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STATE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL OFFICERS RELEASE NEW REPORT

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The California Air Pollution Control Officers Association today released its annual air quality report *California's Progress Toward Clean Air* for all 35 local air districts in the state documenting dramatic reductions in unhealthy levels of fine particulate pollution in every county reporting air quality data.

Fine particulate pollution, also known as PM_{2.5}, is associated with a wide range of health effects from increased hospitalizations to premature deaths. The report also shows a general trend of improving air quality for ground-level ozone, although some counties and their air district face unique challenges in reducing levels of that pollutant.

“While each air district faces different local challenges, we all work in partnership toward cleaner air for California as a whole,” said Brad Poiriez, CAPCOA board president and air pollution control officer for the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District.

The report contains statistical information on ozone and PM_{2.5} air quality for 2000 and 2012 for each county; statewide air quality trends and detailed descriptions of air pollution control programs at each air quality district.

California and its individual air districts have made remarkable progress in cleaning the air during the past three decades in spite of dramatic increases in population and driving. From 1980 to 2010, the state's population increased by 65 percent and daily miles driven by all vehicles increased by 137 percent. But thanks to a comprehensive air pollution control strategy, smog-forming pollutants were cut by 55 percent during the same period. California's largest industrial plants also cut their greenhouse gas emissions by 17 percent between 2008 and 2011.

These improvements have occurred in spite of the fact that neither the state nor local air districts have the authority to regulate federally controlled sources of air pollution including ships, locomotives and aircraft.

And yet daunting challenges remain to reach current air quality standards, especially for the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California's South Coast Air Basin, the two most severely polluted regions in the nation. Recent studies show that pollutants are harmful to our health at lower levels than previously thought. As a result, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has revised key air quality standards to be more stringent and health-protective. This means that local air districts and the state have to develop clean air plans requiring significant further emission reductions from all sources including cars, trucks, businesses and consumer products.

“Our partnership with CAPCOA is a critical resource in the San Joaquin Valley’s mission of attaining clean air,” said Seyed Sadredin, executive director of the Valley Air District. “Just as we assist each other in meeting our challenges, we also share our successes.”

For a copy of *California’s Progress Toward Clean Air*, visit www.capcoa.org. For more information about CAPCOA and the state’s air districts, call 916-769-7769.