

## Valley Air District updates diesel truck replacement program

By Steven Mayer

Bakersfield Californian, Tuesday, June 14, 2022

Residents of the San Joaquin Valley sometimes blame the region's troublesome air pollution on emissions floating down from the San Francisco Bay area, or on pollutants coming from stationary sources like the oil industry or dairies.

But the overwhelming majority of the valley's air pollution comes from the wheeled vehicles we depend on: trucks, cars, tractors, planes and trains.

"Mobile sources actually continue to be the biggest source of pollutants," said Jaime Holt, chief communications officer with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

How big? Mobile sources account for 85 percent of the valley's emissions. And ironically, the valley air district has no regulatory authority over mobile sources.

But that doesn't mean valley air regulators ignore them. When it comes to cleaning up mobile sources, they make use of the carrot rather than the stick, incentives rather than regulations to help clean up dirty-burning heavy-duty diesel trucks.

The air district has announced the launch of an updated truck-replacement program, which provides monetary incentives for trucking companies or even owner-operators to replace 2010–2016 engine-model year diesel trucks with new zero or near-zero emission trucks.

The district has been operating similar programs for years, sometimes focusing on old, smoke-belching school buses or farm tractors.

"We're continually looking to refresh our programs," said Todd DeYoung, director of grants and incentive programs for the air district.

The way it works is the district pays part of the purchase price of a low- or zero-emission new truck, DeYoung said. The older polluting truck is destroyed so it doesn't end up back on the roads and highways.

But this updated program includes some changes.

"We've seen price increases (for new trucks), so the incentives have gone up," DeYoung said. And they've expanded the number of model years that are eligible.

"The program pays between 30 percent and 70 percent of the cost of the new equipment," he said.

And that cost can be significant, usually running between \$200,000 and \$400,000 for a zero- or low-emission heavy-duty truck, DeYoung said.

"We don't pay 100 percent," he said. "We think it's important that the buyer has skin in the game."

Since the 2000s, the district has provided more than \$325 million in incentive funding to replace more than 7,175 trucks, using a combination of federal, state and local funding sources, Holt said.

Those sources have included Proposition 1B monies, state cap-and-trade funding, federal Diesel Emissions Reduction Act funding, the EPA's Targeted Airshed Grants program, and locally generated motor vehicle surcharge fees.

It's a challenging goal. Tens of thousands of Class 8 heavy-duty trucks — plus large numbers of smaller diesel-burning trucks — operate in the district, traveling, as a whole, millions of miles per day.

That's a lot of harmful nitrous oxide and micro-particles that may get into the air we breathe — or even the lungs we use to breathe.

Exposure to fine particulate matter or ground-level ozone can cause premature death, hospitalizations and respiratory symptoms, limiting a person's normal daily activity and increasing school absences and loss of workdays.

But trucks we see on the highways are already getting cleaner, Holt said. And every smoke-belching diesel traded out for a new, clean vehicle is one more step in the right direction.

For more information, visit the district's website at <https://tinyurl.com/37dx646x> or speak with truck replacement program staff at 559-230-5800.

## **Valley Air District updates diesel truck replacement program to help**

By Steven Mayer

The Bakersfield Californian, Monday, June 13, 2022

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