

## **BUSINESS JOURNAL EXECUTIVE PROFILE**

Business Journal (Fresno), Thursday, April 21, 2011

**Name:** Seyed Sadredin

**Title:** Air Pollution Control Officer / Executive Director  
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

### **What you do:**

Lead the District via a clear mission to improve the Valley's health and quality of life through effective and innovative strategies, and articulate its core values, which focus on providing excellent customer services.

### **Education:**

Bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering from California State University, Sacramento,

### **How did you come to your position with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District?**

I was appointed as executive director by the District Governing Board in 2006. Prior to that, I had served in a number of different positions ranging from Air Quality Engineer to Deputy Director with the District since 1981. Being an American by choice, I wanted to find a career that enabled me to give back to this great country that has given me so many opportunities. Working for the District and having the ability to make real changes in improving quality of life for Valley residents goes a long way in fulfilling that dream for me.

### **How has air quality in the San Joaquin Valley improved in the last 20 years?**

Air quality today is the best it has been in over two decades. The last two winters have been two of the cleanest on record. There has been an 80% reduction in the number of "unhealthy" days and a 20% increase in the number of "good" air quality days. Emissions from Valley business have been reduced by over 80% since 1980. These improvements have come about through a great deal of investment and sacrifice by Valley businesses and residents.

### **Are you pleased with the number of truckers taking advantage of new funding to help retrofit or replace old diesel engines?**

The application process for the second round of Prop 1B funding just recently opened and initial signs are that, once again, the program will be incredibly successful here in the Valley. Any interested diesel truck owner or operator should visit [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) to learn more about the program.

### **What other types of grants or incentives are available through the Air District to help businesses reduce emissions? Where can they find more information?**

The grants and incentives program is the fastest-growing function at the District. We have seen a 10-fold increase in funding for Valley businesses and residents in the past five years. In addition to state funding targeted at reducing heavy-duty diesel truck emissions, we have funding for upgrading agricultural equipment and vehicles, replacing or retrofitting school buses, technology advancement and demonstration projects as well as several community-based programs. Businesses can visit [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) or call the Strategies and Incentives Department at (559) 230-5800 to find out more.

### **Last year, Valley motorists were asked to cover a \$29 million ozone violation penalty. What courses of action may be taken if similar penalties come down in the future?**

Designing and implementing effective strategies that protect both the Valley's economic well-being and our residents' health demand a great deal of innovation, creativity and hard work. Thanks to residents and businesses, we have made significant progress and air quality in the San Joaquin Valley today is the best in recorded history. Given where we are in our journey toward cleaner air, each of us must have the courage to look in the mirror and do our part as we craft reasonable remedies to protect public health. Enormous challenges remain, and we cannot achieve our clean air goals on the backs of businesses alone. Valley businesses have already spent billions of dollars on cleaning up our air, which brings us to the new DMV fees. Facing an unfair mandate from the federal government, our board concluded that a \$12 per year fee is less detrimental to the Valley's economy than a \$29 million per year penalty on

businesses. As one Valley resident aptly said at the public hearing, paying \$12 is better than he or his neighbor losing their jobs.

But make no mistake: I believe that neither Valley residents nor businesses deserve a penalty. If anything, they deserve commendation for their sacrifices and investments in clean air. We will continue our fight in Congress to repeal this unfair penalty.

**What exactly is it that makes the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin one of the largest hot beds for ozone and other types of pollutants?**

In the San Joaquin Valley, our air quality challenges are more difficult than those in any other region in the nation. On one hand, we have been given circumstances over which we have no control: the Valley's geography, topography and climate turn our region into a bowl with a lid; pass-through highway traffic brings pollution without any economic benefit; and emissions from the northwest add to our own. On the other hand, our resources and capacity to absorb the economic costs of combating air pollution are limited due to our high poverty and unemployment rates.

**What is the greatest source of emissions in the San Joaquin Valley?**

Mobile sources are the largest source of ozone and particulate precursor emissions. Trucks alone constitute over 55% of the Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx) emissions that lead to formation of ozone and particulate matter.

**What up-and-coming technologies seem the most promising at reducing both on-road emissions and those produced by local industry?**

The most cost-effective means to reduce emissions is to prevent those emissions from being generated to begin with. Pollution prevention through energy efficiency and the use of clean and renewable fuels will reduce emissions and can reduce costs. Much work remains in developing technologies and the necessary infrastructure for efficient use of clean fuels. Technologies to allow cost-effective use of fuel cells and hydrogen can make significant reductions in both mobile and stationary source emissions.

**In your opinion, how effective will California's high-speed rail project be in curbing emissions in the Valley and elsewhere?**

It depends on the route design and trip frequency. For it to benefit Valley air quality, it needs to be properly designed to offer commute alternatives for Valley residents. In other words, it needs to provide an alternative to highway traffic on Interstate 5 and Highway 99. It will not benefit Valley air quality if it only serves as a substitute for flyover air traffic between Northern and Southern California.

**What are your roots in the San Joaquin Valley?**

I came to the United States at age 16 by myself, finished high school on the East Coast and came to California for my college education. I graduated with an engineering degree from California State University, Sacramento. I have lived and worked in the San Joaquin Valley for over 30 years. My wife was born and raised in Stockton. Both my daughters attended California State University, Fresno.

