



# Valley Air News

A publication of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

Fall | 2001



## **\$1.5 Million Available with School Bus Particulate Matter Retrofit Program**

Nearly \$1.5 million is now available from the State of California Lower-Emission School Bus Program. For a limited time, applications are being accepted for the Valley Air District's School Bus Particulate Matter [PM] Retrofit Program.

"The goal of this program is to reduce the exposure of diesel particulate matter for students riding school buses," explained Chris Acree, an air quality specialist with the Valley Air District.

The State of California has identified PM from diesel-fueled engines and vehicles as a toxic contaminate; however, utilizing PM filters can reduce emissions substantially.

These incentives are available to eligible school districts interested in purchasing and installing particulate filters on qualified diesel school buses meeting program criteria. Funds will be expended on a first-come, first-served basis to those meeting the specific program criteria, until exhausted. The District will provide funding for the full cost of purchase and installation of the particulate filter. An additional \$500 will cover the increased cost of the low sulfur diesel fuel [sulfur content no more than 15 parts per million] required in the buses retrofitted with the PM filter technology.

A list of eligible engines with a qualifying retrofit kit is available @ [www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/dieselrrp.htm](http://www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/dieselrrp.htm).

Applicants must obtain approval and have a signed, executed contract with the District prior to purchase and installation of a retrofit device. Any retrofit purchased and installed prior to contract execution is ineligible.

For further information on this program, please call Chris Acree at [559] 230-5829. Complete program applications are also available online @ [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).



## **"New Valley" Documentary**

The Valley Air District and Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District are sponsoring a documentary series on issues facing the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys. The "New Valley" series is produced by KVIE Channel 6 in Sacramento, a Public Broadcasting Station [PBS] and will be broadcast on KVIE in Modesto and Stockton, as well as on KVPT Channel 18 in Fresno and KVPT Channel 65 in Bakersfield. Through ten segments airing throughout a 24-month period, the project will examine the key quality of life issues facing the heart of California.

Segments will identify topics, such as the environment, economy and transportation, and will explore regional approaches to finding long-term solutions.

For programming information, please contact KVIE by calling [916] 929-5843 or online @ [www.kvie.org](http://www.kvie.org); or contact KVPT by calling [559] 266-1800 or online @ [www.kvpt.org](http://www.kvpt.org).

## Board Meeting Highlights

### **Complete Governing Board Agendas and Minutes**

For complete agendas and minutes, please visit the Valley Air District's web site @ [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).

### **August**

Amended District Budget to accept additional Agricultural Biomass-To-Energy Incentive Grant 2000 Program funds in the amount of \$578,494.92.

Received two eligible applications for infrastructure funds from the Valley Emergency Clean Air Program [VECAP]. Lodi Unified School District requested \$72,400 and the City of Fresno, Fresno Area Express requested \$300,000 for compressed natural gas [CNG] stations.

### **September**

Accepted Emission Reduction Credits [ERC] Bank Program Funds in the amount of \$9.4 million from the California Air Resources Board [ARB] to be placed in the District's Heavy-Duty Engine Emission Reduction Incentive Program.

### **Meeting Schedule**

The next Governing Board meetings are scheduled for October 31, 2001 and tentatively for November 15, 2001. Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at 9:00 AM in the:

#### **Central Region Office**

in Fresno, [559] 230-6000.

#### **VTC System**

Governing Board meetings are also held via a video teleconferencing [VTC] system:

#### **Northern Region Office**

in Modesto, [209] 557-6400;

or the:

#### **Southern Region Office**

in Bakersfield, [661] 326-6900.



## Alternative Fuel Vehicle Incentives

Based on tremendous public participation in the Valley Air District's new incentive program for alternative fuel, light- and medium-duty vehicles, the District Governing Board has approved an additional \$500,000 for the project. These funds are currently available.

The District offered incentives in April for individuals, companies or public agencies to purchase light- or medium-duty, alternative fuel vehicles. The largest percentage of program funds has been disbursed to individuals purchasing cars for private use. With the initial \$250,000 investment, the District approved 103 applications funding 128 automobiles and 32 electric bicycles for law enforcement agencies.

District Program Coordinator Todd DeYoung reports that the majority of vehicle applications have been for the Toyota Prius and the Honda Insight. Both of these hybrid vehicles alternate between electric motors and gasoline engines. They deliver miles per gallon fuel efficiencies ranging from the high 40s to the low 50s.

"This is a win-win situation all around," commented DeYoung. "The Valley gets the needed emission reductions. Individuals take an active role in improving air quality and realize a significant cost savings at the same time."

The District bases the incentive amount offered for each vehicle on the California Air Resources Board emission standards. The four-door, compact Prius with a SULEV [Super Ultra Low Emission Vehicle] designation is eligible for a \$2,000 incentive. The smaller and sportier two-seat Insight has a ULEV [Ultra Low Emission Vehicle] rating and qualifies for a \$1,000 incentive.

Applications are evaluated and approved on a first-come, first-served basis until program funds run out. Prospective owners must obtain approval and have signed contracts with the Valley Air District before buying vehicles. Purchases made prior to contract executions are ineligible.

