

Worth noting in the community

Bakersfield Californian, Friday, March 19, 2011

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is accepting student entries for its annual video contest, according to a news release.

Participants are asked to create 30-second videos about one change they would make to improve local air quality. The winner will receive an Apple iPad.

Videos must be submitted in DVD format by May 27 to 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno, CA 93726. Results will be announced June 10.

For more information, call 559-230-6000. Download the entry form at www.healthyairliving.com.

Air district reports improvement over winter months

By Sabra Stafford

Turlock Journal, Late Friday, March 18, 2011

The air quality over the winter season has shown a marked improvement according to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, which recently wrapped up its eighth Check Before You Burn program.

Check Before You Burn operates every November through February and restricts the use of wood-burning stoves and fireplaces when air quality is low to help prevent the build-up of fine particulate matter. During the season, wood-burning forecasts are issued each day for every county in the San Joaquin Valley, which determine if wood-burning devices can be used. The District tickets those caught in violation of the restriction.

"This rule is one of our most important tools to keep the Valley's air during winter as clean as possible," said Seyed Sadredin, the District's executive director and air pollution control officer. "Our cleaner air quality benefits all of us."

During the last season the number of unhealthy air days in the Valley, which is based on the Air Quality Index, showed a decrease of 44 percent. The number of days that exceeded the federal health standard for fine-particulate pollution also declined by 9 percent over last season.

The District adopted the wood-burning restriction in 2003 and since then several other air basins have adopted similar regulations.

"The Valley continues to pioneer important regulations that are critical to protecting the public health and improving our quality of life," Sadredin said.

Over the last winter season the District issued 25 wood-burning prohibitions in Stanislaus County and doled out 54 violations. Fresno County had the most prohibitions at 44 and the most violations at 174.

Galt High School seniors Dillon Szyper and Anthony Toledo take first place at regional science competition

By News-Sentinel Staff

Lodi News-Sentinel, Monday, March 21, 2011

Galt High School seniors Dillon Szyper and Anthony Toledo's joint project, "Reducing Gaseous Emissions from Dairy Cattle Excretia," won first place in the Senior Biological Sciences division of the Sacramento regional competition of the Intel International Science & Engineering Fair on Saturday at Rosemont High School.

"We're working with cow poop," Szyper said.

The study involved adding used vegetable oil to cattle feed to suppress gut bacteria which generate environmentally harmful methane.

Szyper and Toledo are from farming families and hope to continue their work together at either University of California, Davis or California Polytechnic State University.

"We'd like to help bridge the gap between environmentalists and the farming industry," said Toledo.

Next steps for West Park

Sacramento Bee, Sunday March 20, 2011

West Park must deliver a draft environmental impact report, predicting how the project would affect people and nature, including traffic, air quality and farmland preservation analyses. Other elements:

- 1) Facilities plan. This outlines water, sewer, storm drains, roads and so on. A phasing plan would show a timeline for improvements. A finance plan explains how it all gets paid for.
- 2) Feasibility study. This crunches costs against benefits such as jobs and tax revenue. It also analyzes the market, showing how the project would stack up against competition.
- 3) Revenue neutrality study. This predicts whether income from the project would cover government costs for public services such as fire protection, law enforcement and garbage.
- 4) Specific plan. This applies the county's General Plan policies to a defined area.

Kamilos has promised to update the Board of Supervisors every three months and to reach out to West Side agencies and community groups. After the board meeting, he arranged to brief mayors and city managers of Patterson and Newman. His staff will schedule meetings with local school, water, fire and health care districts, he said. WS-PACE.org, an opposition group, is not available for another week or so, he said.

"I'm trying to figure a way that we can trust anything you say." — Jim DeMartini

"I believe you've demonstrated over a period of time that you can get things done." — Dick Monteith

"There is nothing to back up whether this is a viable project or not." — Terry Withrow

"Mr. Kamilos is current on all his financial commitments to the county. West Park has been a good partner." — Rick Robinson

"He was criticized before for making it too big. Now he's criticized for shrinking it." — Bill O'Brien

"After hearing from Patterson residents ... you have your work cut out for you. You see the frustration around here." — Vito Chiesa

Focus on Ag

By John Holland

Modesto Bee, Saturday, March 19, 2011

Kevin Abernathy, executive director of the California Dairy Campaign in Turlock, will serve two more years on the Agricultural Air Quality Task Force. He was appointed in 2006 to the panel, which advises the U.S. Department of Agriculture on efforts to reduce pollution. Abernathy's group works on behalf of the state's dairy farmers.

Free workshop helps dairy farmers with new air regulations

By Carol Reiter

Merced Sun-Star, Late Friday, March 18, 2011

The California Dairy Quality Assurance Program is offering free help on new air rules in the San Joaquin Valley at a workshop Thursday, March 24 from 10 a.m. to noon at the University of California Cooperative Extension classroom, 2145 W. Wardrobe Ave.

In October of 2010, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District adopted an updated version of Rule 4570 which regulates volatile organic compounds from confined animal facilities. The major changes in the updated rule affecting dairy operations include: smaller facilities once exempt from Rule 4570 are now included (more than 500 milking cows instead of more than 1,000 milking cows,) and additional mitigation practices that are needed, including the addition of controls related to silage management.

The updated Rule 4570 requires all dairy operators in the district with 500 or more milking cows to submit a Phase II permit application by April 21.

The workshop will provide assistance for both existing permit holders and newly permitted dairies, an overview of Rule 4570 requirements and permit application assistance.

For more information, call 1-866-662-3727.