



Valley Air News

A publication of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

Summer | 2004

New ozone designation brings new rules, deadline

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has adopted a more stringent ozone standard for the country, triggering a new classification and attainment deadline for the San Joaquin Valley that District planners say will be difficult to meet.

The new standard measures air pollution levels over an eight-hour period rather than a one-hour period.

Under the older, one-hour ozone standard, the San Joaquin Valley is classified "extreme" non-attainment, a classification shared only by the Los Angeles area. The Valley's one-hour ozone classification will remain in effect until June 15, 2005. The EPA has directed the Air District to submit a one-hour ozone plan by fall of 2004 demonstrating how it will attain the one-hour standard by 2010.

The new eight-hour ozone standard took effect in June and overlaps the one-hour standard by one year. The San Joaquin Valley is classified as "serious" non-attainment for the eight-hour standard. The deadline for the Valley to meet the eight-hour standard is 2013. The EPA has proposed that the Air District submit an eight-hour ozone demonstration plan by 2007.

By comparison, the Los Angeles area has been classified as "Severe-17" and must meet the new standard by 2021.

The eight-hour standard is more protective of public health because it measures average concentrations over a longer period. According to the EPA, exposure to lower concentrations of ozone pollution for longer periods is more harmful than short-term exposure to higher levels of the corrosive gas, which can permanently damage lung tissue.

Even though the Valley has three additional years to meet this standard, it may not be long enough, according to Don Hunsaker, D.Env., a District planning supervisor. "This will be a very tough new standard, and we'll have to look at new emissions cuts that we haven't

considered before," Hunsaker said.

Several environmental groups have filed lawsuits challenging the EPA's decision for classification of the new eight-hour standard, fearing a longer wait for clean air in the San Joaquin Valley.

However, an anti-backsliding rule is included within the new eight-hour standard to prevent air districts from dropping any control measures existing within their one-hour ozone plans. This means that control measures within the District's 2004 one-hour ozone plan will have to be carried out and additional measures will also be needed to attain the eight-hour standard.

Also: EPA announces PM2.5 designation, page 2

September 29-30
2004 Air Quality Symposium
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Air Pollution Control District

CNG replaces diesel school buses

Jefferson and New Jerusalem School Districts in Tracy recently welcomed two new school buses fueled by compressed natural gas and a natural gas fueling station housed at Jefferson School.

The project was made possible as a result of mitigation required for a new natural gas-fired power plant recently completed in Tracy by GWF Energy. Susan Sarvey, a Tracy resident, organized the formation of the Tracy Peaker Plant Environmental Benefits Oversight Committee, which secured \$296,800 from GWF energy to purchase two natural gas-fueled school buses.

The Air District donated \$75,000 for a natural gas fueling station and PG&E provides the natural gas by which these two buses are fueled every day. "Now, with these improvements, we're able to protect children's health and improve air quality for the public



at large," Sarvey said.

The Air District requires mitigation by companies building large projects that impact air quality in the San Joaquin Valley.

In this case, Tracy citizens voiced a strong desire that the mitigation for the peaker plant benefit the City of Tracy directly. "The result is school buses that will reduce particulate matter emissions by 95 percent over the diesel buses being replaced," said Tom Jordan, Air

Left: Jefferson School's new CNG bus sits behind refueling station while tank is filled.

Below: Tom Jordan speaks to students and guests at grand opening.



District special projects manager, as he addressed the crowd invited to the May 26 grand opening ceremony. "That translates into 95 percent less harmful emissions to the children riding these new buses," Jordan added.

Valley doesn't meet new fine particle standards

The United States Environmental Protection Agency on June 29, 2004, announced new standards for fine particulate matter, along with an attainment date for areas in the nation that do not meet those standards.

Until this time, particulate matter designations and attainment deadlines had only been given for PM10 (particulate matter ten microns and smaller). In an effort to further protect public health, the EPA has now listed PM2.5 (particulate matter 2.5 microns and smaller) as a pollutant that must be controlled in areas where it reaches unhealthy levels.

PM2.5 is approximately one-thirtieth the diameter of a human hair and made up of dust, soot, ash, salts, sulfates and other pollutants that form droplets of liquid. This is small enough to lodge deep in the lungs, and may enter the bloodstream, causing heart attacks, asthma exacerbations, other respiratory ailments, even premature death.

