

Fresno-area drivers to get free emissions tests Saturday **Event runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at Fresno Fairgrounds**

By Megan Ginise

Fresno Bee, Thursday, Aug. 27, 2015

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and Valley Clean Air Now will provide Fresno drivers free vehicle emission tests Saturday, Aug. 29, as part of the annual "Tune In & Tune Up" event hosted at the Fresno Fairgrounds.

If the vehicle doesn't pass the emissions test but can be repaired, the driver will receive a voucher for up to \$500 in emission-related repairs at a participating STAR-certified smog check station.

Drivers must have owned their car for at least six months and maximum vehicle height cannot exceed 10 feet.

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Fresno Fairgrounds' infield parking lot, 1121 South Chance Ave.

Event to offer some Fresno drivers free emissions testing

The Associated Press

Fresno Bee, Modesto Bee and Merced Sun-Star, Thursday, Aug. 27, 2015

FRESNO, Calif. - Certain drivers in Fresno will be able to get free vehicle emissions testing through a partnership between a regional pollution control agency and nonprofit clean air advocacy group.

The Fresno Bee reports this year's annual tune-up event provided by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and Valley Clean Air Now is being held Aug. 29 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Fresno Fairgrounds.

Drivers must have owned their vehicles for at least six months. Vehicles cannot exceed 10 feet in height.

A \$500 repair voucher is being offered to drivers of vehicles that don't pass. The voucher can only be used to fix emissions-related issues.

Air Pollution District asks the public to reduce driving, idling of vehicles

By María G. Ortiz-Briones

Vida en el Valle, Wednesday, August 26, 2015

As back to school season started in the Valley, the message from the San Joaquín Valley Air Pollution Control District was loud and clear: The public truly has a role to play in improving the Valley's air quality.

"During back to school season there are a lot of things parent can do not only to reduce the pollution that is out in the atmosphere but also to protect their kids," said Jaime Holt, the air district's chief communications officer.

The air district held a back-to-school air quality press conference at its Fresno office on Aug. 19, which was also the first week of back to school for Fresno Unified School District's students, to urge the public be mindful of their contributions to poor air quality as traffic increase with students going back to school.

Given the severe drought, strings of triple-digit temperatures and multiple wildfires impacting the Valley, Valley air quality has shown tremendous improvement this ozone season compared to past years, and has continually set new records over the past 35 years, according to district officials.

"We are asking the public to do their part to think about ways to reduce emission specially those emission that are tied to vehicle traffic, idling vehicles outside school during August and September time frame," Holt said, adding that the public needs to understand when the district calls for air alerts, is a public notice for residents and businesses to make a change or to either do something different with their behavior to reduce vehicle emissions.

The air district covers eight counties: San Joaquín, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley air basin portion of Kern.

Holt said that would include things like driving less, carpooling or vanpooling, refraining from idling their vehicles at school sites, or avoiding the use outside drive through restaurants or other ways to minimize traffic in general.

“The first thing we ask is to reduce their driving and try not to idling their vehicles either when they are picking up their kids from school or going through a drive-through restaurant,” Hold said.

If air quality begins to deteriorate over the next few weeks the district might call air alerts, which are declared Valley-wide when conditions such as increased emissions, high temperatures and stagnant air flow are favorable for ozone accumulation and an air alert episode may last several days.

“Air alerts is telling the public ‘hey think your behavior,’ there are things you can do differently to minimize emissions,” Holt said.

“It’s critical the public understand that they truly have a role to play and they truly can be part of the solution,” she said, adding the air pollution control district has develop a couple of tools to help the public make sure they understand what the air quality is at any given time.

Besides air alerts, some of the air quality tools and programs includes the partnership with hundreds of Valley schools through the Healthy Air Living Schools program which includes the Turn the Key, Be Idle Free campaign, the Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) which gives residents current, hourly air quality data as well as the Web-based Archived Air Quality (WAAQ) system which gives residents historical air quality data

The district has. This new online tool allows users to compare historical air quality data from the last two decades using information specific to their local neighborhood.

“They can pay attention to the real time air advisory network, or what we call RAAN,” Holt said. “By signing up for RAAN is a great way for them to see what hourly air quality is at their location, if needed they can bring their kids inside and protect them from what might be a poor afternoon air quality event.”

Cheers: Better air quality

Stockton Record, Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2015

This may be hard to believe, given the smoke from area wildfires that has wafted into San Joaquin County recently, but air quality in the Valley this summer has been the cleanest on record.

So reports the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

The lowering of emissions from automobiles has been a key reason for the improvement, officials said.

“We have had the best summer ever and we want it to keep going in that direction,” said Anthony Presto, a district spokesman.

We heartily concur.