

VALLEY AIR NEWS



BurnCleaner
Fireplace and Woodstove Change-out

Burn Cleaner program offers incentives for cleaner units

Now in its fourth year, the Air District's annual wood-burning device change-out program offers valuable incentives for upgrading wood-burning devices and continues a generous incentive for low-income homeowners.

Burn Cleaner encourages Valley residents to change out older, dirtier wood-burning units for cleaner, more efficient models by offering monetary incentives.

"We're pleased to once again offer Valley residents a valuable incentive to make one change in their daily lives to help improve air quality," said Samir Sheikh, director of the District's Emission Reduction Incentive Program.

The 2010 program began Jan. 19 and continues until all funding is exhausted.

Residential wood burning is a major source of wintertime air pollution in the Valley and wood-burning emissions cause serious health problems.

The program offers varying incentive amounts, depending on the type of device being changed out and purchased:

- \$100 to upgrade a non-certified wood-burning device to an EPA Phase II-certified wood-burning device;
- \$250 to upgrade a wood-burning device to a pellet stove;
- \$500 to upgrade a wood-burning (including pellet stove) device to gas-burning device; and
- \$1,500 to low-income residents for the purchase of any of the above devices (low-income status as verified by tax returns, pay stubs, unemployment or disability checks, or bank statements submitted with applications).

Eligible households must be located in the eight-county air basin. People interested in participating can visit the District's website at www.valleyair.org or call the Emission Reduction Incentive Program at 559-230-5800 to learn more.

"Changing out a dirtier, older wood-burning unit is a very effective way to reduce dangerous emissions, and the Burn Cleaner program is a valuable way to support people in making that change toward healthier air," Sheikh said.

For more information about the Valley Air District, call a regional office: in Fresno, 559-230-6000; in Bakersfield, 661-392-5500; and in Modesto, 209-557-6400.



Environmental Justice for all!

The Air District's Environmental Justice Advisory Group (EJAG), formed in October 2008, has just completed its first full year and is still actively recruiting EJ community members to be a part of this important group.

EJAG's mission is to advise the Air District on how to integrate environmental justice principles into all programs, policies and activities. Members provide feedback to the Air District concerning its continuing efforts to advance environmental justice.

Each year, the group establishes goals, objectives and an action plan according to the Air District's Environmental Justice Strategy.

In its first year, the EJAG proved valuable in assisting the Air District to promote Healthy Air Living Community Chats, and provided recommendations to the District regarding fee waivers for public records duplication, as well as environmental justice maps.

EJAG reports to the Air District's Governing Board through the District's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

Members are selected by the Air District from throughout the San Joaquin Valley. Current members are:

Amarpreet Dhaliwal, CAC member, Fresno
Rosenda Mataka, At-large Rep., Stanislaus
Fabian Ceballos, Small Business Owner, San Joaquin
Catherine Garoupa, At-large Rep., Madera
Jeremy Terhune, At-large Rep., San Joaquin
Melissa Kelly-Ortega, At-large Rep., Merced
Andre Booker, At-large Rep., Kings
Linda MacKay, At-large Rep., Kern
Riley Jones, CAC member, Kings
Kevin Hamilton, CAC member, Fresno

The Air District is seeking at-large representatives from Fresno and Tulare counties as well as an ethnic small business owner representative.

For more information about EJAG and its membership requirements, contact Maricela Velaquez at 559-230-5849 or maricela.velasquez@valleyair.org.