

Smoky skies prompt air quality warning

Bakersfield Californian, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

Air quality officials have issued a health caution because of smoke caused by wildfires. The caution will be in effect until the fires are extinguished.

“Due to the erratic nature of the smoke, areas of the eight-county air basin could potentially be affected at any given time,” said Shawn Ferreria, senior air quality specialist for San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, in a statement.

Since late last month, air quality officials have been advising Kern County and San Joaquin Valley residents to stay indoors as much as possible because of poor air quality caused in part by wildfire smoke wafting into the valley from fires.

That advisory continues. Particulates can aggravate lung and heart disease, trigger asthma attacks and acute bronchitis.

The nearby Piute fire had burned more than 30,000 acres as of Tuesday morning.

Worsening air quality, areas of smoke forecast

By KEN CARLSON

Modesto Bee, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

Air quality is expected to worsen today in the Northern San Joaquin Valley, and the region will have areas of patchy smoke this week.

It's considered unhealthy for seniors, children and people with chronic health conditions. People who live in Tuolumne County and the Sierra foothills are wrestling with heat as well as smoke being driven into the area from fires elsewhere in the state.

The high pressure building over Northern California is putting a lid on the San Joaquin Valley, keeping the smoke from dispersing, said Gary Arcemont, a senior air quality specialist for the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

The smoke is able to block sunlight, which takes some heat off during the day and also causes a slight increase in nighttime temperatures.

The air in the foothills is unhealthy for sensitive people, but it tends to fluctuate and can be more unhealthy in some areas, officials said.

Todd Stolp, public health officer for Tuolumne County, advised residents to use the visibility to monitor air quality near their homes or work sites. Monday, visibility ranged from five or six miles to less than three miles in some canyons.

With less than three miles of visibility, the pollution is unhealthy for everyone and people should avoid going outside, Stolp said. If landmarks are visible from three to five miles away, people with asthma, lung disease and other chronic illnesses should stay indoors and close their windows.

Until the air quality improves, people should postpone strenuous outdoor activities that are not necessary, Stolp said.

Danger of fires, health concerns are heating up

Blistering triple digit temperatures.

Manteca Bulletin Tues, July 8, 2008

Unhealthy air.

Extreme fire danger.

Electricity peak load alerts.

Manteca and the rest of the South County are being put on notice to expect all that as the region is getting hit with at least a five-day heat wave with the foulest air on record coupled with dangerously low humidity.

Every agency from California Fire and the San Joaquin Air Pollution County District to the San Joaquin County Health Department is warning people of the dangers that lurk outdoors.

The National Weather Service is calling for a high today of 106 degrees. The temperature is expected to hit 110 degrees on Wednesday before cooling off slightly to 104 degrees on Friday.

Meanwhile, California Fire has noted a severe drop in humidity that - when coupled with hot temperatures - is putting large segments of the state on a red flag alert at the same time 20,000 firefighter personnel are stretched thin battling more than 300 active blazes across the state. Crews have been brought in from as far away as Alaska to help fight the fires. The heightened status of caution is expected to continue through at least Friday

Air is also expected to be especially foul. The air in San Joaquin County and most of the rest of the valley expected to be unhealthy. It is mostly due to the smoke from the fires that are filling up the gigantic bowl created by the Central Valley being surrounded by mountain ranges. The stagnant air coupled with high temperatures normally creates an inversion level that traps pollutants. The two in combination are expected to be particularly serious.

Manteca Police spokesman Rex Osborn said the city advises those in need of a "cooling center" to go to the Manteca Library in the 300 block of Center Street or the Manteca Senior Center, 295 Cherry Lane. Osborn noted that both are open to all residents regardless of their ages. He added the senior center does close at 5 p.m.

"They're open during the hottest part of the day and that's important," Osborn said.

Manteca Police have a system in place where they check on the welfare of elderly who live alone that have requested such service. Welfare checks are being made throughout the heat wave.

"We're monitoring it very closely," Osborn said.

If the heat wave persists with excessive temperatures above 100 degrees, the Citizens Emergency Response Team may be called into action to make door-to-door welfare checks in the city's age-restricted senior citizen mobile home parks. Such a check two summers ago is credited with saving the life of an elderly woman who public safety workers found suffering from the initial stages of heat strike.

California energy gurus have also announced a peak load alert for the next four days from 3 to 6 p.m. That means they are asking people to turn-off or unplug all unnecessary power uses and to avoid using things like washers and dryers during that time period. They also are asking that air conditioners be kept at a higher setting than normal.

They are trying to avoid a major spike in energy usage as the state tries to keep cool using air conditioners. It was heavy air conditioning use that cascaded into brown-outs several years ago and contributed into widespread blackouts in previous years.

Since Manteca now has a dual water system using both a surface treatment plant that relies on gravity and wells that require electricity, the advent of a power outage won't substantially impact water supplies. But even so, people are being asked to watch water usage beyond the mandatory conservation measures now in place.

During the West Coast blackout that knocked power out for more than eight hours in Manteca

and other areas back in the earlier part of this decade, Manteca's water supplies became perilously low. People retreated to their yards and turned on hoses to cool down. At one point fire officials were concerned that if a fire broke out they wouldn't have enough pressure to battle it.

Air masks aren't necessarily answer to smoky Central Valley

Breathing becomes more difficult but they can filter out particles.

By MADDALENA JACKSON, The Sacramento Bee

Merced Sun-Star Mon., July 7, 2008

If June's fires are a preview of the remainder of the season, Valley residents will again be faced with a variety of unpleasant options for avoiding the smoke.

One of those options is wearing a mask -- and living with the trade-offs.

The right mask can filter almost all particles and provide your lungs with clean air. But because sucking air through the fine mesh of the mask takes energy, breathing becomes a little harder, and masks can become warm and claustrophobic.

"I've done it for 16 years -- I have to protect myself," said Patty Bender, 55, who began wearing masks in times of bad air after she was diagnosed with lung disease. A registered nurse with 30 years of experience, Bender has worn the masks, with doctor approval, to prevent further damage.

Not all masks are created equal -- and there is a standard by which masks may be judged. Bender wears an N95 mask, which means that under testing by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the mask blocks 95 percent of particulate matter.

Masks with no ratings displayed may be OK for filtering sawdust, but they are useless in filtering smoke particulates.

"Every manufacturer that comes in and wants (a mask approved) submits to us a number of respirators," said Heinz Ahlers, branch chief with the National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory. "We take those respirators and test them for penetration and for breathing resistance."

If they block a certain portion of particulates during testing, they are awarded a letter and a number that signify the type and percentage of particles blocked, Ahlers said.

