

Rebates for that noisy gas guzzler are back

By Alex Breitler, staff writer

Stockton Record, Tuesday, June 4, 2013

A popular program resuming today allows San Joaquin Valley residents to exchange their old gas lawn mowers for new electric ones.

And to sweeten the deal, there's more incentive money available than before - \$1 million.

Basically, residents will get up to 50 percent off a new electric mower if they'll get rid of an old functioning gas one. Depending on the model and cost of the new mower, they'll be eligible for rebates of as much as \$250.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District offers this exchange program most years, in an effort to reduce surprisingly potent emissions from lawn care equipment. Gas-powered mowers can produce as much pollution in a single hour as 40 late-model cars.

In 2010, the program allowed residents to purchase new mowers for as little as \$25, or close to 90 percent off.

You'll pay more under the new rules, but there's more money available so more people stand to benefit.

"We offer the best return possible, to get the best participation we can," district spokesman Anthony Presto said.

The money comes from the district's general fund, which includes permit fees and other costs borne by regulated businesses.

New this year, 14 lawn mower types will be available, at varying costs. And unlike the old program, in which new mowers were shipped to Valley addresses from out-of-state, most of these models should be available in local stores, Presto said.

Residents will have to pay the full cost up-front. If they follow through by disposing of their old gas mowers and properly filling out an application, they'll receive a rebate in the mail.

In 2010, the demand for a limited supply of lawn mowers overloaded the district's 41-line phone system. The mowers ran out within a day or so. The additional money available this year should allow funding to hold out for a longer period of time, while serving more people, Presto said.

"There always is a really huge response," he said.

To learn more, call the air district at (559) 230-5800.

How it works

Here's how to participate in the Valley Air District's lawn mower exchange program:

- First, go to valleyair.org for all of the details and to download an application.
- Decide which electric mower you want and where you'll buy it. The website will have lists of available models and participating stores.
- Buy the mower for the full price. Keep the receipt.
- Dispose of your old gas-powered motor at a participating recycling business. They'll give you verification of the disposal.
- Turn in all of your information. A rebate check will be sent to your address.
- Questions? Visit valleyair.org or call (559) 230-5800.

[Fresno Bee Earth Log, Monday, June 3, 2013:](#)

Get your summer ozone game on

By Mark Grossi

Ozone season came back with a vengeance in early June as temperatures spiked over the very warm weekend. Get your summer game on — avoid the afternoon peaks.

A breezy May left the San Joaquin Valley with only eight days when the ozone exceeded the federal standard. It's easy to forget about air quality in those conditions. Now the heat and ozone are here.

Over the weekend, the problem areas for ozone included Fresno, Clovis, Bakersfield, Hanford, Arvin, Porterville and Sequoia National Park.

Ozone is a corrosive gas that forms in warm, stagnant weather. It attacks the skin, eyes and lungs.

Even for healthy adults, it's not a good idea to exercise in the late afternoons when this stuff peaks. If you have small children, try to keep them inside on the bad days.

How will you know when there's a bad day ahead? Check with the [San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District](#) for daily forecasts.