

# District Highlights

## April 16, 2015 Actions by the Governing Board

### **Board Adopts Another PM2.5 Attainment Plan for Submittal to the Federal EPA and Expresses Frustration with Federal Mandates that Lack Common Sense**

Despite already having the most stringent and best available control measures for particulate matter, a string of archaic mandates under the federal Clean Air Act and complications arising from the extreme drought conditions placed the District in a position to adopt yet another federal attainment plan for PM2.5.

In 2012, after implementing much of the commitments in a previously adopted PM2.5 Plan, the District was on the verge of attaining the standard. However, due to the extreme drought, stagnation, strong inversions, and historically dry conditions experienced over the winter of 2013-2014, attainment was impossible even if the Valley experienced zero PM2.5 pollution for the last three quarters of 2014. Although the federal Clean Air Act includes provisions for excluding uncontrollable “exceptional events” from a region’s attainment determination, EPA currently excludes stagnation and drought conditions from qualifying as “exceptional events”.

Adding further confusion, the D.C. Circuit Court recently ruled that EPA erred by solely using Subpart 1 of the Clean Air Act in establishing its PM2.5 implementation rule, without consideration of the PM-specific provisions under Title 1, Part D, Subpart 4.

The new plan adopted by the Board builds on decades of developing and implementing active and effective air pollution control strategies, contains Most Stringent Measures (MSM), Best Available Control Measures (BACM), additional enforceable commitments for further reductions in emissions, and ensures expeditious attainment of the standard. Additionally, due to the recent exceptional weather conditions, the plan is accompanied by a request for a one-time extension of the attainment deadline for the 24-hour PM2.5 standard to 2018 and the annual PM2.5 standard to 2020. The plan and the extension request must now be approved by the federal EPA by December 31, 2015 in order to avoid the imposition of sanctions on San Joaquin Valley which will have devastating economic consequences for Valley businesses and residents.

If the plan is disapproved the extra mandates that are triggered will be impossible for the Valley to meet. Given the irreparable consequences that may arise from such an action by EPA, the Board also directed staff to prepare and present a public report to the Board within 120 days detailing available options including possible recommended actions for the District to pursue.

### **Board Accepts \$2,400,000 from the California Air Resources Board for New Vehicle Replacement Program**

The District accepted \$2.4 million from the California Air Resources Board to integrate a vehicle replacement component into the District’s highly successful Tune In Tune Up Vehicle Repair Program for Valley residents. To date, the District’s award-winning program has provided over \$12 million in funding for over 12,000 vehicle repairs, primarily for low-income Valley residents. This additional funding will be used to implement a vehicle replacement program based on a successful pilot program implemented in 2014. During the pilot program, the District replaced 108 vehicles utilizing \$600,000 in locally-generated funding. The success of the

District’s pilot program was used to shape the development of the state’s Enhanced Fleet Modernization Program (EFMP) and resulted in the District receiving 50% (\$1.4 million) of the statewide allocation of EFMP funding. In addition to EFMP funding, the District is receiving \$1 million in EFMP Plus Up funding, which offers additional incentives to low-income residents for replacing existing high polluting vehicles with cleaner hybrid, battery electric and other advanced technology vehicles.

**Board Approves Projects Under Public Benefit Grants Program**

The Governing Board approved project selections for enhanced transit and transportation strategies under the District’s Public Benefit Grants Program. Utilizing Board-approved scoring and funding criteria, the Board approved 13 projects across the Valley totaling \$2,008,730 in funding. These projects include traffic synchronization, bus rapid transit, zero-emission shuttles, electric transit buses, and bicycle infrastructure projects to reduce emissions from passenger vehicles.

San Joaquin RTD – 2 Zero-Emission Transit Buses	<b>\$699,930</b>
City of Porterville – 2 Zero-Emission Transit Buses	<b>\$459,270</b>
Kings Canyon Unified School District – 3 Zero-Emission School Buses	<b>\$357,840</b>
City of Stockton – BRT Phase V	<b>\$127,225</b>
City of Stockton – Traffic Progression Improvements	<b>\$105,524</b>
City of Stockton – West Ln. Traffic Synchronization Enhancements	<b>\$62,790</b>
City of Visalia – New Alternative Fuel Public Shuttle	<b>\$43,835</b>
California State University, Fresno – Zero-Emission Public Shuttle	<b>\$41,161</b>
City of Stockton – BRT Phase 1-B	<b>\$33,460</b>
City of Fresno – Clovis Ave. Adaptive Traffic Synchronization	<b>\$31,080</b>
City of Madera – 4 <sup>th</sup> Street Traffic Flow Enhancement Project	<b>\$24,000</b>
City of Bakersfield – Baker St. Bicycle Transportation Enhancement	<b>\$11,307</b>
City of Bakersfield – Belle Terrace St. Bicycle Transportation Enhancement	<b>\$11,307</b>