The number signifies the percentage of particles blocked. A "95" mask removes 95 percent of particulate matter.

A common measure of air quality is the amount particles smaller than 2½ microns in diameter present in the air. Some of the most dangerous particles are much smaller than that -- a particle 2½ microns wide is dwarfed by the end of a human hair.

Smoke produces particles so small that they act as a mist. Masks that have earned the NIOSH N95 certification block 95 percent of these particles, regardless of size.

But masks aren't for everyone. Health experts, including the American Lung Association and government health officials, warn that people with compromised respiratory systems should be very cautious about using masks.

"Certainly, anyone who has any respiratory illness or heart illness should consult their physician before considering a mask," said Bonnie Holmes-Gen, senior policy director with the American Lung Association of California.

Many local health officials don't recommend the N95 mask.

"It feels like part of my skin," Bender said. "I got used to it. ... I had such severe lung disease, I had to."

Dust masks and painters masks generally do not protect against particulates. Only masks that say "NIOSH" and have a letter and number rating printed on them will protect the lungs from smoke.

Bender, who credits the masks with her health after her diagnosis, said she feels so strongly about public access to proper masks that she has tried leaving messages with local, state and federal officials -- with no responses.

"I believe this has fallen through the cracks because there have been so many issues with the fires," she said.

But the official opinion about masks is not as enthusiastic as hers. State health officials said the decision to recommend masks -- or not -- should be left to each county's health officer.

Lodi could face scorching heat, lower air quality

By Ross Farrow - News-Sentinel Staff Writer

Lodi News Sentinel, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

The Lodi-Galt area could endure record-breaking temperatures today and Wednesday as a massive heat wave descends on the Central Valley.

And some of the smoke that made people cough and made buildings look yellowish-brown two weeks ago will return to the Valley.

Today's high is expected to range from 106 to 108 degrees, which would break the July 8 record of 104, set way back in 1932, according to AccuWeather.com, a private forecasting firm. Records were available only for Stockton Metropolitan Airport.

On Wednesday, temperatures could reach 110, breaking the July 9 record of 107 set in 1961, according to AccuWeather.com.

The low tonight is expected to be a balmy 67 degrees, and Wednesday night, it will "cool" to 64 degrees.

The city of Lodi has set up a cooling center from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Friday in the Pisano Room at Hutchins Street Square, 125 N. Hutchins St. Books, board games and water will be available. Senior citizens may also cool off at the senior center.

In Galt, the city had not established a cooling center by Monday afternoon, but one will be set up if the Office of Emergency Services recommends it, said City Clerk Liz Aguire.

It is unclear whether the smoke that caused people to cough frequently two weeks ago will be as intense this week. There are conflicting reasons why it may or may not happen, according to

Shawn Ferreria, senior air quality specialist for the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

How hot will it get?

Well, that depends on whether you rely on AccuWeather.com, a private forecasting firm, or the National Weather Service. Actual temperatures vary, but both agencies agree about one thing — it will be HOT. Lows all week will be in the mid to high 60s.

It won't get below the century mark until at least Saturday. And you'll love it a week from today — a forecast balmy 93 degrees.

Here is this week's forecast for the Lodi area:

For air quality information, visit www.valleyair.org. Smoke alerts will be posted on the home page. For further information, click on "air quality information" in the left-hand column.

— *News-Sentinel staff*

On the one hand, a couple of wildland fires that sent smoke toward Lodi — in Napa-Solano counties and in Merced-Mariposa counties — are now contained, Ferreria said. That should reduce the smoke coming toward Lodi.

On the other hand, the high-pressure system that is responsible for the heat wave this week is more intense than the weather system that created the smoke-filled airways two weeks ago, Ferreria said. So that is a reason the smoke could be worse.

"The air quality will continue to deteriorate the next few days," Ferreria said. "If you see smoke or smell smoke, you should limit outdoor activity as much as possible."

Lodi Dr. John Connolly, a lung specialist, said that seniors, children, smokers and people with asthma or other breathing problems should refrain from being outdoors as much as possible.

"I don't know if it makes big difference if you have healthy lungs," Connolly said.

Local electrical providers said they are ready for the onslaught of air conditioner use and will do whatever possible to keep power on. George Morrow, Lodi Electric Utility director, acknowledged that there could be some isolated power outages, but he will have all his equipment and employees ready to respond to any outages.

Spokeswoman Nicole Tam from Pacific Gas and Electric Co., which provides electricity to rural areas outside Lodi, advises people to conserve energy during hottest times of day. For example, do your laundry or dishwashing in the morning or after 6 p.m. The same applies for other large appliances.

The heat and smoke won't keep construction workers expanding Lodi Memorial Hospital from working, even at 110 degrees, according to Nick Layton, a carpenter for HMM builders.

However, the hospital may excuse workers if the weather becomes oppressive since construction is ahead of schedule, said Lodi Memorial spokeswoman Carol Farron.

Layton said that HMM officials make sure their workers do not become overheated. Two covered tents provide workers with welcome shade and ice water.

"If you go on the roof, tell someone you're up there," Layton said.

That is to prevent someone from passing out on the roof with anybody knowing it, he added.

Calif. suing cement company over toxic emissions

San Diego Union Tribune Tues., July 8, 2008

RIVERSIDE – State Attorney General Jerry Brown and Riverside County District Attorney Rod Pacheco are suing a cement factory, saying it exposed neighbors to toxic cement dust without warning them.

The suit, filed Thursday in Superior Court, seeks to get TXI Riverside Cement Co. to stop its practices that are causing exposure to hexavalent chromium. The carcinogen, the same one featured in the movie "Erin Brockovich," has been carried by dust into neighborhoods near the factory in the Rubidoux area.

Last month, the company agreed to pay \$600,000 in penalties and spend \$400,000 toward site improvements as part of an agreement with regional air quality officials to reduce its hexavalent chromium emissions.

Other provisions in the settlement include the company hiring someone to monitor the plant for compliance to air district regulations.

Dry, hot weather threatens California fire gains

USA TODAY, Tuesday, July 08, 2008

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A day of gains on the California firelines could be giving way to days of trouble.

The return of some residents to their homes Monday marked progress against the siege of wildfires, but forecasters warned that weather is turning the advantage back in favor of the flames.

"A high pressure system is setting up over the entire West," said Mike Smith, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Sacramento. "So in addition to the very warm temperatures we're getting, we'll also be getting a little bit of offshore wind over the next couple of days, which keeps the moist marine air from coming inland."

