

District Highlights

August 21, 2014 Actions by the Governing Board

District Emergency Relief Actions in Response to Drought

The Governing Board, in recognition of the severe potential air quality and economic impacts of the drought, adopted in April of 2014 a series of measures designed to assist farmers and water districts with emergency drought relief efforts. In August, the Board heard the first update on the District's implementation of these measures and adopted further measures designed to assist residents and communities to address an ongoing, and growing, Valley-wide public health crisis as water wells go dry. These new measures are designed to address severe delays in water well drilling by encouraging the Air Resources Board to allow out-of-state water well drilling rigs to operate in California, even if not in compliance with state regulations, provided any associated air quality impact is mitigated.

Calendar year 2013 was the third year of the current drought and was driest year in the 119 years that official rainfall records have been kept in California. On Jan. 17, 2014, the Governor declared a drought emergency for all of California, and the brief periods of rain that we experienced in subsequent months have fallen far short of replenishing reservoirs and rebuilding snow packs – the state of emergency remains in place. Since the April Board meeting, the drought has only worsened, with 100 percent of the Valley now considered to be suffering “Exceptional” drought conditions, the worst ranking possible.

District staff reported to the Board that they have taken the following actions in response to Board direction, since the April meeting:

- Developed and maintained a “Drought Relief” webpage on the District’s website to provide information of District and state activities related to drought relief.
- Seven internal combustion engines have been permitted using the District’s newly developed, expedited permitting policies for drought relief, preventing 168 tons of NOx emissions over a 10-year period by avoiding permanent installations of internal combustion engines to drive agricultural water wells
- Proposed and supported the Governor’s Emergency Declaration providing CEQA relief for urgent drought relief projects. Proposed mitigation of such projects through Voluntary Emissions Reduction Agreements.
- Prepared two compliance assistance bulletins (CABs) regarding specific drought relief expedited permitting policies the District has developed.
- Met with, and otherwise communicated with, several stakeholders and stakeholder groups interested in drought relief efforts, sharing information, providing assistance and seeking input.
- Working with agricultural stakeholders, developed an information package on revising Conservation Management Practices plans with less water-intensive options, and has committed to expedited processing of such requests.
- Prepared systems to expedite portable equipment registrations to help water districts address new and unique water transfer systems, and to mitigate significant impacts through VERAs. No such project has yet been proposed to the District, although one or

two large water pumping projects are in the planning stages for implementation later in the year.

In addition, District staff reported on recent District actions to facilitate relief for residential well drilling in impacted communities, in response to an inquiry from Stanislaus County regarding extraordinarily long waits for drilling rig availability. District staff found that state regulations contained exemptions that would allow out-of-state drilling rigs to operate during this time of drought emergency, but that there was not widespread understanding of these allowances and their applicability, even among state regulators. The Board took the following actions to address these issues:

1. Authorized the Executive Director/APCO to provide educational material and permitting assistance to residential well drillers, government agencies and affected residents.
2. Authorized the Board Chair to sign a letter to the state Air Resources Board in support of a temporary exemption for drilling rigs from the state Truck and Bus regulation.
3. Appropriated up to \$500,000 from the District's contingency funds to the District's emission-reduction incentive grant program to mitigate air quality impacts from unregistered water well drilling rigs now allowed to operate in California for emergency drought relief purposes.

Partnership with Valley Jurisdictions to Enhance Public Transportation to National Parks

The Governing Board approved partial funding for the Fresno Council of Governments and the City of Sanger to complete a two-year pilot project for two regional transit operations serving the Valley and the region's three national parks: Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon. The District will provide up to \$367,040 to the Fresno COG for the Yosemite transit project and up to \$59,873 to the City of Sanger for the Sequoia/Kings Canyon project. This funding represents 11.47 percent of the total funding necessary to complete both projects. The remaining funding for these projects has been conditionally approved under the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program. Final approval for these projects is scheduled to occur in December 2014. These projects will provide public transit service between the greater Fresno metropolitan area and the three national parks where currently none exists. The projects are expected to reduce over 5.8 tons of emissions per year at cost-effectiveness commensurate with the Governing Board-established cost-effectiveness threshold.