**First Winter Season Under Amended Wood Burning Rule Successful Despite Continuing Drought Conditions**

The Governing Board heard a comprehensive report on the 2014-2015 Check Before You Burn season. This marked the first season under the recently amended wood-burning rule, which significantly increased the number of no-burn days for high polluting wood-burning devices, and allowed for a substantial increase in burn days for clean wood-burning devices. This change coupled with an increase in available incentive funding for upgrading to clean wood-burning devices created a huge success in the Burn Cleaner program over the winter season with over \$7 million in funding for over 4,000 replacement vouchers issued. Despite continued drought conditions through the Valley, the region experienced improved air quality compared to the historically severe 2013-2014 winter season, yet still experienced a number of days with high PM2.5 concentrations during periods of high pressure and poor dispersion. This past winter saw another successful Check Before You Burn campaign, with Valley residents expressing significant interest in air quality and the District responding to 950 public calls, and 715 complaints for suspected wood-burning activity. Without the District’s multi-faceted program that utilizes wood-burning curtailments, incentives, public education/outreach, and strong enforcement to reduce wood smoke, air quality would have been challenged even more during this last winter season.

## April Healthy Air Living Tip

The amount of energy required to deliver water to your home is significant. Over-watering your lawn and outdoor landscaping not only results in excess air pollution emissions from power plants, but as California faces one of its most severe droughts on record, it is more important than ever to reduce water usage as much as possible.

Reference: <http://saveourwater.com/what-you-can-do/outdoor/>

<http://www.fresno.gov/Government/DepartmentDirectory/PublicUtilities/Watermanagement/Conservation/Schedule.htm>

**Tip: Consult your local area watering schedule and minimize the amount of water used in landscaping. In the winter, do not water when rain is in the forecast, and check your automatic water timer frequently.**

For more clean air tips, see [www.healthyliving.com](http://www.healthyliving.com).

## March District Activities

### *Outreach and Communications*

- Outreach and Communications spent March finalizing the annual report, organizing the transboundary ozone conference and wrapping up wood-burning season. Public and media call topics ranged from biomass plants to wood-burning stove change-outs, to diesel truck funding and RAAN.
- In March, OC staff responded to 20 media calls and 73 public calls and emails, and attended three events and presentations..

### *Grant and Incentive Programs*

- In March, the District received 319 incentive program applications. 126 were for the Wood Stove Change-Out Program and 47 were for the Heavy Duty Engine Program.
- In March, \$3,770,595 was placed under contract in the Heavy Duty Engine Program and 179 claims were paid.
- In March, \$608,815 was paid out in REMOVE II program claims.
- In March, \$2,662,595 was paid in Burn Cleaner program claims and 1,490 claims were processed.

March 2015	Applications		Grants Offered		Grants Executed		Amount Paid	
	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	47	104	\$2,523,984.28	112	\$3,770,595.38	179	\$7,810,369.54	
School Bus	1	0	\$0.00	4	\$416,652.78	9	\$222,270.11	
On-Road Prop 1B	0	1	\$1,300,000.00	0	\$0.00	84	\$3,799,600.00	
Lawn and Garden	5	10	\$2,244.99	10	\$2,244.99	15	\$3,499.50	
REMOVE	134	410	\$434,630.00	403	\$434,420.00	1,344	\$608,815.03	
Burn Cleaner	126	323	\$557,500.00	315	\$535,000.00	1,490	\$2,622,595.15	
Technology Advancement	0	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	2	\$64,328.40	
Public Benefit	6	18	\$1,380,049.93	2	\$40,000.00	22	\$300,000.00	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>\$6,198,409.20</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>\$5,198,913.15</b>	<b>3,145</b>	<b>\$15,431,477.73</b>	

Reductions from Executed Contracts (tons)

Nox	PM	ROG	Total
340	103	33	475

## Operations Overview

- **Compliance** completed 2950 inspections in March. 147 NOVs were issued. Mutual settlement case completions totaled 299.
- **Permits** received 352 applications in March. 481 permits were issued.
- **Strategies and Incentives** received 19 smoking vehicle reports in March.
- **The District** received 183 environmental documents in March.

## Upcoming Meetings

**Governing Board\***  
9 a.m. Thursday, May 21

**Citizens Advisory Committee\***  
10 a.m. Tues., April 21

**Environmental Justice Adv. Grp.**  
5 p.m. Thurs., April 23

*Meetings are held in the Fresno office Governing Board Room and via video teleconference to the Modesto and Bakersfield offices. Details: [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) \*Webcast*