The turn toward hot and drier weather comes as three major forest blazes — a blaze above the city of Goleta west of Santa Barbara, another 150 miles to the northwest at Big Sur and a third fire in the southern Sierra Nevada — are all less than half contained.

Those fires, considered the most dangerous, were among more than 300 still uncontained from some 1,780 that have scorched more than 960 square miles of California in two weeks. Most were started by lightning strikes, but several are believed to have been human-caused.

Some 100 structures statewide have been destroyed. One firefighter died of a heart attack.

The 15-square-mile fire near Goleta was 35% contained late Monday, mostly on its southern side near neighborhoods. More than 2,000 residents were able to return home.

"We recognize that the west end is problematic," Goleta Mayor Michael Bennett said. "But the north and the northeast corner will be contained soon and then we can maybe take a deep breath and relax."

Some mandatory evacuation orders and warnings to be ready to leave remained in effect for scattered homes on the fire's growing western flank on the Santa Ynez Mountains.

Roger Aceves, Goleta's mayor pro tem, said residents were immensely grateful to firefighters, who in some instances beat back flames from front doors. But they were still concerned that the fire could whip up again.

"We know what can happen," Aceves said. "This is brush that hasn't burned since 1955."

Five fresh "hot shot" crews from Arizona and New Mexico, totaling 100 firefighters, were brought in Monday to the region about 100 miles northwest of Los Angeles.

About 36,000 customers in Santa Barbara County lost power around 8 p.m., said Southern California Edison spokeswoman Nancy Williams. Nearly all had their power restored within an hour, she said. It was at least the sixth straight day that transmission lines have been affected by flames and smoke.

Officials for the 125-square-mile blaze near Big Sur and the 41-square-mile fire in the Sequoia National Forest east of Bakersfield said those blazes won't be controlled for at least another two weeks.

The fire near Big Sur, was 18% contained and raging through the remote Ventana Wilderness where difficult access made it hard to build containment lines, said Jim Turner, spokesman for the U.S. Forest Service.

A mandatory evacuation remained in effect Monday for all residents of Big Sur. Firefighters were struggling to widen fire lines near Highway 1 and residential areas to between 300 feet and a quarter mile, Turner said.

Crews secured a Boy Scout camp Monday by burning out brush between the buildings and the wildfire's edge and were setting controlled fires elsewhere to halt the blaze's march, the Forest Service said.

The fire in the southern Sierra Nevada was 26% encircled. Unexpected winds pushed it on several flanks Monday, causing flames to jump western containment lines and run up Brown Peak. Air tankers and helicopters dumped flame retardant.

"The steep, challenging terrain makes it tough to work directly," said Bob Kurilla, fire spokesman. "It will take a little while, but we're making progress."

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The forecast: Hot and smoky

S.F. Chronicle, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

SPARE THE AIR

Predicting unhealthy levels of smog, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District has issued a Spare the Air health advisory for today for the second day in a row and the sixth time this year. California wildfires are adding some particulate pollution to the mix, but nowhere in the Bay Area is smoke expected to reach unhealthy levels. Today's advisory does not come with free rides on public transit. For more information, go to www.sparetheair.org.

STAY SAFE

- Never leave infants, children or the frail elderly unattended in a parked car.
- Drink plenty of fluids - don't wait until you're thirsty. Eat frozen treats; avoid hot foods.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing. Wear a hat and sunscreen.
- People with lung disease, including asthma, should keep the windows shut in the middle of the day, when smog levels are highest. Anyone sensitive to foul air should limit time spent outdoors.

CUT POLLUTION

Drive less. Carpool or vanpool. Take public transit, walk or bike - visit 511.org for transit information.

BEWARE OF THE HEAT

As smoke from wildfires continues to blanket much of Northern California, shown on the map below, the National Weather Service has issued a heat advisory for much of the Bay Area from noon today through 5 p.m. Thursday.

East Bay braces for scorcher

By Jonathan Lockett

CONTRA COSTA TIMES, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

No records are expected to fall, but East Bay residents will be feeling overheated this week.

Forecasts of blistering heat through at least Thursday mean hazardous health conditions and more fire danger for many parts of the Bay Area.

A Spare the Air advisory, a red-flag warning and a heat advisory were issued Monday, the beginning of a warming trend that is expected to increase Wednesday and Thursday, the National Weather Service said.

Weather service spokesman Matt Mehle said a strong area of high pressure from the west combined with heat from the east caused temperatures to climb drastically. Though no records are forecast to be broken, he said, the heat is unusual.

"It's definitely unseasonably warm," he said.

High temperatures across the East Bay will range from the mid-90s to upwards of 105, the weather service said.

About two dozen cooling centers, most in senior facilities, have been opened for people who are unable to stay cool in their homes as temperatures reach into the triple digits.

"We can suggest a number of places that people can go to get out of the heat, such as public pools, a movie theater or the mall," said Susan Roseberry, Contra Costa County emergency planner, "but the senior centers are primarily places that will be used as cooling centers."

Public health officials also stressed the importance of hydration.

"The main thing is to make sure you get enough fluids," said Francie Wise,

Contra Costa director of communicable diseases. "Drink even when you're not thirsty. Once you're thirsty, you've gone too far."

The hot weather also triggered a Spare the Air advisory for today, the second day in a row, because of high smog concentrations. Forecasts call for "unhealthy air for sensitive groups," including the elderly and people with respiratory problems.

People are urged to minimize driving and to avoid strenuous outdoor exercise, especially in the afternoon when smog levels peak.

Advisories could also be issued Wednesday and Thursday if hot weather persists, accelerating the formation of smog from car and industrial exhaust.

Fire danger is another dangerous element to the uncharacteristically high temperatures.

The East Bay hills and Diablo range are under a red-flag warning issued by the weather service until 8 p.m. Thursday. The agency is predicting relatively low humidity, probably not exceeding the 20 percent mark, with wind gusts as high as 21 mph — conditions that increase fire danger.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger announced Monday that he activated Phase II of the state's plan for excessive heat emergencies, which involves opening cooling centers around the state.

"We are coordinating with state and local agencies to help keep people safe during this excessive heat wave," he said. "I urge all Californians to take proper health precautions as the temperatures rise into the 90s and 100s across the state — drink plenty of water and check on your neighbors who may be more vulnerable."

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Tri-Valley Herald, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

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Jonathan Lockett covers public safety. Reach him at 925-945-4782 or jlockett@bayareanewsgroup.com.

Staff writer Denis Cuff contributed to this story.

CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA COOLING CENTERS

- Concord Senior Center, 2727 Parkside Circle; 925-671-3320
- Jewish Community Center, 2017 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek; 925-938-7800
- Martinez Senior Center, 818 Green St.; 925-370-8770
- Pleasant Hill Sr. Center, 233 Gregory Lane; 925-798-8788
- San Ramon Senior Adult Center, 9300 Alcosta Blvd.; 925-973-3250
- Walnut Creek Senior Club, 1375 Civic Drive; 925-943-5851

WEST COUNTY COOLING CENTERS

- Pinole Senior Center, 2500 Charles Ave.
open 8:30 a.m.-9 p.m beginning Monday through at least Thursday
- Hercules Senior Center, 111 Civic Drive, will be a cooling site for the duration of the hot spell. Hours 8 a.m-9 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday.
- San Pablo Senior Center, 1946 Church Lane, will be open "if necessary" as a cooling center. Normal hours are 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; extended cooling center hours 5-8 p.m.

EAST COUNTY COOLING CENTERS

- Antioch Senior Center, 415 West 2nd St.; 925-778-1158
- Nick Rodriguez Community Center, 215 F St.; 925-779-7070
- Ambrose Community Center, 3105 Willow Pass Road, Bay Point; 925-458-1601
- Brentwood Senior Center, 730 Third St.; 925-516-5444
- Pittsburg Senior Center, 300 Presidio Lane; 925-439-4001

stay cool

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Sacramento to sweat it out in triple-digit heat all week

By Kim Minugh

Sacramento Bee, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

As the mercury bubbled past 102 degrees Monday afternoon, a team of city construction workers clad in sweat-stained orange uniforms kept their cool – mentally, at least – as they labored on a shade-blessed street in Sacramento's Oak Park.

This is nothing, they insisted. You get used to it. Just stay hydrated and you'll be fine. And this Zen-like mantra: Think thoughts of cool, and you'll stay cool.

"Hot," said 55-year-old Ignacio Solorio, "is in your mind."

But at least one member of the team validated the experience of the rest of us sweating through this heat wave: There is no getting used to triple-digit heat.

"It's brutal," said Wayne Neal.

Monday's high in downtown Sacramento topped out at 103, and that's only the beginning, forecasters say. The mercury is expected to pass 105 today and Wednesday. No real relief is in view until the weekend, when temperatures could drop down to the mid-90s, normal for this time of year.

Sacramento might flirt with a record high Wednesday – 109 degrees set on July 9, 2002 – but that's a long way from the capital's all-time record hot temperature of 114 on July 17, 1925.

Another Sacramento record is also safe: the 11-day string of triple-digit days in July 2006, according to Karl Swanberg, forecaster with the National Weather Service.

"For this heat wave, we're thinking Wednesday may be the peak," Swanberg said. "That night, we might be getting a puff of breeze coming out of the Delta – not wholesale cooling but taking the edge off."

This is typical July weather in the Sacramento Valley, where the drone of air conditioning is the lullaby of summer. But one thing that makes it seem worse this time is the really dismal quality of the air. Smoke from hundreds of wildfires has upped the particulate count, while the triple-digit heat has cooked tailpipe exhaust into ground-level ozone.

"What we're seeing is dueling pollutants," said Jamie Arno of the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District. "Whichever one you measure, it's not healthy to breathe."

She said the district declared Monday and today "Spare the Air" days, when residents are encouraged to reduce driving and limit physical activity outdoors.

The forecast hasn't yet prompted the city of Sacramento to open up its cooling centers. They are awaiting direction from the city and county's joint Office of Emergency Services, said city spokeswoman Amy Williams. She said the agencies are watching National Weather Service forecasts and are "monitoring the situation very closely."

Folks at Cal-ISO, which manages much of the state's power system, got to thinking of all those air conditioners humming this week and issued a plea for conservation.

"It is a hefty heat wave we're heading into, and we're certainly asking Californians to do their part to conserve," said Stephanie McCorkle, Cal-ISO spokeswoman.

She said the heat, coupled with poor air quality, makes it difficult to ask people to avoid air conditioning all together. Instead, Cal-ISO encourages setting the thermostat between 78 and 80 degrees when you're home, and shutting off the AC when you're out.

Oh, and try to avoid using electrical appliances during the peak demands hours of 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. That's about the time today when Cal-ISO projects a statewide demand of almost 49,000 megawatts – just shy of the all-time record peak of 50,000 megawatts, McCorkle said.

Just as people try to cool themselves indoors, others will seek relief while working outdoors. The state Department of Industrial Relations has scheduled teams of compliance officers to rove the state looking for violations of the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, particularly in the agricultural and construction industries.

Their main concern: making sure employers remember their responsibility to take care of workers in triple-digit heat.

"With the hot weather, we want to have a presence out there," said Dean Fryer, spokesman for the department, which oversees the division that administers the Cal-OSHA program.

Ex-EPA official: Cheney wanted cuts in climate testimony

USA TODAY, Tuesday, July 08, 2008

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Dick Cheney's office pushed for major deletions in congressional testimony on the public health consequences of climate change, fearing the presentation by a leading health official might make it harder to avoid regulating greenhouse gases, a former EPA officials maintains.

When six pages were cut from testimony on climate change and public health by the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention last October, the White House insisted the changes were made because of reservations raised by White House advisers about the accuracy of the science.

But Jason K. Burnett, until last month the senior adviser on climate change to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen Johnson, says that Cheney's office was deeply involved in getting nearly half of the CDC's original draft testimony removed.

"The Council on Environmental Quality and the office of the vice president were seeking deletions to the CDC testimony (concerning) ... any discussions of the human health consequences of climate change," Burnett has told the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

The three-page letter, a response to an inquiry by Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., the panel's chairwoman, was obtained Tuesday by The Associated Press. Boxer planned a news conference later in the day.

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Environment | Environmental Quality | White House Council | Environmental Protection Agency
Administrator Stephen Johnson

Burnett, 31, a lifelong Democrat who resigned his post last month as associate deputy EPA administrator because of disagreements over the agency's response to climate change, describes deep political concerns at the White House, including in Cheney's office, about linking climate change directly to public health or damage to the environment.

Scientists believe manmade pollution is warming the earth and if the process is not reversed it will cause significant climate changes that pose broad public health problems from increases in disease to more injuries from severe weather.

Senate and House committees have been trying for months to get e-mail exchanges and other documents to determine the extent of political influence on government scientists, but have been rebuffed.

The letter by Burnett for the first time suggests that Cheney's office was deeply involved in downplaying the impacts of climate change as related to public health and welfare, Senate investigators believe.

Cheney's office also objected last January over congressional testimony by Johnson, the EPA administrator, that "greenhouse gas emissions harm the environment."

