

For immediate release 8-13-18

Attn: Local news, business and assignment editors

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District asks public to be mindful of air quality during Back-to-School

During the Back-to-School period, ozone levels tend to rise due to increased vehicle traffic. Parents can help reduce vehicle emissions by carpooling and refraining from vehicle idling during school pick-ups and drop-offs. In addition, Valley residents are urged to reduce vehicle emissions by driving less, driving electric or other fuel-efficient vehicles, and avoiding the use of drive-through services. This is especially important as multiple wildfires are impacting Valley air quality and the public's help is crucial in preventing spikes in ground-level ozone and exceedances of federal air quality standards.

Valley air quality has shown tremendous improvement over the past several years. These improvements would not be possible without the success of the District's control strategy through its various attainment planning efforts, its robust incentive programs, and the commitment from Valley stakeholders, businesses and residents doing their part to reduce emissions as much as possible.

To ensure that these clean air trends continue and to help minimize pollution associated with school site vehicle idling, the District has partnered with hundreds of Valley schools through the Healthy Air Living Schools program. The program gives schools materials and tools to encourage parents to "Turn the Key & Be Idle Free" when picking up or dropping off students. In addition, the program trains schools on how to use the health-protective Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN), which provides hourly air quality and corresponding outdoor activity recommendations to protect student health. To learn more about Healthy Air Living Schools, request a presentation or get signed up, visit www.healthyliving.com/schools or contact us at healthylivingschools@valleyair.org

All Valley residents can check current, localized air quality by visiting myraan.com or downloading the free Valley Air app from the Apple Store or Google Play. Additionally, during wildfire events, Valley residents can check www.valleyair.org/wildfires for information about current wildfires, hourly air quality data, health protective tips and a link to temporary air monitors in the mountain and foothill communities.

For more information, call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-392-5500).