

Air District helps residents burn cleaner

Burning wood is neither the cleanest nor most efficient way to heat your home. However, the Valley Air District recognizes and appreciates the fact that some residents still prefer this method at times, over the recommended use of natural gas as a primary source of heat.

In order to help make heating with wood as clean as possible, or converting to natural gas as easy as possible for Valley residents, the Air District offers incentives to upgrade to something cleaner than an open fireplace or old wood stove.

Incentives are offered exclusively to residents living within the boundaries of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, which includes the counties of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley portion of Kern. In order to be eligible, the resident must be upgrading from an existing wood-burning appliance to a cleaner unit.

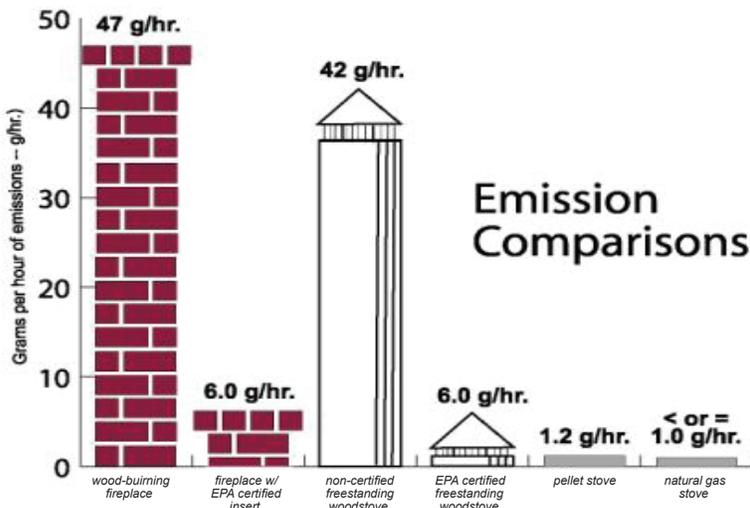
For example, any of these appliances would be cleaner than an open fireplace or older, non-certified stove: EPA Phase II-certified wood-burning stove or insert, pellet-fueled stove or insert, or a free-standing natural gas stove or insert.

Incentives discounts are as follows:

- \$100 off the price of a freestanding EPA Phase II-certified wood stove or wood-burning insert.
- \$250 off the price of a freestanding pellet stove or pellet-fueled insert.
- \$500 off the price of a freestanding gas stove or gas insert.
- \$1,500 off the price of any of the above appliances for low income qualifying residents.

For more information on the Burn Cleaner program, a program application and a list of participating retailers, visit www.valleyair.org under the Grants and Incentives tab.

See the illustration below for emission comparisons of different wood and gas-burning heaters.



RAAN hits a home run!



Real-time data tool empowers end users

Always on the cutting edge of new methods to deliver the most customized, current data to Valley residents, the Air District developed the Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) to bring current, localized air quality data to the Valley's schools and residents. It is perhaps the most powerful personal-empowerment tool ever developed by an air quality agency.

And although it was designed for schools' use, it is now available to the general public!

The goal of RAAN is simple: to give schools the flexibility to make timely adjustments to their day-to-day outdoor activities, such as recess, sports practice and competition, and respond to changing air quality conditions. As air quality either improves or deteriorates, RAAN provides subscribers, such as school staff, with emails outlining the change in air quality and a web portal detailing the day's air quality trends.

Registration is simple via the Air District's website, www.valleyair.org. Just follow the links to a video and documentation explaining the program, and select the nearest neighborhood school to your location of preference, which will link you to the nearest monitoring site. You'll receive automated email notification of changes in air quality and access to historical air quality trends in your neighborhood.

RAAN is part of a comprehensive package of information services for the educational sector, including the popular Air Quality Flag Program. Flag program enrollees receive a free set of color-coded flags that correspond with the Air Quality Index daily forecast. This is a more general tool for assessing expected air quality and it complements RAAN. For more information about the flag program and to order materials, visit http://valleyair.org/Programs/FlagProgram/AirQualityFlagProgram_Idx.htm.