**What do you do in your spare time?**

Play soccer, read, travel and watch movies.

**Valley truck operators say they can't afford cleaner trucks**

By David Castellon

Visalia Times-Delta and Tulare Advance-Register, Tuesday, April 26, 2011

Between the rising price of diesel fuel, increased competition in the trucking industry and other growing expenses, Jaime Robles said replacing his small fleet of five trucks may be impossible for him to afford.

And retrofitting them with filters to capture more pollutants that can cost thousands of dollars per truck seems no more within his budget.

But new state regulations starting Jan. 1 will require him and other commercial diesel truck owners to buy newer-model trucks with cleaner emissions or retrofit them with special filters to clean up emissions.

Robles worries he may have to close his trucking business — Vyda Express General Services, Inc.

"This is a very bad time because of the economy," Robles said. "There are going to be a lot of people who will go out of business because of this."

But some help is available for commercial truck owners.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is offering \$60 million in incentive funds to help owners of heavy-duty diesel trucks to buy new vehicles.

It's also offering \$5,000 or \$10,000 toward filters on truck engines to capture pollutants.

These aren't loans. Truck owners will not have to pay back the money.

Despite this, over the two months since the air district announced the money has been available, the interest from truck owners has been lower than expected.

The deadline is 5 p.m. Friday.

"I think it has something to do with the economy, the availability of credit," said Todd DeYoung, a program manager at the air district.

### **Truck prices**

Even with the financial help, truck operators will have to come up with a lot more money to buy or retrofit their trucks, he said.

"Trucks go from \$90,000 to \$150,000 or more," he said, and retrofits can cost \$12,000 to \$25,000.

Truck operators contacted said the emission equipment now required to be standard equipment on new trucks sold in California have added \$20,000-plus to the prices of most semis.

The state regulations approved by the California Air Resources Board in 2008 apply to commercial diesel vehicles with gross weights of 14,000 pounds or more.

Brenda Turner, a spokeswoman for the Valley air district, said heavy-duty diesel trucks are top contributors to ozone — "that means smog" — in the Valley.

With or without grants, many in the trucking industry say the requirements to upgrade or replace their vehicles comes at a time when they just can't afford it.

Movement of goods is down, so haulers are getting more aggressive to get business, many cutting their hauling fees or not marking them up despite the added diesel costs.

"I have heard a lot of smaller companies like me have reduced their operations by two or three trucks," Robles said.

"I've got customers right now, they are going to go as long as they can, but if things don't change, they are going to shut down," said Jack Mendonca, owner of the Diesel Doctor, a truck repair shop in Tulare.

### **Financial assistance**

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District has financial assistance of up to \$60,000 to help owners of heavy-duty diesel trucks buy newer, cleaner trucks or retrofit engines with filters. The application deadline is 5 p.m. Friday.

Applications and more information are available online at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) by clicking on the "PROP 1B FUNDING" icon or by calling the California Air Resources Board Diesel Hotline at 866-634-3735.

Get more information about California's emission rules for diesel vehicles and other financial assistance at [www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/truckstop/truckstop.htm](http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/truckstop/truckstop.htm)

Note: The following clip in Spanish discusses the truck replacement funds application deadline. For more information on this Spanish clip, contact Claudia Encinas at (559) 230-5851.

## **Dinero disponible para camiones**

El Sol, Thursday, Apr. 21, 2011|

VISALIA — A medida que se acerca la fecha límite para que los camiones de carga con motor diesel dispongan de nuevos filtros para el control de las emisiones, el Distrito de Control del Aire del Valle de San Joaquín (SJVAPCD, por sus siglas en inglés) recuerda a los transportistas que aún hay fondos disponibles para esos gastos.

"Un transportista podría recibir hasta \$60.000 dólares por trailer", dijo Claudia Encinas, representante del SJVAPCD con base en Fresno. "Nuestra agencia también puede ayudar a aquellos que tengan inconvenientes en llenar las solicitudes".

De acuerdo a Encinas, un transportista puede pedir de \$5 a \$10 mil dólares para cambiar el filtro de emisión o de \$30 a \$60 mil dólares para la compra de una nueva unidad.

El nuevo trailer puede ser usado, pero en este caso se trata de modelos 2010 para adelante.

Algunos transportistas latinos del condado de Tulare consultados por El Sol no dieron su opinión sobre el tema.

Sin embargo, en el área existen numerosos transportistas de origen hispano que desconocen la existencia de esta ayuda financiera para modificar sus trailers o para comprar nuevas unidades que se adapten a los nuevos reglamentos.

La fecha límite para solicitar estos fondos es el viernes 29 de abril.

Los requisitos básicos, según explicó Encinas a El Sol son: el transporte debe ser usado al menos en un 75 por ciento para explotación comercial, el propietario debe tener al menos dos años con el vehículo, debe disponer de seguro y con récord limpio.

Si el transportista quiere cambiar su vehículo, los requisitos varían levemente.

Para obtener la solicitud, los interesados deben visitar [www.valleyair.or](http://www.valleyair.or) o llamar al Departamento de Incentivos y Estrategias al 559-230-5800.