

# VALLEY AIR NEWS

## District Summits Introduce Healthy Air Living

The Air District rolled out details of its sweeping Healthy Air Living initiative to enthusiastic public reception at three free summits in March.

The summits – in Bakersfield, Fresno and Modesto – disseminated information about Healthy Air Living, a year-round, lifestyle-oriented program that aims to reduce emissions Valley-wide through behavioral change among the public, the business community, nonprofits, faith-based communities, and the educational sector.

It is the largest, most comprehensive initiative in the Air District's history.

“We are really encouraged by the response to some of our ideas for putting air quality at the forefront of everyday decision-making,” said Seyed Sadredin, the District's air pollution control officer and executive director. “In order for the Valley to continue our significant progress toward clean air, we need everyone's active participation.”

Summit agendas included presentations by District staff about Healthy Air Living's goals and suggestions for how to reach them, such as encouraging carpooling and vanpooling by business and industry to reduce vehicle miles traveled, as well as presentations by business leaders on how they have already put some of these measures into place.

For example, Clovis-based Pelco, a world leader in video security systems, is in the midst of a three-phase plan to incorporate “green” practices into its corporate practices, such as going paperless by 2009; installing solar panels on all seven plant buildings; and offering incentives to employees for reducing their vehicle trips (free lunches in the employee cafeteria and possibly building an on-site gym and daycare center).

Best Buy's regional office in Dinuba has reduced truck mileage from 26,000 to 12,000 each week through trip consolidation. And OK Produce in Fresno has converted its entire fleet to “green” vehicles and installed solar panels at its plant.

The District is planning Healthy Air Living Week, July 7-13, as a high-profile, Valley-wide event that will throw the spotlight on collective and individual strategies to incorporate air-quality considerations in decision-making. As part of the week, the District plans to formally recognize “Clean Air Champions,” businesses that have put clean-air concepts into practice, and will also sponsor a public contest in which the grand prize is a new Toyota Prius.



Attendees listen as panelists discuss how employers can provide tools to help their staff drive less at the summit in Bakersfield.

The Air District will be offering free Healthy Air Living “tool kits” that include resources and strategies for making clean-air changes to organizations beginning in late May. For more information, please visit [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) (the Healthy Air Living website is under construction).

## Lawn mower program a quick sell-out



The Air District kicked off its popular lawn mower trade-in program, Clean Green Yard Machines, on Tuesday, April 22 (Earth Day), and sold out to excited Valley residents in under two days.

As part of the Healthy Air Living initiative, the Air District once again offered a huge discount on cordless, electric mowers in an effort to reduce air pollution caused by gasoline-powered lawn equipment.

The first 1,100 Valley residents requesting vouchers were able to replace polluting mowers with Neuton cordless electric mowers for only \$150 each. Vouchers for Clean Green Yard Machines 2008 expire on May 31.

The District has provided the popular incentive to retire gas-powered mowers since 2001. One gas mower can pollute as much as 40 newer cars.

In 2007, the District eliminated the traditional, one-day lawn mower trade-in event in favor of a direct-mail program that gives Valley residents the opportunity to turn in their old gas-burning mower at a participating recycling center, then order their new mower by phone between April 22 and May 31. All 1,100 vouchers were spoken for within 36 hours of this year's program launch.

Since the Neuton Lawnmower Company is a direct-mail company with no retail outlets in the United States, mowers are delivered to the homes of program participants. This new method of conducting a trade-in program is being mirrored by air districts throughout the nation.

The program was made available to residents living anywhere within the boundaries of the San Joaquin Valley Air District, allowing for a 62 percent discount off their new mower, which normally sells for \$399.

Funding for Clean Green Yard Machines 2008 was provided by the Air District, PG&E, Valley CAN, and the counties of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced and Tulare.