Board Approves Contract to Install Near-road Air Monitor in Southwest Fresno

The Governing Board approved a contract with SCS Tracer Environmental to construct and establish the District's first of four required near-road NO₂ monitoring stations in the Valley. This first site will be established in Fresno near Highway 99 at the RY-DEN truck center, between Jensen and Church avenues. The site will initially measure NO₂ and meteorology, but will provide the infrastructure for additional monitoring capabilities to measure other pollutants as mandated. Three similar sites will be installed at additional locations in the Valley in Stockton, Modesto, and Bakersfield before 2017.

Wood Smoke Impacts in Foothill Communities and Proposed Action by the District

This past winter, at the direction of the Governing Board, District staff conducted a field study to assess wood smoke concentrations in the air basin's foothill communities in order to determine the magnitude of the localized particulate pollution. As part of this assessment, staff completed a survey campaign in the counties of Madera, Fresno and Tulare to observe residential wood-burning and hazard-reduction burning activities. Using information gathered from the field survey, staff conducted a worst-case modeling scenario assuming 100 percent of homes were using their wood-burning devices throughout the winter to estimate the emissions impacts within these foothill communities. Based on the field survey and conservative modeling, a residential

wood-burning curtailment strategy in foothill communities is not expected to significantly serve the District's overall goal of achieving attainment with the federal PM2.5 ambient air quality standard. However, consistent with the District's Health-Risk Reduction Strategy, the results from the District's field survey and modeling support adopting and implementing measures that minimize episodic localized health impacts, particularly during the nighttime hours (8 p.m.-12 a.m.). Towards that end, the Governing Board approved the following:

1. Creation and implementation of a public education and outreach program to urge voluntary actions to reduce emissions from residential wood burning in the Valley's foothill communities, including information regarding the health effects of wood smoke exposure and methods to minimize wood smoke through the use of EPA-certified wood stoves, burning dry, seasoned wood and routine maintenance of wood-burning devices.
2. Allocation of an additional \$100,000 in funding for the replacement of older, higher-polluting wood-burning devices with new, cleaner, certified burning devices in the Valley's foothill communities through the District's Burn Cleaner incentive program.

District Accepts \$200,000 in Funding for the Carl Moyer Memorial Air Quality Standards Attainment Program from the Eastern Kern County Air Pollution Control District

The Governing Board approved receipt of Carl Moyer Memorial Air Quality Standards Attainment Program (Carl Moyer Program) funds in the amount of \$200,000 from the Eastern Kern County Air Pollution Control District (EKAPCD). Because of the District's statewide recognition by the California Air Resources Board (ARB) for administering highly efficient and effective incentive programs, the District has been approached by several neighboring air districts to either assist with the administration of their Carl Moyer Program funds or to allocate a portion of their unused funding allotment to the District as an alternative to sending those funds back to ARB. Due to limited available incentive program staffing resources and program demand, the EKAPCD is unable to fully utilize their Carl Moyer Program funds prior to the statutory deadlines associated with the program. The Governing Board authorized staff to form a partnership with the EKAPCD to accept and utilize EKAPCD's allotment of Carl Moyer Program for Valley emission-reduction projects for current and future years.

August Healthy Air Living Tip

Idling your vehicle puts unnecessary emissions into the Valley's air and damages our air quality. Help keep our air cleaner and all of us healthier!

Ref: <http://www.healthyairliving.com/your-school/>

Tip: Turn off your engine when dropping off or picking your kids from school and choose to not use drive-through services.

Healthy Air Living helps educators, students and parents make informed decisions about student activity as it relates to air quality. Invite your child's school to become a Health Air Living School.

For more clean air tips, see www.healthyairliving.com.

June District Activities

Outreach and Communications

- Outreach and Communications discussed an early wildfire season with Valley media. A new wildfire page was added to the District's website. Staff supported eTrip outreach.
- OC staff responded to 19 media calls and 80 public calls and emails, attended four events and presentations, and issued five news releases in June.

Grant and Incentive Programs

- The District received 308 incentive program applications. 21 were for the Wood Stove Change-Out Program and 79 were for the Heavy Duty Engine Program.
- \$4,710,158 was placed under contract in the Heavy Duty Engine Program and 99 claims were paid.
- \$944,458 was paid out in REMOVE II program claims.
- \$9,350 was paid in Burn Cleaner program claims and 19 claims were processed.