An official in Cheney's office "called to tell me that his office wanted the language changed" with references to climate change harming the environment deleted, Burnett said. Nevertheless, the phrase was left in Johnson's testimony.

Cheney's office and the White House Council on Environmental Quality worried that if key health officials provided detailed testimony about global warming's consequences on public health or the environment, it could make it more difficult to avoid regulating carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, Burnett believes.

The EPA currently is examining whether carbon dioxide, a leading greenhouse gas, poses a danger to public health and welfare. The Supreme Court has said if it does, it must be regulated under the Clean Air Act.

Nowhere were these White House concerns more apparent than when CDC Director Julie Gerberding testified about climate change and public health before Boxer's committee last October. The White House deleted six of the original 14 pages of Gerberding's testimony, including a list of likely public health impacts of global warming.

The White House, at the urging of Cheney's office, "requested that I work with CDC to remove from the testimony any discussion of the human health consequences of climate change," wrote Burnett.

"CEQ contacted me to argue that I could best keep options open for the (EPA) administrator (on regulating carbon dioxide) if I would convince CDC to delete particular sections of their testimony," Burnett said in the letter to Boxer.

But he said he refused to press CDC on the deletions because he believed CDC's draft testimony was "fundamentally accurate."

Burnett, in a telephone interview, said he opposed making the extensive deletions because "it was the right thing to do." He declined to elaborate about White House involvement beyond his July 6 letter to Boxer.

As a Democrat, Burnett, seems to have been an odd choice as a senior policy adviser and key liaison with the White House in Bush administration's EPA.

Over the last eight years, he has contributed nearly \$125,000 to various Democratic politicians, starting with Al Gore's 2000 presidential campaign, according to the Center for Responsive Government. He supports Democrat Barack Obama for president.

Burnett caught the attention of Bush administration insiders as a researcher at the Center for Regulatory Study, a joint effort by the American Enterprise Institute and the Brookings Institution, where he co-authored a number of reports on regulation including one criticizing a ban on using cellphones while driving and another criticizing the EPA regulation of arsenic as too expensive with limited benefits.

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Cheney wanted cuts in climate testimony

By H. JOSEF HEBERT, Associated Press Writer
Modesto Bee, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

WASHINGTON — Seeking to downplay the effects of global warming, Vice President Dick Cheney's office pushed to delete references about the consequences of climate change on public health from congressional testimony, a former senior EPA official claimed Tuesday.

The former official, Jason K. Burnett, said that White House was concerned that the proposed testimony last October by the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention might make it tougher to avoid regulating greenhouse gases.

The account, described by Burnett in a July 6 letter to Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., chairwoman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, conflicts with the White House explanation at the time that the deletions reflected concerns by the White House Office of Science and Technology over the accuracy of the science.

Burnett, until last month a senior adviser on climate change at the Environmental Protection Agency, described that Cheney's office was deeply involved in getting nearly half of the CDC's original draft testimony removed.

"The Council on Environmental Quality and the office of the vice president were seeking deletions to the CDC testimony (concerning) ... any discussions of the human health consequences of climate change," Burnett said in the letter to Boxer.

At a news conference, Boxer maintained that the heavy editing of the testimony given by CDC Director Julie Gerberding last fall was the first part of "a master plan" aimed at "covering up the real dangers of global warming and hiding the facts from the public."

Burnett declined to comment beyond what he described in the letter and said he didn't want to identify the people he had talked with in Cheney's office or elsewhere at the White House. "I'm not interested in pointing fingers at individuals," he said.

White House Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto said that the White House stands by its explanation for the deletions, and noted science adviser John Marburger had raised concerns.

Marburger issued a summary of his concerns at the time, but at a Senate hearing a few weeks later said he did not recommend deleting six of the 14 pages as was done.

Megan Mitchell, the vice president's press secretary, dismissed the allegations by Burnett and said, "We don't comment on internal deliberations."

Burnett, 31, a lifelong Democrat resigned his post last month as associate deputy EPA administrator because of disagreements over the agency's response to climate change.

He appears an odd choice for the EPA post, which included liaison with the White House on climate issues. Currently a supporter of Barack Obama for president, he has contributed nearly \$125,000 to Democratic candidates since 2000, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

An economist who had written a number of papers on government regulation while at the Center for Regulatory Study, a joint effort by the American Enterprise Institute and the Brookings

Institution, Burnett first joined the EPA in 2004. He resigned two years later because of objections to an EPA rule on soot.

He was asked to return in 2007 by EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson, who put him in charge of coordinating the agency's response to a Supreme Court ruling on whether to regulate carbon dioxide.

In his letter he describes concerns at the White House, including in Cheney's office, about linking climate change directly to public health or damage to the environment.

Nowhere was that more apparent than in the heavy editing of the CDC testimony last October, maintained Boxer.

The White House, at the urging of Cheney's office, "requested that I work with CDC to remove from the testimony any discussion of the human health consequences of climate change," wrote Burnett.

"CEQ contacted me to argue that I could best keep options open for the (EPA) administrator (on regulating carbon dioxide) if I would convince CDC to delete particular sections of their testimony," he wrote.

But he said he refused to press CDC on the deletions because he believed the CDC's draft testimony was "fundamentally accurate."

Burnett said Cheney's office also objected last January over congressional testimony by Administrator Johnson that "greenhouse gas emissions harm the environment." An official in Cheney's office "called to tell me that his office wanted the language changed" but that it was kept as it was.

Burnett also described in greater detail than previously reported the White House refusal in December to accept a draft EPA finding concluding that carbon dioxide, the leading greenhouse gas, is endangering human health.

After he sent the e-mail with the draft finding attached, he said he received a telephone call from the White House asking that he "send a follow-up note saying that the e-mail had been sent in error."

"I explained that I could not do that because it was not true," wrote Burnett. Boxer said the draft finding was now "in limbo" and not available for public review.

More than a year ago, the Supreme Court directed the EPA to determine whether carbon dioxide endangers human health and welfare and, if so, begin to regulate it under the Clean Air Act. That process is not likely to continue until the next administration.

Bristol-Myers settles Clean Air violations

By RICK CALLAHAN , Associated Press Writer

Modesto Bee, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

INDIANAPOLIS — Pharmaceuticals maker Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. has agreed to spend \$3.65 million to resolve federal Clean Air Act violations by eliminating ozone-depleting refrigerants at factories in six states and Puerto Rico.

