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Attn: Local news, health and assignment editors

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The Valley Air District offers FREE car emissions test and up to \$9,500 to replace high polluting vehicles

Program helps vehicle owners take voluntary action to improve air quality

The Valley Air District's *Drive Clean in the San Joaquin* program launched a new vehicle replacement option, offering a huge incentive for Valley residents to replace their 1999 or older high-polluting vehicle with a newer, hybrid, plug-in hybrid or battery electric vehicle.

While meteorology, geography and topography play a key role in the Valley's air pollution problems, motor vehicles are the largest source of emissions. Since the Valley Air District does not hold regulatory authority over tail pipe emissions, a robust grants and incentives program is among its many strategies to reduce air pollution and protect public health in the San Joaquin Valley.

The new "Replace" option offers \$5,000 to \$9,500 for most residents in the eight-county Valley air basin who are willing to turn in their old vehicle for crushing. To participate in this program, residents must be low income and live in a disadvantaged community (determined by zip code). The incentive amount is based on the replacement vehicle type and residents that choose to purchase a zero-emission vehicle can receive the higher funding amount. Additional funding may be available through the California Vehicle Rebate Program run by the California Air Resources Board.

The Replace option is the latest piece to the *Drive Clean in the San Joaquin* incentive program which has long offered "Repair" and "Rebate" options which provide funding for residents to repair their emission plagued vehicles or a rebate for the lease or purchase of newer technology like plug-in hybrid and electric vehicles. This program is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantaged communities.

Interested individuals can start their vehicle replacement application online, anytime, at www.valleyair.org/drivecleaninthesanjoaquin.

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