Valley Air News

A publication of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District February 2000

The Year In Review - 1999

One month into the new year, the District took a moment to reflect on how quickly time passed and the accomplishments made along the way. Here is a look at some of the highlights and endeavors of 1999.

Achievements in Air Quality

A comprehensive research program, the Central California Ozone Study, is being conducted by the District, other environmental agencies, industry and researchers to determine the causes and solutions to the ozone problem in California.

The study measures air quality, meteorology, and emissions that cause ozone build-up. The data will be entered into a model to determine the emission control strategies needed to produce attainment of the one and eight-hour standards in San Joaquin Valley. The study is expected to be finalized in the summer of 2000.

Plans to implement the California Regional Particulate Air Quality Study were finalized. This study was a field program aimed toward finding solutions to the PM10 and PM2.5 problem in the San Joaquin Valley. The data will be used to run computer models that simulate the characteristics of particulate transport and dispersion. The models will be used as tools to determine particulate control strategies to achieve standards.

The District is On-line!

On November 15, the District went on-line at **www.valleyair.org** with regional forecasts and daily readings from the various monitoring stations throughout the Valley. Visitors to the web site also have access to information about District programs and can link to related sites such as the California Air Resources Board, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, other air districts, and partner organizations. The web site serves as an excellent informational and public outreach tool.

Outreach at its Best

A new particulate matter educational campaign was launched in the fall through newspapers and television stations to inform the public about the sources and health effects of the tiny airborne particles.

The District hosted the seventh Air Quality Symposium to establish and strengthen partnerships with local government officials.

Additionally, the Valley Air District established a new partnership with Fresno Unified School District that will result in implementation of an air quality curriculum at Fresno area schools this year.

Emission Reduction Programs

The Carl Moyer Heavy-Duty Engine Incentive Program was incorporated into the District's existing Heavy-Duty Program. This allowed the District to allocate over $3.4 million in state funds and $3.9 million in District funds for 140 projects. In response to the program, applications were received for over 600 lower emission vehicles/ engines during 1999, which reduced 3,500 tons of oxides of nitrogen in the Valley.

Plan and Rule Develoment

A Memorandum of Agreement was developed with the California Department of Forestry to assess emissions from prescribed burning.

A consultant assisted staff with measuring and evaluation of thirteen control measures to determine potential emission reductions through the implementation of the most effective performance standards.

CAPP Class Scheduled

Training sessions for certified air permitting professional (CAPP) candidates is scheduled for May 16 and 17, 2000 at the Valley Air District's Central Region Office in Fresno.

An application form can be obtained by calling (559) 230-5900 or by logging on to the District's web site at www.valleyair.org. Complete application forms must be submitted to the District by April 14, 2000. For questions or further information, please contact George Heinen at (559) 230-5909.

INSIDE THIS EDITION

GOVERNING BOARD REVIEW

Following is a summary of actions taken at the January 20 Governing Board Meeting:

- Approved letter recommended by the Citizens Advisory Committee to USDA Secretary Dan Glickman, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner regarding the Agriculture Air Quality Task Force.
- Approved resolution increasing budget to allow pass through of congestion mitigation and air quality (CMAQ) funds for Heavy-Duty Motor Vehicle Emissions Reduction Program.
- Approved budget transfer of REMOVE funds for required District matching funds.

The Board also approved a number of items on the consent calendar, including:

- Redesignation of the $750,000 appropriation in the 1999-2000 District budget for the San Joaquin Valleywide Air Pollution Study Agency from Particulate Study to Ozone Study.
- Contract with the Environmental Monitoring Company, Inc. (EMC) for implementation of an air quality data management system for an amount not to exceed $60,000.
- Two members and three alternate members were appointed to the REMOVE Program Evaluation Committee.

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The next Governing Board meeting will be held on Thursday, February 17, at 9:00 a.m. in the District's Central office in Fresno, and via video-teleconference in the Modesto and Bakersfield offices.

CUSD Cops Drive Electric Cars

The Clovis Unified School District (CUSD) is taking another step to clean up the air in the Central Valley. December 15, the transportation department unveiled two new electric police cars that will soon be patrolling the Reagan and Buchanan educational complexes.

Purchased with a $10,000 Wal-Mart Clean Air grant and Safe School funds, the two electric vehicles came complete with sirens, radios, and police car detailing but without combustion engines. This means that the vehicles will remove more than a ton of pollutants from the Valley over the course of their lifetimes.

"The District made a commitment back in 1990 to do its part in cleaning up the air in the Valley," said Joe Bjerke, director of transportation for CUSD. Toward that end, the District has purchased alternative fuel vehicles as often as possible. The two police cars are the first of their kind in the Fresno area and Bjerke hopes they will set an example for other agencies to follow.