Bristol-Myers also agreed to pay \$127,000 in penalties to resolve claims brought by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

A proposed consent decree filed Tuesday in federal court in Evansville, Ind., details the New York-based company's plan to retire or retrofit 17 refrigeration units by July 2009 that use hydrochlorofluorocarbons - a gas that, when leaked, damages the ozone layer that protects Earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

Those and other changes at Bristol-Myers will remove more than 6,350 pounds of hydrochlorofluorocarbons from the company's operations, the Department of Justice said in a statement.

"These actions will help to protect the ozone layer, ensuring a safer environment for our future generations," said EPA Assistant Administrator Granta Nakayama.

Thinning of the ozone layer has been linked to skin cancer and eye damage in humans.

The 17 refrigeration units at plants in Mount Vernon and Evansville, Ind.; Hopewell, N.J.; and Humacao and Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, will switch to refrigerants that do not deplete stratospheric ozone.

In addition, Bristol-Myers will ensure 13 plants in Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York and Puerto Rico comply with the EPA's ozone-depletion regulations. Potential violations were found at those plants when the company audited a total of 25 plants to determine its compliance with the EPA's regulations.

Bristol-Myers also will retire two cooling units at its New Brunswick, N.J., plant and connect them to a new system that uses water-chilled coolers.

Bush, G-8 make progress on climate change

By Paul Wiseman

USA TODAY, Tuesday, July 08, 2008

RUSUTSU, Japan — The world's richest countries agreed Tuesday to support a 50% reduction in worldwide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 – but environmentalists and poorer countries denounced the move as a mushy compromise that would do little to stop global warming.

The South African environmental minister, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, dismissed as "an empty slogan without substance" the long-term emissions goal set by the Group of Eight industrialized nations at their annual summit here on the northern Japanese island Hokkaido.

The 50% target is nonbinding and in any case "falls below what is scientifically required to stabilize the atmosphere at a relatively safe level," van Schalkwyk said. Japan, for instance, has already pledged to cut emissions by as much as 80% by 2050. And the G-8 communique; didn't include a base year; so it's unclear whether emissions would be cut from 1990 or 2008 or another year's levels.

Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, host of this year's summit, had pushed the G-8 to approve the 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to global warming by trapping heat in the atmosphere. But President Bush had resisted agreeing to cuts unless rising economic powers (and big polluters) such as China and India signed on too.

To get a deal, the United States moved its position slightly. At last year's summit in Heiligendamm, Germany, the G-8 merely agreed to "consider seriously" a 50% cut by 2050 – words that reflected U.S. ambivalence. This year, G-8 nations agreed to "share" the "vision" of cutting emissions in half. White House aide Dan Price, deputy national security adviser, said the agreement here "represents substantial progress from last year."

But Alden Meyer, policy director of the Union of Concerned Scientists environmental group, saw the agreement as little more than an attempt to save face for host Fukuda: "Everyone is saying: Let's not kick up a fuss and ruin Prime Minister Fukuda's summit. Let's kick the can down the road."

A meaningful agreement, Meyer says, awaits a new U.S. president. Bush refused to go along with European demands for binding emissions targets. "President Bush and the Europeans just have a totally different worldview," he said. "Whether it's President McCain or President Obama, he will be more in synch with the Europeans."

Climate change, the focus of this year's meeting of industrialized nations, is just one on a long list of global issues — from Iran's nuclear weapons program to missile defense — that Bush is trying to push forward at the summit.

With his popularity low at home and fewer than 200 days left in office, Bush is methodically promoting his issues, seemingly ready to accept incremental progress rather than pursuing eye-catching breakthroughs.

Bush, Fukuda lay out summit goals

USA TODAY, Monday, July 07, 2008

TOYAKO, Japan (AP) — Before focusing on global challenges, President Bush sought on Sunday to address Tokyo's concerns that progress in ending a nuclear standoff with North Korea has not helped settled the sensitive issue of Japanese citizens kidnapped by the North.

The president held talks with Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda soon after arriving on the northern island of Hokkaido for his eighth and final summit meeting of the world's leading industrialized nations.

Greeting Bush on his 62nd birthday, Fukuda asked about his trip from Washington. "It was good," Bush said. "Thank you for asking. It had a beautiful ending — right here."

Japan is an important participant in the six-nation talks that led to North Korea's recent declaration about its nuclear activities. Japanese citizens are upset about the U.S. move to remove the communist country from the State Department's terror blacklist in exchange for North Korea's decision to admit to some of its weapons work.

As a condition for sending aid and improving relations with the impoverished North, Japan long has pushed for the resolution of North Korea's kidnappings of Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s. The abductees apparently were used to train North Korean agents in Japanese language and customs.

Knowing the U.S. action would put a wrinkle in U.S.-Japanese relations, Bush called Fukuda just before the administration announced on June 26 it would ease penalties against North Korea and remove the North, which he once labeled as part of his "axis of evil," from the terrorism list. Bush told Fukuda the U.S. would continue to push North Korea to resolve the kidnapping issue.

"The Japanese public has very strong feelings about getting positive progress" on the abductee issue, Dennis Wilder, the National Security Council's senior director for Asian Affairs, told reporters traveling with Bush aboard Air Force One. "The president has said we're not going to forget that issue. ... I think the Japanese prime minister will, of course, want to hear the president repeat those assurances."

Before leaders began arriving for the Group of Eight summit, more than 1,000 people marched in northern Japan to protest the event. Demonstrators demanded that the summit nations take urgent measures to stop global warming, grant indigenous people greater rights, combat world poverty and battle discrimination.

Fukuda has made climate change the centerpiece of the meetings involving leaders from the U.S., Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Russia and Canada. The prime minister, who suffers from low approval ratings, would like to emerge with an agreement on 50% overall reductions in greenhouse gases by 2050.

Bush says any climate change deal must include commitments from fast-growing economies such as China and India. He says these countries must be held to the emission-reduction standards as older, developed economies.

In his meeting with Fukuda, Bush also planned to discuss how U.S. troops are being moved within Japan and out of the country.

The Japanese are helping transfer 8,000 Marines and their dependents from Japan to Guam. The U.S. military is realigning its base structure in Japan to move troops out of urban areas. About

50,000 U.S. troops are based in Japan under a security pact between the two countries. Many Japanese complain of crime, pollution and noise associated with the American bases.

Other issues include U.S. and Japanese aid to battle poverty and disease and improve health in Africa; Japan's support of cargo flights between Kuwait and Iraq; reconstruction assistance in Iraq; and its refueling operation in support of troops in Afghanistan.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Schwarzenegger extends the State of Emergency to include the county of Santa Barbara. For more information on this and other Spanish clips, contact Claudia Encinas at \(559\) 230-5851.](#)

Amplían la emergencia autoridades de salud al condado de Santa Bárbara

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Friday, July 4, 2008

El gobernador de California, Arnold Schwarzenegger amplió el estado de emergencia regional al condado de Santa Bárbara debido a un número indefinido de incendios que amenazan con alcanzar zonas habitacionales y económicas.

