



# Valley Air News

A publication of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

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## Agricultural burn phase-out begins

Farmers throughout the San Joaquin Valley are switching to clean alternatives for burning agricultural waste.

As of June 1, certain types of agricultural burning are banned per a new state law that phases out all agricultural burning over the next five years. SB 705 was enacted in 2003 and bans open burning in three phases:

- June 1, 2005: Field crops, most prunings and weed abatement;
- June 1, 2007: Orchard Removals;
- June 1, 2010: Prunings from crops harvested off the ground,

vineyard removal and removal of diseased materials.

Agricultural burning is currently a significant source of air pollution in the San Joaquin Valley, responsible for more than ten tons per day of particulates and more than 15 tons per day of smog forming chemicals.

Under a recently adopted Air District Rule concerning Open Burning, Rule 4103, the phase-out of rice stubble burning begins in 2008 and is scheduled to be complete by 2010. Furthermore, the burning of apple, fig, pear and quince prunings was scheduled for phase-out this year, but has been postponed until 2010 due to concerns about crop diseases.

Burning weeds along surface waterways will also be allowed until 2010.

Farmers can utilize several clean alternatives to dispose of waste. Waste such as stumps, trees and prunings can be chipped and hauled to biomass facilities where the material is used to generate electricity. The waste can also be chipped into valuable mulch or soil amendment, and most weeds and stubble can be tilled under the fields.

The Air District continues to work with agriculture to facilitate the phase-out of open burning and ensure that this industry is aware of and prepared for the upcoming deadlines.

## Green Goats funded by Air District

Thanks to a grant from the Valley Air District, five more "Green Goat" locomotives will go into service in the Valley.

The grant of \$3.5 million will allow Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. to lease five additional hybrid electric/diesel locomotives from Canadian Manufacturer RailPower Technologies, bringing the Valley total to six. The five additional Green Goats will go into service by June 2006.

Primarily used as railyard switching cars, the new hybrid locomotives will be located in Bakersfield, Fresno and Stockton. Earlier this year, Union Pacific became the first railway on the West Coast to place a Green Goat into full-time service. Union Pacific received \$700,000 in grant

funds from the District for the Valley's first Green Goat, which is based in Fresno.

The Green Goats will reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides (Nox) – a smog-forming chemical – and particulate matter (PM) by 80 to 90 percent over the eight-year lease period.

The Air District estimates that each of the BNSF locomotives, over a span of eight years, will

reduce NOx emissions by 102 tons and particulates by 1.7 tons. That's a total reduction of 510 tons of NOx and 8.5 tons of particulates over the life of the project. The project's cost effectiveness is \$3.36 per pound of emissions reduced.

The District offers grants for voluntary pollution-reduction projects such as electric irrigation pumps, alternative-fuel vehicles, vanpools, bicycle infrastructure, vehicle retirement, and more.