"We're hoping the concept will really take-off," said Bob Riding, technical liaison for the Clean Cities Coalition and a program manager for PG&E. The Coalition hopes that the City of Fresno will begin to use the vehicles around area malls, where officers typically have to start and stop their gasoline fueled cars many times per day. According to Bjerke and Riding, the electric cars are 100 per- cent cleaner than gasoline powered cars and can be started and stopped without adding any pollutants to the air.

The vehicles operate off of six 12-volt lead acid batteries that are charged by simply plugging the car into a standard 120-volt outlet. According to Bjerke, it takes about 10 hours to fully charge the cars, after which they can travel thirty miles before needing to be re-charged.

"The batteries can be re-charged anytime the vehicle is near an outlet," Bjerke said. This allows the cars to be used for longer periods of time around the District's educational campuses.

With top speeds of up to 30 mph, the cars will make traveling about the District's schools quicker and more effective, which means safer schools to CUSD Sgt. Bud Hettenhouser.

This article was reprinted in its entirety with permission from CUSD Today.

A Millennium Makeover for the Clean Air Kids Club

In honor of the new year, the Valley Air District's Clean Air Kids Club has an updated look and a new name for the quarterly newsletter. *The Clean Air Kids Courier* debuted in January and featured an ultra-hip air quality advocate named Ray. Ray joins the original Clean Air Kids Club icon, Sparkle as the official mascots of the club.

Membership in the club is free for Valley children in kindergarten through sixth grade. The goal of the club is to educate youngsters about air pollution, its sources, health effects, and how to prevent it. Now in its fourth year, there are over 700 members. New members receive a kit that includes a certificate, membership card, stickers, bookmark, ruler, eraser, and other air quality information.

To sign a child up for the Clean Air Kids Club, complete and return the form on page three to: SJVAPCD, Attn: Clean Air Kids Club, 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, CA 93726. Facsimiles will also be accepted at (559) 230-6064.

LONG STORY short

A complex partnership

Scientists have a good understanding of how pollutants affect public health. What is not as well known, however, is how combinations of pollutants may affect health. To study this further, a number of large corporations and organizations have teamed up with the U. S. government to create the National Environmental Respiratory Center (NERC). This research and information center is located at the Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute in Albuquerque, New Mexico and will examine how the large number of different particles, gases, and vapors in the air work together to affect public health. The center is funded through funds allocated by the U.S. EPA budget, as directed by the Congress in 1998.

The NERC will begin to study complex pollutant atmospheres by looking at engine and power plant emissions; wood and tobacco smoke; cooking fumes; and road dust. If the strategy is successful, it will be expanded to study other sources.

Some of the partners in the project include the American and California Trucking Association; heavy engine manufacturers such as Caterpillar, Cummins, Detroit Diesel, Deere, and Navistar; the Chemical Manufacturers Association; Ford; Exxon; and Southern Co., the nation's largest private electric power company.

For more information on the center and its studies, visit the NERC web site at http://www.nercenter.org.

Honda offers Insight for environmental efforts

In January, the Sierra Club recognized the 2000 Honda Insight with the new Award for Excellence in Environmental Engineering. This was the first time in the environmental organization's 108-year history that a car was honored.

The Insight is a two-seat hybrid vehicle, getting power from both a 1.0-liter, three-cylinder, 67-horsepower gasoline engine and a battery-fed electric motor. The batteries recharge as it runs. It is the first hybrid vehicle to go on sale in the U.S., but a four-seat version by Toyota is expected this spring.

According to Honda information, the Insight is an ultra low emission vehicle. It gets 61 miles per gallon in city use and 70 mpg on the highway, making it the most fuel efficient of any mass-produced vehicle in the world. The Insight sells for about $19,000 and Honda officials have said they expect to sell about 4,000 per year.

SIGN UP A CLEAN AIR KID!

To sign an elementary school child up for the Clean Air Kids Club, fill out this form and mail it to: SJVAPCD, 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, CA 93726.

Name:_____ **Age:** ___ **Date of Birth:**_____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:**____ **Zip:** _____

Home Telephone: (___ **)** _____ **School:** _____

Steve Elliott
The Modesto Bee
1999 Air District Award of Distinction for Outstanding Media Support

For nearly two years, Steve Elliott served as environmental and transportation reporter for The Modesto Bee, Stanislaus County's major daily newspaper with a circulation of more than 83,000. During his tenure, Mr. Elliott increased awareness of air pollution and its effects in the northern portion of the District by providing interesting, factual and consistent coverage.

Mr. Elliott took the time to educate himself about air quality issues. His articles demonstrated a scientific grasp of the facts while presenting information in an easy-to-understand matter. He often brought a touch of humor and unique perspective to his work.

Most noteworthy, Mr. Elliott offered a personal account of his air pollution-reduction efforts by writing an award-winning article about crushing his own older model vehicle. The article followed the story from the inital call through crushing and detailed the program and its benefits effectively.

The Valley Air District salutes Steve Elliott for his commitment to excellent journalism and outstanding coverage of air quality concerns.

Editor's Note:
In November, Steve Elliott took an assignment with the Jamestown Bureau of the Modesto Bee.