

Another \$45M available for diesel replacement

By Business Journal Staff

The Business Journal (Fresno), Wednesday, June 30, 2010

Another \$45.5 million will be available for Valley truckers to replace or retrofit their older diesel-fired engines.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District announced the funding, part of another round of funds from the voter-approved Proposition 1B to become available in the coming months. Of the total, the California Air Resources Board temporarily redirected \$5.5 million of the funds to the Valley from other regions.

"This new funding is sorely needed to help the air basin reduce harmful pollution, the majority of which is caused by vehicle traffic, including heavy-duty trucks," said Seyed Sadredin, the Air District's executive director and air pollution control officer. "We are ready and able to disburse these funds quickly and the reductions in emissions will help the rest of the state as well, since many of these trucks travel to other regions."

The application period will open within the next few months. Interested owners and operators can contact the Air District's Strategies and Incentives Program at 559-230-5800 for more information.

For more information about the Air District's other incentive programs, visit http://valleyair.org/Grant_Programs/GrantPrograms.htm.

Lamoure's Dry Cleaners Close Thursday

By Business Journal Staff

The Business Journal (Fresno), Wednesday, June 30, 2010

After decades in business, it appears regulatory troubles have led to the closure of all Lamoure's Cleaners & Laundry locations in the Central Valley Thursday.

According to a Google search, Lamoure's has about 16 dry cleaning locations in the Valley ranging from Madera to Visalia, each staffed with at least two people. Messages left for Fresno-based Lamoure's ownership group were not returned, but a receptionist and workers at several Lamoure's shops said the family-owned business's last day was Wednesday.

Lamoure's has been a Valley fixture since 1947, according to an online profile by business research firm manta.com, which also estimates its workforce at around 100 people.

Lamoure's Inc. was incorporated in California in 1960, according to the Secretary of State's office. It's headquarters is located in Downtown Fresno at 1304 G St.

While the business's owners including John and Jean Lamoure could not be reached to comment on the closure, it coincides with a deadline for dry cleaners to replace equipment that uses the solvent perchlorethylene (PERC) to clean clothes, or else stop operating.

The regulation was set from by the California Air Resources Board and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Kettleman landfill operator feeling the heat

By Seth Nidever

Hanford Sentinel, Wednesday, June 30, 2010

It isn't the easiest of times for Bob Henry.

The director of operations at the huge Chemical Waste Management Inc. landfill southwest of Kettleman City is trying to manage a controversy that has put in limbo the company's plans to build a new hazardous waste landfill and is threatening to spiral out of control.

The site is the West's biggest hazardous waste disposal site - a lucrative venture for Chem Waste and one it says is perfectly safe. The location brings more than \$1 million in annual revenue into Kings County government coffers - 10 cents for every dollar Chem Waste makes for disposing toxic waste at the site.

But a mounting controversy over birth defects in Kettleman City and recent allegations of violations at the landfill is focusing attention from several state and federal agencies.

The latest blow came when the Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment, a Bay Area civil rights organization, filed complaints alleging that Kings County's approval process for the landfill expansion - the county gave it the green light in December - was biased against Spanish speakers.

Several environmental organizations sued to block Kings County's decision. More recently, several state agencies have launched investigations into the causes of the Kettleman City birth defects that some blame on the landfill. That has frozen Chem Waste's progress in getting permits for the hazardous waste landfill project.

Recently, federal Environmental Protection Agency officials blasted Chem Waste in a letter, saying that some of the company's analysis of incoming toxic waste was unreliable.

All of which combined to make put Henry on the defensive in his regular appearance before the Kings County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday.

Henry spent a good chunk of his time attacking federal EPA allegations of bad lab work. He said that multiple state inspections and re-inspections of Chem Waste's laboratory at the Kettleman Hills facility found "no significant issues."

But there's nothing he can do to push the new hazardous waste landfill project forward until the state Department of Public Health completes its birth defects investigation.

Anticipating a potentially long delay, Henry said the company is reducing the amount of hazardous waste trucked to the facility. He reminded supervisors that it means less tax revenue flowing to the county.

