

VALLEY AIR NEWS

A publication of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
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Eighth wood-burning season begins Nov. 1

Check Before You Burn will make its seasonal debut Nov. 1. The annual program, which curtails residential wood burning when air quality deteriorates, runs through February each year.



The San Joaquin Valley has cold, stagnant winters that make some people long for a cozy fire, but also creates the perfect air pollution breeding ground.

As much as 24 tons per day of particulate matter (PM) is emitted from residential wood burning, making it the largest source of this type of pollution during winter months.

The Valley's challenges in meeting stringent federal air quality standards for PM10 (particulate matter measuring up to 10 microns) and PM 2.5 (up to 2.5 microns), led to the 2003 adoption of Rule 4901 Wood burning fireplaces and wood burning heaters, also known as "Check Before You Burn."

Each day during winter, the District issues wood-burning forecasts by county to let residents know if it is permissible to use wood-burning fireplaces, wood or pellet stoves. If air quality is not conducive, residential wood burning is prohibited.

Residents with no natural gas service or any other form of heat are exempt from the rule.

Finding the daily forecast and wood burning declaration is easy by calling the District's Smog Information Line at 1-800-766-4463 (available in both English and Spanish), or by visiting www.valleyair.org. Hmong language forecasts are available at 1-877-344-1212. Residents can also sign up to receive the daily forecast automatically, by e-mail at www.valleyair.org.

Clean Air Challenge Workshop for Teachers: November 6

The Air District offers this free workshop for teachers of middle and high school students to bring air pollution education to their classrooms.

Clean Air Challenge is a theme-based program which allows students in grades 6-12 to conduct experiments and scientific research on air pollution and teachers to meet science standards in the classroom. The program also provides all the necessary materials for teachers and students to carry out the experiments in class.

For more information on Clean Air Challenge and how to register for the workshop to be held in Fresno on November 6, visit www.cleanairchallenge.org.

Clean Green Yard Machines offers deeper discounts

The Valley Air District's lawn mower trade-in program just got better - a lot better. Beginning November 8, San Joaquin Valley residents can trade in a gas-powered mower in favor of a Neuton cordless, electric mower for as little as \$25, and have the new mower delivered right to their door.

In one of its many strategies for air pollution reduction, the Air District has partnered with various lawn mower manufacturers and retailers for the annual Clean Green Yard Machines lawn mower trade-in program since 2001. The program encourages residents to replace their old, gas-burning mowers with non-polluting, electric lawn mowers.

One gas mower creates the pollution equivalent of 40 newer automobiles, according the Environmental Protection Agency. With an electric mower, such emissions are not created.

Electric mowers are also quieter, lighter, easier to start and free from annoying fuel and oil spills. Just plug it into the charger, disconnect when fully charged, and it's good to go for a full hour.

Through the Air District's program, Neuton's 14-inch mower, which regularly retails for \$399, is available to Valley residents for only \$25. The Neuton 19-inch mower, which retails for \$499, is just \$50 through Clean Green Yard Machines.

This is a limited supply, first-come, first-served offer. Interested Valley residents should contact the Valley Air District no earlier than November 8 to receive a program voucher. Customers will need the District-issued voucher to be validated at participating recycling companies throughout the Valley when they turn in any gas-powered lawn mower.

After turning in their mower and receiving the special program code by their recycling company, participants can order their new mower directly from the lawn mower company, using the toll-free number on their voucher.

For more information, or to request a voucher, call the Air District's Strategies and Incentives Department at 559-230-5800, or visit the Air District's website at www.valleyair.org.

