environment."

In Fresno, schools and universities including Fresno State have installed charging stations. So have libraries, local malls and businesses.

According to Chargehub.com, an online platform that helps EV drivers find charging stations in the U.S. and Canada, there are 151 public charging station ports in Fresno, 14 in Madera, 139 in Clovis, 21 in Visalia, 25 in Tulare, 19 in Merced and 24 in Sanger.

In June, Beneficial State Bank in Fresno installed 10 EV chargers in its lot through the California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project and its Fresno County Incentive Project, which promotes easy access to zero-

emission vehicle infrastructure with financial rebates for the purchase and installation of eligible Level 2 EV chargers in Fresno County.

Tyson Eckerle, deputy director of zero emission vehicle infrastructure at GO-Biz, said the state started redoubled its push for EV charger infrastructure after EVs such as Chevrolet's Volt and Nissan's Leaf started hitting the market in 2011.

"We want to make sure there are charging stations where people park at home, but also in their work, at their destinations, when they're going shopping," Eckerle said. We've seen the increasing role of fast chargers, and how they enable longer distance travel, because people can fill their car up relatively quickly, and that's been a big push lately."

Eckerle said that to expand the infrastructure, state organizations such as the California Energy Commission grant \$20 to \$50 million a year. In 2018, they put \$80 million into the budget.

Due to the Central Valley's proximity to national and state parks, Eckerle said that more charging units are being installed in areas of travel so EV drivers feel more comfortable taking long drive trips and knowing there will be locations where they can charge up.

To install a fast charging station with about three or four charging stalls, the price could run from \$100,000 to \$300,000, but it depends on where the power is available on site, how much trenching has to be done, site work and the kind of chargers bought.

A smaller two-stall workplace charging station, or overnight chargers for a commercial space, could cost about \$10,000 to install.

The California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project (CALeVIP), which is funded by the California Energy Commission, offers incentives such as the Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) Loan and Rebate Program State Incentive. The Electric Vehicle Charging Station Financing Program provides loans for the design, development, purchase and installation of EVSE at small businesses in the state. It may provide up to 100% coverage to lenders on certain loan defaults.

A small business is eligible for a 50% rebate of the loan loss reserve amount after it repays the loan in full, or meets monthly payment deadlines over a 48-month period. The maximum loan amount is \$500,000 per qualified small business and can be insured for up to four years.

To promote easy access to zero-emission vehicle infrastructure, The Fresno County Incentive Project (FCIP) offers rebates for the purchase and installation of Level 2 EV chargers in Fresno County. Applicants who qualify can get rebates of up to \$4,000 for single EV chargers and \$7,000 for dual port EV chargers.

"The hope is to make this normal," Eckerle said. "To meet our climate and air quality goals, we have to transition to a 100% zero emission fleet. We can't do that without supporting infrastructure, and that's really what this effort is all about."

The Fig Garden Village in Fresno has EV chargers outside of Whole Foods that were installed in 2015.

"The state being No. 1 for market share EVs, there was a demand in 2015, and demand increased every year since, with the number of people purchasing electric vehicles," said, Mark Gianquitti, general manger of Fig Garden Village.

Though Gianquitti said he has only been with the Fig Garden Village for over a year, he sees the charging stations constantly being used, and more frequently since he started.

He said that demand is expected to increase, and that it is always a question of whether it's a service they want to keep providing. Gianquitti says that more shopping and commercial centers and offices are going to start looking into whether they should install charging stations or not.

Because there are more EVs on the road, there is now a large market of consumers and drivers out there, the amenity of a charging station is an attractive feature to consumers, and businesses realize that it a draw to get people into their areas.

"Companies are always looking at providing benefits for their team members, besides the standard medical and everything — whether its recreational items to reduce stress, or to build collaboration among team

members. If a charging station is an opportunity to provide an advantage over a competing business that's looking for talented individuals, it maybe worth to put in a charging station," Gianquitti said.