"That will affect you guys," he said.

But Henry is a man accustomed to long, incremental progress. He predicted that, in the end, the new landfill will be built, allowing continued hazardous waste operation for 30 years to come.

"I truly believe we will be vindicated," he said.

Fiorina says Calif. climate law is killing jobs

By Judy Lin - Associated Press Writer

In the Modesto Bee, Merced Sun-Star and Hanford Sentinel, Thursday, July 1, 2010

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- GOP Senate candidate Carly Fiorina appeared on a national cable news show Wednesday asserting that California's law to fight global warming is killing jobs, but a review shows its economic effects remain uncertain.

In an interview on CNBC's "Closing Bell," Fiorina said she is trying to unseat Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer in part because of the lawmaker's push for federal greenhouse gas legislation inspired by California's 2006 climate law, called the Global Warming Solutions Act but commonly referred to as AB32.

The regulations that will be placed on California industries will increase energy prices for consumers, she said.

"In California, we have something called AB32. It has killed jobs so much that there is a bipartisan effort to have that law suspended until unemployment reaches 5 percent. It is going to be voted on by the voters of California in the November ballot. If that isn't an admission that legislation can kill jobs, I don't know what is," Fiorina said.

The 2006 law was signed by Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who has championed it as a way to begin reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the state. It mandates that the state cut emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

Manufacturers, cement plants, oil refineries, utilities and other polluters will be asked to start lowering their emissions or pay for the carbon they emit.

The California Air Resources Board, the entity charged with implementing the law, has taken some early actions but is still drafting cap-and-trade regulations for industries, which will be a main aspect of the law. Most of the law will go into effect in 2012.

An initiative seeking to stop the law has been certified for the November ballot. The proposition, which is backed primarily by out-of-state oil companies, would delay the regulations until California's unemployment rate - now at 12.4 percent - drops to 5.5 percent and stays there for a year. That has happened only three times over the past three decades, according to California Employment Development Department statistics.

Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Google, eBay and other businesses support the law.

It's not clear whether the law would reduce or create jobs in California over the long run. Studies have come to different conclusions.

A study by the dean of the business school at California State University, Sacramento concluded the law could cost 1.1 million jobs. But that has been discredited by the state's nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office and criticized by other researchers as biased.

The California Air Resources Board this year updated its economic analysis of the climate law and concluded that the growth in green technology would counterbalance the economic harm done to carbon-intensive industries.

"The measures for AB32, if carried out fully, will allow California's economy to grow just as robustly as if we had done nothing, but we will have additional benefits of increased energy security, cleaner energy and the growth of the new clean-tech sector," said Stanley Young, climate change spokesman for the board.

In May, legislative analyst Mac Taylor said there would be a near-term negative effect, but the economic effect of climate regulation would likely be modest relative to the size of California's \$1.7 trillion annual economy.

Fiorina spokeswoman Julie Soderlund said after the CNBC interview that the candidate believes it's unfair to ask businesses to comply with new regulations in a poor economy.

Soderlund said Fiorina has been hearing from businesses such as Glendora-based CalPortland, which produces building materials. The company is reducing operations in California as a result of the long-term costs they believe will be associated with regulatory compliance of AB32.

The Air Resources Board is expected to create about 30 new regulations under the law, covering everything from the types of fuels Californians can put in their vehicles to what air conditioning units businesses can install.

Natural gas and electrical bills are expected to rise because utilities will have to increase their use of renewable energy.

A climate bill study by the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, found this year that it would cost jobs and increase energy prices. The bill was co-authored by Boxer.

Rose Kapolczynski, Boxer's campaign manager, said some economists view clean energy as a way to boost California's economy, much like computer technology and biotechnology has driven the state. "Many Silicon Valley entrepreneurs see clean energy as a way to grow the California economy in a whole new area," she said.

Supporters of California's climate law point out that the state already has attracted \$9 billion in venture capital for clean-energy technologies.