June 2014	Applications	Grants Offered		Grants Executed		Amount Paid	
Program	Number Received & Entered	Number of Contracts sent out	Sum of Grant Funding	Number of Contracts Executed	Sum of Grant Funding	Number of Claims paid	Sum of Grant Funding
Heavy Duty	79	102	\$4,370,258.26	110	\$4,710,158.91	99	\$2,542,656.02
School Bus	0	0	\$0.00	5	\$180,841.37	59	\$1,194,388.14
On-Road Prop 1B	0	21	\$3,395,000.00	42	\$7,071,000.00	0	\$0.00
Lawn and Garden	29	40	\$9,500.00	40	\$9,500.00	36	\$8,500.00
REMOVE	173	392	\$228,408.96	392	\$228,408.96	3,632	\$944,458.03
Burn Cleaner	21	29	\$14,350.00	29	\$14,350.00	19	\$9,350.00
Technology Advancement	0	0	\$0.00	1	\$486,229.00	1	\$138,996.90
Public Benefit	6	6	\$2,446,012.00	6	\$444,624.52	13	\$240,668.47
Totals	308	590	\$10,463,529.22	625	\$13,145,112.76	3,859	\$5,079,017.56

Reductions from Executed Contracts (tons)			
Nox	PM	ROG	Total
1,096	27	49	1,172

Smoking Vehicles	13
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Operations Overview

- **Compliance** completed 3,112 inspections. 173 NOVs were issued. Mutual settlement case completions totaled 174.
- **Permits** received 551 applications. 282 permits were issued.
- **Strategies and Incentives** received 13 smoking vehicle reports.
- **The District** received 142 environmental documents.

July District Activities

Outreach and Communications

- Outreach and Communications discussed the effect of fireworks on Valley air quality during July. Refinements were made to this summer's Air Alert program. Redesign of the District's web site continued and staff performed outreach for the grants program.
- OC staff responded to 19 media calls and 137 public calls and emails, and issued two news releases.

Grant and Incentive Programs

- The District received 374 incentive program applications. 30 were for the Wood Stove Change-Out Program and 71 were for the Heavy Duty Engine Program.
- \$3,385,210 was placed under contract in the Heavy Duty Engine Program and 104 claims were paid.
- \$904,996 was paid out in REMOVE II program claims.

- \$11,100 was paid in Burn Cleaner program claims and 23 claims were processed.

July 2014	Applications	Grants Offered		Grants Executed		Amount Paid	
Program	Number Received & Entered	Number of Contracts sent out	Sum of Grant Funding	Number of Contracts Executed	Sum of Grant Funding	Number of Claims paid	Sum of Grant Funding
Heavy Duty	71	117	\$4,538,858.53	78	\$3,385,210.69	104	\$3,243,261.53
School Bus	0	4	\$325,473.19	0	\$0.00	41	\$737,632.49
On-Road Prop 1B	0	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
Lawn and Garden	19	26	\$5,522.90	26	\$5,522.90	23	\$4,772.90
REMOVE	250	375	\$665,808.04	379	\$563,258.04	2,682	\$904,996.96
Burn Cleaner	30	27	\$15,700.00	27	\$15,700.00	23	\$11,100.00
Technology Advancement	0	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	2	\$203,581.50
Public Benefit	4	16	\$1,676,630.66	4	\$2,306,012.00	3	\$60,000.00
Totals	374	565	\$7,227,993.32	514	\$6,275,703.63	2,878	\$5,165,345.38

Reductions from Executed Contracts (tons)			
Nox	PM	ROG	Total
433	23	47	503

Smoking Vehicles	22
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Operations Overview

- **Compliance** completed 3,409 inspections. 158 NOVS were issued. Mutual settlement case completions totaled 174.
- **Permits** received 147 applications. 210 permits were issued.
- **Strategies and Incentives** received 22 smoking vehicle reports.
- **The District** received 171 environmental documents for review.

September Meetings

Governing Board* **Citizens Advisory Committee***
9 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 18 **10 a.m. Tues., Sept. 2**

Meetings are held in the Fresno office Governing Board Room and via video teleconference to the Modesto and Bakersfield offices. Details: www.valleyair.org *Webcast