

VALLEY AIR NEWS

Residents help shape next air plan



At right, a resident addresses the panel during a Town Hall meeting in Stockton. The Air District panel, from left to right: Don Hunsaker, Scott Nester, Rick McVaigh, Jessica Hafer, Seyed Sadredin.

The Air District hosted a series of six town hall meetings last month, providing more than 300 Valley residents the opportunity to share their ideas on how to clean the Valley's air and learn about the air-quality challenges facing the District.

The meetings were held in six cities throughout the Valley: Bakersfield, Delano, Fresno, Huron, Modesto and Stockton. The purpose was to educate attendees on actions the Air District has already taken to clean the air, explain the Valley's current air-quality and receive input on what strategies to include in the upcoming plan to meet the federal 8-hour ozone standard.

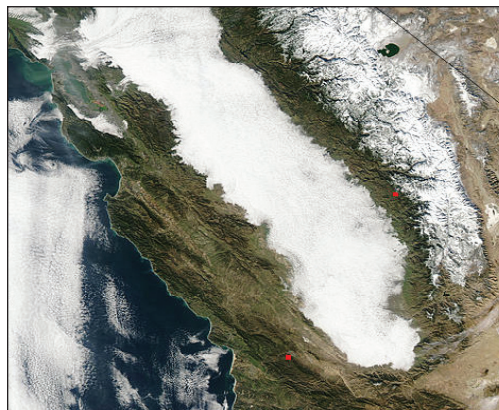
Air quality experts from the District responded to the questions and comments of over 100 people over the course of three days. They explained why the District has such a unique situation in battling the Valley's air pollution problems and the challenges in meeting the deadline set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Air District is required to meet tough,

new, health-based air quality standards for ground-level ozone pollution. The Valley is designated as a "serious non-attainment" area under the 8-hour ozone standard and must reach attainment by June 15, 2013.

"You have my commitment that the Air District will meet the federal ozone standard as expeditiously as possible," said Seyed Sadredin, Air Pollution Control Officer.

Sadredin also pointed out that the District has some of the strictest air quality rules



The satellite image above illustrates how air pollution is trapped in the Valley.

Still looking for artists



All Valley artists from grades K-12 have until September 30, 2006, to submit their entry for the District's 2007 calendar contest.

Artwork should be on an 8 ½ by 11 inch piece of paper turned on its side to the landscape position. Artwork should be an original kid's drawing or painting and should demonstrate the importance of clean air.

Entries should include: artist's name, address, phone number, grade and school.

Mail to: 2007 Calendar Contest, Valley Air District, 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, CA 93726. See District website for more information: www.valleyair.org.

in the nation, but only has the ability to regulate about one-third of the sources that cause the Valley's bad air.

There are several challenges the Valley faces in meeting federal ozone standards:

- The Valley's geography and topography effectively trap pollutants near ground level.
- The Valley's summer heat bakes the pollutants to form ozone.
- The Valley has a very high rate of population growth.
- The District holds no regulatory authority over the largest source of air pollution -- motor vehicles.

"We need more cooperation from the state and federal governments to reduce mobile source emissions and achieve the 60% reduction needed to meet these standards," Sadredin added.