"For Fiorina, it just shows me how out-of-touch she is and that she's just playing dirty politics with dirty oil," said Warren Smith, the Republican chief executive of Clean World Partners, a Sacramento-based startup that is developing a system to convert organic waste into clean energy.

[Bakersfield Californian, Commentary, Thursday, July 1, 2010:](#)

High-speed rail holds promise of major economic boost for us in Kern County

It's time for Bakersfield to speak up on high-speed rail -- but we can't let the recent City Council meeting be the last word.

The meeting proved what anyone who knows Bakersfield already understands -- our pride in our history and our institutions is real. We're not a community that tosses things aside without a thought. We respect our elders and honor our past. But we've also got an obligation to plan for our future.

The future of California includes high-speed rail. Voters approved it, and the state has won the largest share of federal funding of any project in the country. And Bakersfield can't afford to let the opportunity it represents pass us by.

Frankly, we all should be paying attention to this project. Running 500 miles from San Francisco to Los Angeles, it will be the single biggest public works project ever undertaken. It's also subject to an intense environmental review, public scrutiny and lots of questions.

That's a good thing. Nothing of this scale can be built without affecting the communities it serves, and we all need to be part of the discussion about community concerns and how to best address them.

But we also need to see the big picture: High-speed rail represents a safe, convenient and affordable way to travel, a proven way to reduce air pollution, and a huge boost to our economy at a time we need it most.

The unemployment rate in Kern County stands at 16.5 percent -- and that doesn't count the people who've stopped looking, or the folks who are working part-time, but need full-time jobs to support their families.

Bakersfield needs jobs now. So the sooner we get moving on high-speed rail, the better.

The project will create at least 100,000 construction jobs each year while the high-speed rail line is built -- and as many as 450,000 permanent new jobs sparked by the growth it will bring.

And we're not just talking about jobs for conductors and train engineers. High-speed rail means more people staying in our hotels and eating in our restaurants and shopping in our stores. Kern County stands to gain its share of these jobs, plus as many as 1,500 more if our region is chosen for the site of the project's heavy-maintenance facility.

And high-speed rail is a good fit for Bakersfield's economic future. Our economy is already becoming more diversified as we become a center for green energy. That's why so many companies are gobbling up land for wind and solar usage, and applications for renewable energy projects are on the rise.

Should we ignore the impacts on properties near the two proposed alignments in a rush to benefit from high-speed rail? Of course not. Let's consider them carefully -- and continue to have the kind of open discussion the state's high-speed rail officials have fostered so far to address them.

That's how we'll arrive at the best possible solution -- for Bakersfield and for the state as a whole. So far, the process has worked. State officials even deferred to local leaders when they focused their plans on a downtown station rather than one near the airport.

That choice has consequences. You can't have a downtown station without tracks, and those tracks have to go somewhere. Building them well above ground, as state officials have proposed, would minimize the impact on property owners.

There is still a lot of work to do, including more discussions with residents, business owners and community leaders, and a close and careful look at reasonable alternatives.

The state's High-Speed Rail Authority has pledged to do its part, convening more public meetings and working with local planners, engineers and other officials.

So let's do our part as well, by speaking up on high-speed rail -- and preserving our past while we plan for our future.

Greg Bynum, a lifelong Bakersfield resident, is owner of Gregory D. Bynum and Associates Inc., a full-service real estate development, management, brokerage and appraisal/analysis firm.

[Fresno Bee Earth Blog, Wed., June 30, 2010:](#)

Park your car in the shade

By Mark Grossi

The South Coast and Antelope Valley air basins have twice as many ozone violations now as the San Joaquin Valley.

It's pretty typical for the southern state to have a run of violations in May and June. It was true in the Valley as well, but not so much in the last few years.

Cool, breezy weather helps, but people also are recognizing the air problem is real. I've noticed friends are planning their weekend errands so they don't drive as much.

Even something as simple as parking your car in shade will help. When gasoline evaporates from your car, it produces hydrocarbons -- one of the two major gases that form ozone. The other gas is oxides of nitrogen from combustion sources.