District officials were not surprised that the San Joaquin Valley was near the top of the list of PM2.5 violators since the EPA used District monitoring data and a

recommendation from the California Air Resources Board in determining attainment status. The San Joaquin Valley, Los Angeles and San Diego are the only areas in California listed as "non-attainment" for PM2.5. The San Joaquin Valley and the LA Basin are also the only areas of the country that exceed both the 24 hour and annual PM2.5 standards. Unlike PM10 and ozone designations, there are not different levels of non-attainment, such as serious for PM10 and extreme for ozone. PM2.5 only has designations of "attainment" and "non-attainment."

Those districts with a "non-attainment" classification have an attainment deadline date of 2010. "This is going to be a very difficult deadline to meet," said Dave Mitchell, District planning manager. He added that strategies such as controls on residential wood burning and new dust rules, to reduce the levels of PM10 in the Valley will be very valuable in reducing PM2.5 emissions as well, but more controls will have to be explored. Districts must turn in an attainment plan to the EPA by 2008 and may be allowed one deadline extension of five additional years.

Board member Case steps down

Judy Case (pictured at right, receiving a plaque for her years of service to the District from Board member Thomas Mayfield) attended her last meeting as a Governing Board member of the District on June 17.

The Fresno County Supervisor has served on the District's Governing Board since 1999. She is replaced by Fresno County Supervisor Susan B. Anderson.

Governing Board members are appointed and removed from the board at the discretion of the chairperson on the county Board of Supervisors or city council where they hold office.



Tulare mayors race their Gems

In a fun-filled attempt to raise awareness about air-quality issues and to demonstrate electric vehicle alternatives, past Mayor Richard Stadtherr of Porterville, Mayor Ed Murray of Lindsay and Mayor Mike Smith of Dinuba meet periodically to race their Gem neighborhood electric vehicles on a race course laid out on city streets.

It all began last October in Lindsay as part of the Lindsay Chili Cookoff. The most recent race was held June 12, in Dinuba as part of Dinuba's Classic Car Show. "Being host seems to bring with it a definite advantage as both races were won by the hosting mayor," Richard Stadtherr commented after the last race. Powered by six 12-volt batteries, the cars barreled through the streets of Dinuba at speeds of up to 35 mph, with a police cruiser in front to clear the traffic in advance of the racing mayors.

In the June 12 race, hosting Mayor Smith managed a slight lead going into the first corner, which he was able to hold onto for the duration of the four city-block course. Mayor Stadtherr of Porterville finished second by about three feet and Mayor Murray of Lindsay came in a distant third. With the win, Dinuba takes possession of the perpetual trophy from Lindsay until they are bested in a future race. "All Tulare County cities are welcome to participate in future races as well as cities from Fresno, Tulare and Kings," said Stadtherr.



From left: Porterville past mayor Richard Stadtherr, Dinuba Mayor Mike Smith, Lindsay Mayor Ed Murray.

Board Meeting Highlights

For complete agendas and minutes, please visit the Valley Air District's web site at www.valleyair.org.

May

- Board adopted proposed amendments to Rule 4002 (National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants) to control hazardous air pollutants from major sources of air contaminants, as mandated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

- Board adopted Rule 4550 - Conservation Management Practices and Rule 3190 Conservation Management Practices (CMP) Plan Fee. The CMP Program is intended to reduce PM10 emissions from agricultural sources.

June

- Board approved 2004/05 recommended budget.

- Board received a verbal report from the California Air Resources Board and the Governor's plan for the Hydrogen Highway.

July

There was no Governing Board meeting held during the month of July.

Meeting Schedule

The next Governing Board meeting is scheduled for August 19. Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at 9 a.m. in the Central Region Office, 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, [559] 230-6000.

Governing Board meetings are also held via video teleconference in the offices below:

Northern Region Office, 4230 Kiernan Ave., #130, Modesto, [209] 557-6400,
Southern Region Office, 2700 M St., Suite 275, Bakersfield, [661] 326-6900.

Valley Air District Directory

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

Smog Info Line [800] 766-4463
 Smoking Vehicle [800] 559-9247
 Job Line [559] 230-6019
 Valley Air District Web Site www.valleyair.org

Northern Region Office [209] 557-6400
 Complaint Line [800] 281-7003
 Small Business Assistance [209] 557-6446

Central Region Office [559] 230-6000
 Complaint Line [800] 870-1037
 Small Business Assistance [559] 230-5888

Southern Region Office [661] 326-6900
 Complaint Line [800] 926-5550
 Small Business Assistance [661] 326-6969

2004 Governing Board

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Clerk to the Boards

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