Al mismo tiempo, autoridades de salud del condado advirtieron a la población sobre riesgos por elevados índices de contaminación por el humo de los incendios.

Un comunicado dice que deben tener especialmente cuidado quienes padecen de enfermedades respiratorias y cardíacas.

Hasta ahora hay diez condados en emergencia en California y cerca de mil 400 incendios, de los que 27 son considerados los más peligrosos.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Red Cross recommends California residents to take extra precautions from the pollution in the air caused by the fires.](#)

Recomienda Cruz Roja aumentar cuidados por contaminación de incendios

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Monday, July 7, 2008

La Cruz Roja estadounidense recomendó hoy a los residentes de California aumentar precauciones debido a una alta contaminación del aire porque el estado ha registrado en las últimas dos semanas más de mil 800 incendios.

La Cruz Roja recomendó extremar precauciones para enfermos, niños y ancianos, pero también pidió al resto de la población mantener tan limpio como sea posible el aire en interiores y no contribuir a aumentar de ninguna manera la contaminación en exteriores.

En las labores de control de los incendios participan unos 21 mil bomberos, voluntarios y soldados, con un extenso equipo de aire y tierra, pero aún quedan unos 300 siniestros por controlar.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses Mexico looks for support from G-8 for the Green Fund.](#)

México busca apoyo del G-8 al Fondo Verde

Tema puede quedar opacado ante alza en gasolina y alimentos

Sergio Javier Jiménez Enviado

El Universal, Tuesday, July 08, 2008

SAPPORO, Japón.— Dos temas han permeado al arranque de los trabajos de la Cumbre del G-8, el alza de precios en los alimentos y el cambio climático, sin embargo, a pesar de que desde

ayer comenzaron a llegar los representantes del G-5 o países de economías emergentes —al cual pertenece México—, estos no tuvieron ninguna trascendencia en los medios de comunicación y se encuentran prácticamente desaparecidos de esta cumbre hasta el momento.

Será en el transcurso de hoy martes cuando los miembros del G-5 (México, China, India, Sudáfrica y Brasil) comiencen la redacción de un documento con un posicionamiento que llevarán al encuentro del G-8 que se realiza en la provincia de Tayo, a dos horas de esta ciudad en donde se han concentrado en medio de un amplio dispositivo de seguridad.

El presidente Felipe Calderón pretende posicionar a México en esta reunión con el impulso del Fondo Verde, plan con el cual buscará que naciones como Estados Unidos cooperen de manera ponderada —de acuerdo a su economía y a lo que contaminan— para contar con recursos a fin de impulsar proyectos que detengan el cambio climático.

Calderón llegó a esta gira acompañado de su esposa Margarita Zavala y de la canciller Patricia Espinosa, así como de los senadores Carlos Jiménez Macías (PRI), José González Morfín (PAN) y Arturo Escobar (PVEM), quienes tienen una agenda por separado y fueron instalados en otra ciudad.

En los medios impresos locales se han destacado los resultados de las primeras charlas entre los miembros del G-8 (Estados Unidos, Francia, Gran Bretaña, Rusia, Canadá, Alemania, Italia y Japón) quienes han considerado grave el alza de precios, y en el costo de los combustibles.

En el comienzo de la cumbre también ha trascendido la posición del gobierno de EU quien se ha opuesto a que el G-8 se amplíe a fin de incluir a las cinco economías emergentes. Francia, por su parte, se ha pronunciado a favor de la ampliación del grupo.

Se espera que en la sesión del G-5 haya un pronunciamiento para que se considere la posición de sus integrantes en los temas del alza de precios y del cambio climático, es ahí en donde México busca ganarse un sitio, aunque existe el riesgo de que el tema quede opacado ante la gravedad del alza en la gasolina y en los alimentos, tema de preocupación generalizada.

Los medios de comunicación en Sapporo amanecieron este martes con imágenes de la llegada de George Bush, de Nicolás Sarkozy y de la canciller Angela Merkel, así como de la recepción que les ofreció el primer ministro Yasuo Fukuda, de Japón, además del encuentro bilateral entre Bush y el presidente ruso Dimitry Medvedev. Hasta las esposas de los presidentes G-8 tuvieron alguna mención.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses the heat and winds are making it difficult for firefighters to put out the fires in California.](#)

El calor y el viento dan tregua a los bomberos que intentan sofocar los incendios en California

Hoy Internet, Monday, July 7, 2008

Los Ángeles (EE.UU).- El calor y el viento dieron hoy una pequeña tregua a los bomberos de EE.UU. que trabajan desde hace dos semanas en California para apagar más de 300 incendios, que ya quemaron más de 243.500 hectáreas de matorral y bosque, informaron fuentes oficiales.

Las condiciones meteorológicas favorecieron el avance de las tareas de extinción en los dos principales focos que padece este estado en los condados de Monterey y Santa Bárbara, donde los retenes se dedicaron las últimas horas a crear y a consolidar cortafuegos.

Desde el pasado 20 de junio se declararon en California 1.781 incendios, la mayor parte de ellos originados tras una serie de tormentas eléctricas.

Las llamas ya han destruido 100 edificaciones, a pesar de los esfuerzos de más de 19.000 efectivos equipados con centenares de camiones, helicópteros y avionetas, informó el Departamento de Bosques y Protección contra Incendios del estado.

La excesiva aridez del terreno, el calor y el viento han dificultado la extinción hasta hoy, si bien las previsiones meteorológicas anunció un repunte de las temperaturas para los próximos días,

hasta cerca de 40 grados, así como un incremento en la velocidad del viento y la posibilidad de tormentas eléctricas.

La prioridad para las autoridades del estado es acabar con el incendio conocido como "GAP Fire", que afecta al condado de Santa Bárbara, concretamente a la zona de las montañas de Santa Ynez, y ya calcinó cerca de 4.000 hectáreas desde el pasado martes.

El terreno agreste complica aun más los trabajos a los bomberos que tienen bajo control un 35 por ciento del frente del fuego que se sospecha fue provocado. Las llamas amenazan la localidad de La Goleta, en el área próxima a la costa del Pacífico.

El domingo se ordenó la evacuación de 1.000 viviendas en este condado, a las que se podrían sumar otras 3.000 en los próximos días.

