

For immediate release 3/01/18

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2017-2018 Check Before You Burn season ends

The 15th season of the District's residential wood burning program ended yesterday. Although the level of PM 2.5 emissions is at an all-time low, this past winter the Valley experienced a number of weeks of high pressure and atmospheric stagnation which lead to exceptionally high PM 2.5 concentrations. Additionally, the Thomas Fire, California's largest wildfire to date, affected the Valley's air quality in December.

Given the Valley's geography and topography, the high-pressure acts like a lid over the mountains surrounding the region and even low amounts of emissions eventually build to high concentrations. Despite the poor dispersion this winter, the peak levels of PM 2.5 were still lower than what the Valley is used to seeing in the same conditions, reflecting the progress in emissions reductions the Valley has achieved over last two decades.

"We are moving in the right direction thanks to the cooperation of Valley residents and stakeholders and their investments in cleaner devices," said Seyed Sadredin, the District's executive director and air pollution control officer. "These improvements would not be possible without the success of the District's comprehensive control strategy which includes Check Before You Burn, as well as the District's attainment planning efforts and robust incentive programs, like Burn Cleaner which provides grants for the purchase of cleaner devices."

Valley residents wanting to switch out older wood-burning devices for a cleaner model can still take advantage of the District's Burn Cleaner incentive program which provides \$1,000 for certified wood or pellet inserts, freestanding stoves or natural gas inserts or \$2,500 for eligible low-income applicants for all devices. An additional \$500 is available to all applicants for the installation costs on a natural gas device. Visit www.valleyair.org/burncleaner for program guidelines.

Check Before You Burn runs each winter from November through February and helps minimize the build-up of harmful fine particle pollution in the Valley. The District issues a wood-burning declaration daily for every county in the air basin that determines what, if any, residential wood-burning devices may be used. Beginning today, the District will no longer issue a daily residential wood burning status for each county. While no formal burning restrictions will be in place until November 1, 2018, the District discourages residential wood burning.

Additionally, March through October, is a great time to get clean burning devices registered ahead of next year's wood burning season. Visit www.valleyair.org/CBYBregistration for details.

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Wood-burning season ends

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County	No Burning Unless Registered		No Burning for All		Notices of Violation*	
	2016-2017	2017-2018	2016-2017	2017-2018	2016-2017	2017-2018
San Joaquin	22	45	0	0	46	79
Stanislaus	30	49	0	2	44	73
Merced	23	48	0	1	19	55
Madera	33	51	0	1	16	23
Fresno	43	52	0	5	69	122
Kings	39	59	0	8	7	18
Tulare	44	55	0	6	38	54
Kern	45	58	1	6	30	55
Sequoia National Park & Forest	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kern (Greater Frazier Park Area)	1	1	0	0	0	0
Totals:	281	418	1	29	269	479

*Violations of wood-burning curtailments can result in notices of violation.