



Valley Air News

A publication of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

2nd Quarter | 2003

New Smoke Management Program Coming Soon

The current agricultural burning program will soon be replaced by a new program designed to give farmers more flexibility and reduce smoke impacts throughout the Valley. The new Smoke Management Program will determine not only when burning will be permitted in 93 zones throughout the valley, but the types of materials that can be burned with minimal affect on air quality. The new system is tentatively scheduled for implementation this fall.

Under the state's current agricultural burning program in place since the early 1970's, meteorological conditions dictate either a "burn" or "no-burn" day for three large regions. Agricultural waste can accumulate during frequent, extended periods when burning is prohibited. Wayne Clarke, Valley Air District compliance manager, explained that burning large quantities of the stockpiled materials at once is both a safety and an air quality concern. "You have the potential for air quality being significantly impacted by smoke on the first permissible burn day," Clarke said. "Under the Smoke Management Program, such occurrences would be rare," he said.

"Farmers will have an easier time getting through. They will also be able to find out the day before if they can burn."

*Wayne Clarke
Compliance Manager
Central Region*

In the new program, District staff will monitor localized meteorological conditions and determine the amount of emissions that can be allocated for each of the 93 zones. A computer system will keep track of the emissions and permit burning to be scheduled until the limit is reached. In this way, poor conditions in one zone may not affect the allocation status in another.

See **Smoke Management** on page 3

Board passes 2003 PM10 Plan

A plan designed to help clear the air in the San Joaquin Valley during fall and winter months was adopted June 19 by the Valley Air District's Governing Board. The plan is a blue print demonstrating how particulate matter, nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide and volatile organic compound emissions are expected to be reduced by a total of 275 tons per day or five percent per year by 2010. The strategies within this plan are designed meet federal air quality standards for particulate matter of 10 microns or smaller (PM10) in the Valley air basin.

The plan has been approved by the California Air Resources Board (ARB) and soon will be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for federal approval. The ARB will include the plan as part of it's State Implementation Plan to the EPA. "It's really a joint process between the District and the ARB," said Dave Mitchell, District planning manager.

Since District planners worked closely with the federal and state agencies in developing the plan, the approval process should be smooth.

See **PM10 Plan** on page 3



The District's Spare The Air campaign went into full swing on June 6 with Drill Day. Each year, the practice day allows the Valley Air District, participating work sites and the media to prepare for smoggy days to come. Though Drill Day was predesignated, this year the Valley experienced early smoggy conditions on the kick off day.

The focus of the Spare the Air program is to motivate Valley residents to drive less and use alternative forms of transportation to reduce vehicle emissions.

There are 730 employer partners involved in educating their employees on air friendly practices and promoting emission reduction activities. For the kick off, some employers hosted employee barbecues, distributed prizes and offered discounts to customers.

The Valley Air District uses radio, television and newspaper advertising as well as a speaker's bureau to spread the word about Spare the Air. The daily Spare the Air status is available at 1-800 SMOG INFO or at www.valleyair.org.



Jan Sudomier takes Spare the Air Days seriously with her new electric bike.

Board Meeting Highlights

For complete agendas and minutes, please visit the Valley Air District's web site at www.valleyair.org.

April

- Proclaimed the month of May as "Clean Air Month."
- Adopted amendments to rule 4610 (Glass Coating Operations), delaying the compliance deadline by six months and allowing the affected company time to convert their mirror coating line to a powder coating process, virtually eliminating VOC emissions.

May

- Directed staff to develop a policy statement to include sustainable incentives for rules under development, as advised by the Citizens Advisory Committee.
- Approved and authorized application for Carl Moyer Memorial Air Quality Standards Attainment Program funds.

June

- Approved and authorized the Chair to sign resolution establishing the District's 2003-04 budget.
- Approved 2003 PM10 Attainment Demonstration Plan.

July

- Approved amendments to Rule 4901, Wood Burning Fireplaces and Wood Burning Heaters.

Meeting Schedule

The next Governing Board meetings are scheduled for August 21 and September 18. Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at 9 a.m. in the **Central Region Office**, 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, [559] 230-6000.