To qualify for incentives, a vehicle must be new and have a gross vehicle weight rating of 14,000 pounds or less. It must also be registered for highway use with the California Department of Motor Vehicles and operate exclusively on an alternative fuel such as compressed natural gas [CNG] or electricity. Electric bicycles used by law enforcement also qualify. Vehicles must be based and operated within Fresno, the Valley portion of Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tulare counties.

Information and applications are available by calling the Valley Air District at [559] 230-5858 or @ [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).



## Valley Demands Equity

By David L. Crow, Air Pollution Control Officer

The time has come for the Valley to stand up and demand action. For far too long, its residents have suffered and businesses have paid the price for air pollution coming from the Bay Area. Using all available recourses, the Valley Air District has discussed, argued and even sued over this issue. As evidence, the Valley pointed to a 1994 \$24 million air quality study that proved conclusively that up to 27 percent of the smog in the north Valley, 11 percent in the central and 7 percent in the south comes from the Bay Area. This is a contributing factor to the Valley's ground-level ozone problem—that are among the worst in the country.

For years, Valley business, agriculture and elected officials have complained loudly to the California Air Resources Board [CARB] and the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] that fairness demands the Bay Area be subjected to the same Smog Check II requirements as its downwind neighbors—the Sacramento, San Joaquin and mountain regions. After all, the Valley is only asking the CARB to enforce the law. The federal Clean Air Act requires that upwind regions consider their impact on downwind areas and implement control measures that reduce any significant impact. Translation: if you help make a mess in someone else's backyard, you have to help clean it up.

It is not that the Valley is trying to blame the Bay Area for all of our own air pollution problems. We are aware of our

responsibilities. The Valley Air District has taken a number of effective steps to reduce our homegrown smog. Ninety percent of the Valley's 2.8 million registered vehicles currently or will soon meet the strict Smog Check II testing requirements. We're only asking that the same be true of the 4.5 million in the Bay Area—some of which travel through the Valley. The Bay Area is the only major urbanized area in California that has not implemented the full Smog Check II program. It should be made clear that every other metro area has this program for a good reason: it cuts pollution.

In July, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District [BAAQMD] considered its most recent plan to reduce that region's emissions. It did not include implementing Smog Check II in the Bay Area and ignored that region's downwind contribution to the Valley's severe smog problems. Despite strong urging from the Valley Air District to revise the plan, the Bay Area district board passed it as written and forwarded it to the California Air Resource Board.

Then it was the CARB's turn at bat. At the July meeting, the Bay Area's attainment proposal went before the state board to approve and forward it to the EPA, or to reject it.

Leaving nothing to chance, Assemblymember Dennis Cardoza [D-Merced] filled a clean-air bus with concerned Valley residents and business people. They traveled to San Francisco and

testified eloquently before the CARB on the Valley's dire need for the Bay Area to implement the full Smog Check II program. They impressed upon the board members that they must require the Bay Area to fully implement Smog Check II now for the Valley to have any real chance of meeting the 2005 federal ozone deadline. Waiting until 2008, as recommended by the CARB staff, will come far too late to help the San Joaquin Valley. By that time, the Valley may already be facing federal sanctions over the problem.

After receiving extensive comments on the matter, the CARB postponed direct action on the plan. Instead, the state agency asked the BAAQMD to hold workshops to obtain more public comments on the plan and consider additional feasible measures.

This lack of real action and mounting frustration prompted the Valley Air District's citizens advisory committee to send a recommendation for the air district governing board for consideration. The committee wants to increase outreach to businesses and the public to exert political pressure on the Bay Area and the CARB to implement full protective measures for the San Joaquin Valley now. Not seven years into the future.

If the Valley has any hope of solving our smog problem, the time has come for the state and the Bay Area to act. In fact, it is past time.

## FACES

The Fresno Asthmatic Children's Environment Study [FACES] is still accepting enrollments. The California Air Resources Board and the University of California sponsors the five-year project. The study gathers information on the impacts of air pollution on youth health in the Fresno Area.

Asthmatic children six to 10 years old in the Fresno and Clovis metropolitan area may be eligible. For additional information, please call FACES at [559] 294-6700.

## Boardroom dedicated in honor of Robert Cabral

It was an honor given with a heavy heart. On August 16, the Valley Air District Governing Board dedicated the District's boardroom to Robert J. Cabral, late Supervisor for the fifth district in San Joaquin County and a native of Escalon.

Board Chair and Fresno County Supervisor Judy Case read a proclamation commemorating Supervisor Cabral's lifelong commitment to public service and unveiled a commemorative plaque.

A plaque has been placed outside of the Robert J. Cabral Governing Boardroom in the District's Fresno office. Mrs. Jean Cabral was in attendance to accept the honor bestowed on her late husband.



## Spare the Air Wrap-Up

The 2001 Spare the Air season ended on September 28<sup>th</sup> with the District calling 10 Spare the Air [STA] days for the Central, Southern and Northern regions.