El otro gran frente de fuego, el mayor en tamaño, se encuentra en el norte del Estado, en la zona turística de Big Sur, donde han ardido hasta el momento 31.000 hectáreas en un paraje natural.

Únicamente un 18 por ciento de este incendio, llamado "Basin Complex Fire", se encuentra bajo control tras dos semanas en activo y se espera un empeoramiento de la situación debido a la posibilidad de que el fuego alcance un área de 100.000 ejemplares de robles secos que fallecieron por una enfermedad que les afectó en 1995.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses EPA concludes analysis of air pollution in Ventura.](#)

Concluye EPA análisis sobre contaminación en Ventura, California

Manuel Ocaño

Noticiero Latino

Radio Bilingüe, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

La Agencia federal de Protección Ambiental (EPA, por sus siglas en inglés), informó que dio por terminado un análisis sobre la contaminación del aire en el condado de Ventura, en California.

El análisis es importante porque Ventura fue incapaz de cumplir metas de aire limpio que se habían fijado en el 2005 debido a una creciente contaminación.

Lo que la EPA concluya del estudio próximamente pudiera sentar un precedente para otras regiones de California que también enfrentan creciente contaminación para cumplir objetivos federales.

El reporte del estudio dice que habrían que reducirse los niveles que se exige cumplir en el condado de Ventura para el año 2012.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses a different type of car show; cars that do no pollute are exhibited and tips on how to drive more efficiently were given.](#)

Un show diferente

Presentan carros no contaminantes y consejos para conducir de manera más saludable.

Por Eduardo Stanley

El Sol, Friday, July 4, 2008

FRESNO — Ante el aumento descontrolado del precio de la gasolina, existen serias preocupaciones por parte del público por las consecuencias económicas.

Y también existe preocupación por la contaminación ambiental que afecta la salud de los residentes del Valle, situación que en los últimos días se agravó por el humo proveniente de los incendios forestales.

Ambos temas están relacionados. Y de esto hablaron expertos durante un "car show", parte de una campaña estatal llamada "Maneja saludablemente", de la cual participan varias agencias y organizaciones. El evento se llevó a cabo el sábado 28 de junio en el Centro Comercial Manchester, de Fresno.

"El 60 por ciento de la polución del Valle proviene de los carros", dijo Jaime Holt, del Distrito de Control de la Polución del Aire del Valle de San Joaquín. "Este es el momento de buscar otros medios de transporte, como la bicicleta".

Holt se refirió al espinoso tema del diseño de las ciudades como Fresno, en manos de empresas de construcción. "Debemos mirar de cerca cómo estamos construyendo estas comunidades". Es que éstas no permiten el desarrollo del transporte público —o lo hacen complicado y, por consecuencia, muy costoso.

De manera que se obliga al consumidor a seguir usando el carro como forma de transporte preferida.

Michael Bolten, de la agencia de Reparación Automotriz, dijo que si bien es bonito ver cómo los entusiastas de los carros dedican tiempo a cuidar sus vehículos, también es importante mantenerlos adecuadamente para que funcionen bien, usen menos gasolina y no contaminen tanto el medio ambiente.

La empresa PG&E presentó un pequeño Mercedes Benz que funciona con gasolina y baterías de hidrógeno, por lo que emite vapor de agua en lugar de humo.

Otros expertos hablaron de la importancia de desarrollar automóviles eléctricos. En este sentido, se mencionó también que en los 90s proyectos avanzados en este sentido fueron eliminados para beneficio de las corporaciones, incluyendo las constructoras de automóviles.

Unos 30 vehículos formaron parte del show, de cuya organización participaron también el Colegio de Fresno, el Departamento del Consumidor de California y New America Media.

[Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses strategic plan for global warming isolate the US.](#)

Estrategia de cambio climático aísla a EEUU

Univision, Tuesday, July 8, 2008

RUSUTSU, Japón (AP) _ Las diferencias sobre el cambio climático entre el Grupo de los Ocho países más industrializados (G-8) se agudizaron el lunes, luego que el jefe de la Comisión Europea hizo una convocatoria que dejó al presidente estadounidense George W. Bush en una postura aún más aislada.

Jose Manuel Barroso instó a los líderes de las naciones más ricas a dar los primeros pasos para reducir los gases de invernadero, durante el comienzo de la cumbre del G-8.

El cambio climático se avizoraba como uno de los temas más controversiales en la cumbre de este año y sería un objeto de debate el miércoles, cuando a los líderes del G-8 se les unan el presidente chino Hu Jintao y el primer ministro indio Manmohan Singh.

China e India señalan que los países más contaminantes en el mundo desarrollado deben ser la guía en la lucha contra el calentamiento global. Pero Bush señala que las naciones en desarrollo deben tomar medidas iguales para hacer que cualquier acuerdo funcione, y ha mostrado poco interés en fijar metas sin esos países.

Esa postura fue criticada el lunes.

Barroso dijo que las naciones del G-8 deben llegar a sus propios acuerdos sobre las medidas de combate al cambio climático, en vez de adoptar la postura de: "No haré nada a menos que ustedes lo hagan primero".

El jefe de la CE dijo que esa postura no hace sino desencadenar un "círculo vicioso".

"Si estamos de acuerdo, tenemos una mejor posición para discutir con nuestros socios chinos e indios y con otros países", dijo Barroso.

Debido a sus grandes poblaciones y a sus economías de crecimiento acelerado, China e India son de los países que más emiten gases de invernadero, a los que se atribuye el calentamiento global.

China ha señalado que está lista para discutir el establecimiento de metas de mediano y largo plazo para reducir las emisiones de gases invernadero, y está abierta a negociar esos objetivos.

Pero Beijing no ha cambiado sus argumentos, según los cuales, la responsabilidad principal recae en las naciones desarrolladas. India ha prometido mantener sus emisiones por debajo de las que generan los países desarrollados, pero también quiere que esas naciones den el ejemplo.

Japón, el anfitrión de la cumbre de este año, ha destacado como tema principal del encuentro el cambio climático, y está apoyando a su aliado estadounidense en la búsqueda de conversaciones internacionales más amplias.

"Debería haber una percepción compartida de crisis sobre el cambio climático y, con base en eso, los líderes del G-8 acordarían la necesidad de una participación total de las principales economías", dijo Kazuo Kodama, portavoz de la cancillería japonesa.

El G-8, formado por Estados Unidos, Rusia, Francia, Italia, Alemania, Canadá, Gran Bretaña y Japón, representa alrededor de 40% de las emisiones globales de dióxido de carbono en la actualidad, de acuerdo con la organización ambientalista Greenpeace.