Governing Board meetings are also held via video teleconference:

Northern Region Office, 4230 Kiernan Ave., #130, Modesto, [209] 557-6400

Southern Region Office, 2700 M St., suite 275, Bakersfield, [661] 326-6900.

Rally Through the Valley

Fuel-cell vehicles put alternative to petroleum on public display

A coalition of American, Japanese, German and Korean automakers showed the Valley an attractive alternative to petroleum power during a three-day rally in May.

May 14-16, the California Fuel Cell Partnership drove eight hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles produced by DaimlerChrysler, Honda, Nissan, Ford, Hyundai, Toyota, GM and Volkswagon from Sacramento to Los Angeles, with stops at most major cities in the Valley. The Fuel Cell Partnership's goal is making these zero-emissions vehicles (ZEVs) available and affordable to the public within 12-25 years.

Stops in Stockton, Merced, Fresno and Bakersfield allowed the public to take a close look and ride in these cars. Some of the stops were also necessary for refueling as the vehicles still have a relatively short driving range: from 120 to 200 miles per tank, depending on the size of the vehicle and the fuel tank.

Hydrogen fuel, which can be obtained from fuels such as natural gas, methanol, or petroleum, and oxygen from the air electrochemically combine in the fuel cell to produce electricity. Heat and pure water vapor are the only by-products from the fuel cell's electrochemical reaction.

City and county officials joined interested residents at each Valley stop, who discovered that fuel-cell cars drive like traditional vehicles but are able to accelerate much faster. Most of those who came to see the vehicles said they were ready to buy them now. Some officials, including Merced City Councilman Jim Sanders, said they couldn't wait to have them in local fleets. "The sooner fuel-cell vehicles come to Merced the better," he said.

Last year, the Bush administration announced a concerted effort to encourage auto makers to develop the alternative technology as a clean, renewable energy source that would reduce or eliminate the country's dependence on foreign oil.



Those attending a Road Rally stop in Fresno check out the Honda FCX Hydrogen-powered fuel cell car.

Smoke Management *continued from page 1*

Clarke said that the type of crop being burned will also be considered when determining allocations because different crops produce different levels of emissions. For example, almond prunings do not produce as much smoke as grain stubble.

It would be very difficult for media to communicate so many variables. Instead, farmers will be required to contact the District for burn authorization. They will have three options to expedite the approval process: speaking to District personnel by phone, using an automated voice response system or logging onto the District's website. "Farmers will have an easier time getting through. They will also be able to find out the day before if they can burn," Clarke said.

Using the District's website or the automated voice response system, permit holders can get approval for a burn as early as 8 p.m. the day before their scheduled burn. In the past, they have had to wait for approval in the morning of a permissible burn day. Additionally, growers will be able to place themselves on a waiting list for the next day an allocation is available if their request was rejected due to insufficient allocation. This will eliminate the need to call every day to try to get approval before the allocation is full. It is hoped the new system will give growers more flexibility and the District more control over emission levels in each ag burn zone that will minimize smoke impact for the public.

Bakersfield takes stand for cleaner trains

A July 9 Bakersfield City Council resolution backs legislative efforts to bring clean-burning technology to Valley trains.

U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer (D-California) and state Senator Dean Florez (D-Shafter) seek a commitment from Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroads to upgrade their technology on trains running through the Valley.

Both companies penned a similar memorandum of understanding with the South Coast Air Basin in 1998, after the EPA announced rules requiring all new or rebuilt locomotive engines as of Jan. 1, 2002 to run 23 percent cleaner than their predecessors. Those built or rebuilt as of Jan. 1, 2005 must run an additional 25 percent cleaner.

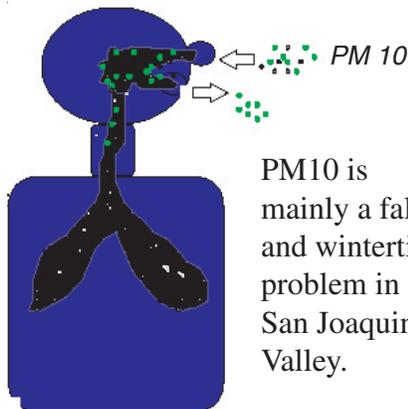
Since the locomotives have a long service life, many older, dirtier trains could still be running through the Valley long after 2005. An agreement from the railroads would bring the cleaner trains sooner.