This year, 722 San Joaquin Valley employers participated as STA Employer Partners by informing employees when STA or smoggy days were forecast and encouraged employees to reduce pollution-causing behaviors.



## Partner in Progress: Valley Yellow Pages

This summer, the Valley Yellow Pages, along with the Valley Air District, co-sponsored Spare the Air [STA] game nights with local professional baseball teams. The Bakersfield Blaze, Fresno Grizzlies, Modesto A's, Stockton Mudville Nine and the Visalia Oaks held STA nights by offering ticket discounts to fans carpooling to the games. The Valley Air District salutes the Valley Yellow Pages as a "Partner in Progress" and thanks them for their support.



## In the Spotlight: Port of Stockton

The Port of Stockton recently purchased a TYMCO dustless sweeper as a major step in supporting environmental enhancement and stewardship.

"The Port of Stockton's purchase and widespread implementation of this dustless sweeper demonstrates our strong commitment toward the control of particulate matter [PM] in the greater San Joaquin Valley District," reported Jay R. Jahangiri, Director of Environmental and Regulatory Affairs with the Port of Stockton.

The TYMCO DST-6 removes dirt, dust and debris from the sweeping surface, plus it also cleans the exhausted air to 99.999% of 0.5 micron size particles. Its patented filtration system enables the sweeper to be equally efficient in wet and dry conditions.

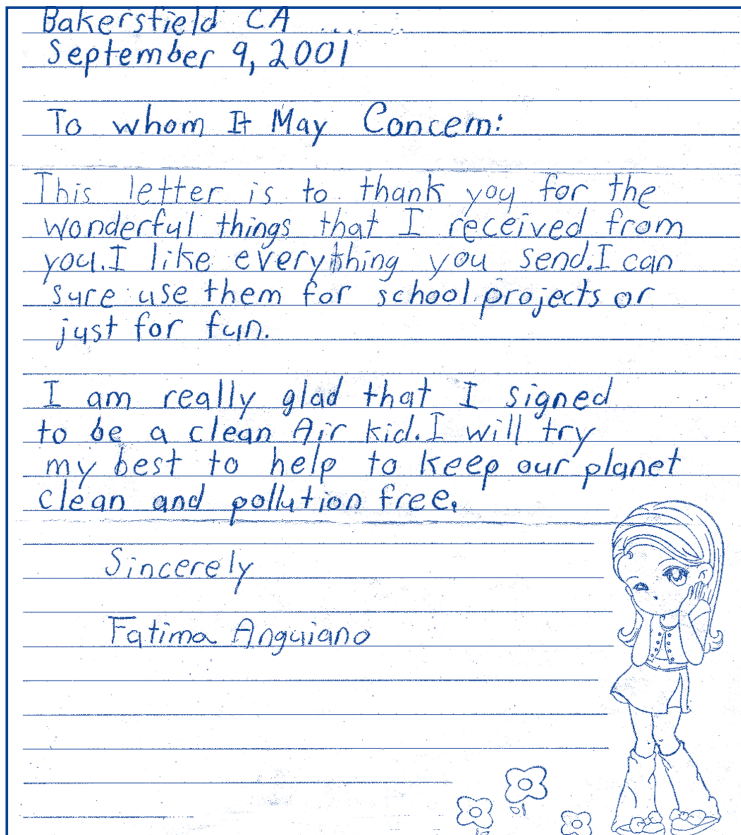


## Clean Air Kids Club

Through the Clean Air Kids Club, the Valley Air District educates youngsters about air pollution, its sources, health effects, how to prevent pollution and how children can protect themselves. Membership is free to San Joaquin Valley Children in kindergarten through sixth grade.

Now in its fifth year, there are more than 1,000 members in the club. New members receive a kit including a certificate, membership card, stickers, bookmark, ruler, eraser and air quality information. Members also receive a quarterly newsletter, the *Clean Air Kids Club Courier*.

To register a child in the Clean Air Kids Club, please call [559] 230-5800, or online @ [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).



*Fatima Anguiano, a member of the Clean Air Kids Club, recently sent a note of thanks to the Valley Air District.*



## New La Paloma Generating Plant

This past May, the PG&E National Energy Group broke ground on its first merchant power plant in California, the 1,064-megawatt La Paloma Generating Plant, located near Bakersfield.

This will be the largest fossil fuel-fired power plant ever built in California and it will be able to generate enough power for one million homes when operating at peak levels.

The plant's four highly efficient, natural gas-fueled combined-cycle turbines are designed to minimize environmental impacts. The plant design uses the best available control measures, including selective catalytic reduction control for oxides of nitrogen, making La Paloma one of the cleanest fossil-fueled generating stations in history.

"This project adds tremendous economic value to our community, not just during construction, but over the long term," said Ken Peterson, chairman of the Kern County Board of Supervisors. "Throughout the siting of the project, PG&E National Energy Group demonstrated a commitment to working with the local community to achieve our common objectives for economic development and environmental stewardship."

The La Paloma Generating Plant is expected to be fully operational by summer of 2002.