

'Check Before You Burn' fireplace season begins today

By Sentinel Staff

Hanford Sentinel, Monday, Nov. 1, 2010

FRESNO - The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's annual fireplace-use regulation program meant to reduce harmful airborne particulate pollution begins its eighth season today.

Check Before You Burn, which runs November through February each winter, determines when residential wood burning will add dangerous levels of particulate matter – tiny pieces of soot, ash, dust and other materials – to the Valley's air. When conditions arise, the use of fireplaces and other residential wood-burning devices is prohibited for that day.

Daily wood-burning forecasts will be available by county each day at 4:30 p.m., and can be accessed at www.valleyair.org/aqinfo/WoodBurnpage.htm, or by calling (800) SMOG INFO (766-4463).

[Stockton Record, Editorial, Tuesday, November 2, 2010:](#)

Get ready to breathe easier

Thumbs up

If you've ever sat at a stoplight behind a bus or a truck, you've probably experienced the sticky-sweet smell of diesel and seen the thick, black smoke discharged as the vehicle chugs away.

There will be a little less of that thanks to 43 new clean-diesel buses that went into service for Stockton Unified School District.

The buses, valued at \$4.2 million, are being paid for mainly by a San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District grant. They will produce 90 percent less in total emissions over their service years, including significantly less particulate pollution linked to lung disease, respiratory illness, heart attacks and premature death.

Clean air isn't cheap, but it's less expensive than the health care costs that are the alternative.

[Fresno Bee Earth Blog, Monday, Nov. 1, 2010:](#)

It's warming up at start of fireplace season

By Mark Grossi

It's November, the time when the San Joaquin Valley's most dangerous air pollution begins to spike -- tiny particles of soot and chemicals.

But, wait. I'm seeing mid-80s forecast on Wednesday. We could be briefly talking about ozone again.

The Valley has recorded 90 ozone violations this year. That's one shy of the Antelope Valley-West Mojave Desert, which is the country's second-worst air basin for ozone this year.

If the Valley violates the eight-hour ozone standard on Wednesday, there will be a tie for second. South Coast Air Quality Management District is No. 1 with 109 violations.

Back to the cold weather pollution.

It can be a most uncomfortable time for people with breathing problems. The tiny specks of pollution, known as PM-2.5, are inhaled deep in the lungs and trigger bouts of asthma, heart irregularities and even early mortality.

Wood burning in fireplaces adds to the problem. Check with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District before you light up this winter. See if your county is allowed to burn wood that day.