

VALLEY AIR NEWS

A publication of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

March 2010

Check Before you Burn improves winter air quality

The results are in from the most recent wood-burning season, showing that once again, winter air quality continues to steadily improve with participation from Valley residents.

The Valley Air District's Check Before You Burn program concluded its seventh season on Feb. 28, with a 57 percent decrease in the number of "unhealthy" days, compared to the 2008-09 season.

The annual program restricts the use of residential wood-burning devices when air quality deteriorates in order to prevent the build-up of dangerous fine-particulate matter (PM2.5).

From November through February, wood-burning forecasts are issued each day, on a county-by-county basis that determine if open-hearth fireplaces, wood stoves and inserts, or pellet-fueled devices can be used. Tickets are issued for violations.

Since the rule's adoption by the Valley Air District in 2003, other air districts throughout California have adopted similar regulations.

"This is a great example of how we can achieve major reductions in air pollution without having to resort to cost-prohibitive regulations on businesses," said Seyed Sadredin, the District's executive director and air pollution control officer.

This rule reduces PM2.5, which has been linked to chronic lung disease, respiratory illness, heart attacks and premature death. Residential wood burning can put as much as 17 tons per day of this dangerous material into the eight-county air basin and is the largest source of particulate pollution during winter months. Surveys have shown that 70 percent of fireplace use is for ambience rather than for heating, although exemptions are available for residents who must burn wood to heat their homes.

The chart below shows the number of wood-burning curtailments declared and notices of violations issued during the 2009-10 season.

County	Wood-burning prohibitions 2009-10 season	Notices of Violation (NOVs)
San Joaquin	21	65
Stanislaus	25	69
Merced	15	49
Madera	20	51
Fresno	33	158
Kings	36	20
Tulare	17	21
Kern (Valley air basin)	41	64

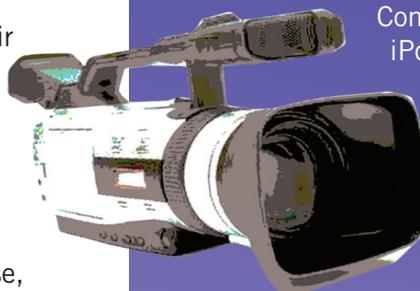
for reel

Video contest asks:

"How are you Healthy Air Living?"

Show the world in 30 seconds how you're living a Healthy Air life, and you may win a prize in the Air District's annual For Reel Video contest!

If you like making videos, the Air District wants to see your answer to the question: "How are you Healthy Air Living?"



Contest winners receive an iPod Shuffle. Group entries that win receive up to five iPod Shuffles, and sponsoring teachers of winning classrooms receive a \$250 resource grant.

All entries must be by amateur videographers or video producers. Videos must clearly and creatively promote Healthy Air Living. Videos cannot exceed 30 seconds. The deadline for entries is May 28, 2010.

For official rules, visit our website at www.healthyairliving.com.

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