The resolution also asks rail companies to reduce engine idling to no more than 30 minutes when stopped in Bakersfield.

What is PM10 and why is it dangerous?

Airborne particulates can cause serious harm to human health in high concentrations. Particulate matter 10 microns and smaller, or PM10, includes nitrates, microscopic pieces of fly ash, tiny droplets of liquid, dust, smoke and soot.

These tiny particles evade the body's natural defenses and lodge deep in the lungs, where they can reduce lung function, trigger asthma flares and heart attacks, and exacerbate other lung conditions such as bronchitis.



PM10 is mainly a fall and wintertime problem in the San Joaquin Valley.

The number of emergency trips to Valley hospitals is greatly increased due to heart and asthma attacks on days when particulate pollution reaches unhealthy levels.

PM10 Plan *continued from page 1*

The PM10 plan includes new rules and regulations on agricultural practices, fugitive dust, and wood-burning stoves and heaters.

Fugitive dust regulations as outlined in the plan will bring tighter controls on dust from construction, demolition, bulk materials handling, storage and unpaved roads. Farmers also will be required to control dust from harvesting, plowing, tilling, and chemical application.

A wood-burning rule included in the plan will prohibit the burning of wood in fireplaces or wood stoves on fall and winter days when air pollution levels are unhealthy. The restriction won't apply to natural gas fireplaces, homes that don't have access to natural gas or in which wood burning is the only source of heat, and areas above 3,000 feet.

The wood-burning rule also proposes to limit the number of wood-burning devices allowed in new homes, and to require old, dirty-burning devices be removed or retired prior to the sale or transfer of property.

Mitchell said that another very important strategy is the District's Heavy Duty Engine Incentive Program. "We're counting on reductions from all our incentive programs. The biggest one is for diesel engines." The District provides funding for the replacement of large engines for on and off-road use. According to Mitchell, the most significant of these programs replaces old diesel engines on irrigation pumps with newer, cleaner burning engines or electric motors.

The deadline to present the PM10 Plan to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is August 28. The District expects that the EPA will file a "Finding of Completeness" for the plan well before that deadline, stopping a sanctions clock that would impose higher fees for all new and expanding businesses listed as major pollution sources in the Valley. Federal approval of the plan by February 28, 2004 also prevents the freezing of federal highway funds and the EPA from implementing its own plan to meet clean air standards.

Valley Air District Directory

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

Smog Info Line [800] 766-4463
 Smoking Vehicle [800] 559-9247
 Job Line [559] 230-6019
 Valley Air District Web Site www.valleyair.org

Northern Region Office [209] 557-6400
 Complaint Line [800] 281-7003
 Small Business Assistance [209] 557-6446

Central Region Office [559] 230-6000
 Complaint Line [800] 870-1037
 Small Business Assistance [559] 230-5888

Southern Region Office [661] 326-6900
 Complaint Line [800] 926-5550
 Small Business Assistance [661] 326-6969

2003 Governing Board

Chair

Supervisor Ronn Dominici, Madera County

Vice Chair

Supervisor Barbara Patrick, Kern County

Board Members

Council member Sam Armentrout, City of Madera
 Supervisor Tony Barba, Kings County
 Supervisor Thomas W. Mayfield, Stanislaus County
 Supervisor Judith G. Case, Fresno County
 Council member Mike Maggard, City of Bakersfield
 Supervisor Mike Nelson, Merced County
 Supervisor J. Steven Worthley, Tulare County
 Supervisor Jack A. Sieglock, San Joaquin County

Clerk to the Boards

Sissy Smith, Central Region Office
 [559] 230-6038, sissy.smith@valleyair.org

Air Pollution Control Officer
 David L. Crow
Central Region Office
 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave.
 Fresno, CA 93726-0244
Northern Region Office
 4230 Kiernan Ave., #130
 Modesto, CA 95356-9322
Southern Region Office
 2700 M Street, #275
 Bakersfield, CA 93301-2373
Valley Air News Editor
 Anthony Presto
anthony.presto@valleyair.org



PRSR STD
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 FRESNO, CA
 PERMIT #1056