



VALLEY AIR NEWS

Air Alert season begins

An important emission-reduction program that dramatically reduces smog-forming pollution from vehicles continues this summer.

Air Alerts are declared when conditions that lead to ozone formation – increased emissions, high temperatures and stagnant air flow – materialize in the Valley and levels begin to climb. High ozone levels are harmful to human health.

Because episodes of late-summer high ozone are correlated to back-to-school traffic and increased vehicle idling, the District asks Valley residents to cut their engines instead of idling in order to reduce smog-forming emissions.

“The Air Alert program was vital to the historic achievement last summer when the Valley had zero violations of the federal 1-hour ozone standard,” said Seyed Sadredin, the Air District’s executive director and air pollution control officer.

This year, that trend continues, with a record number of consecutive days with no exceedances of the more stringent 8-hour standard anywhere in the Valley, despite a long stretch of triple-digit temperatures. Air Alerts will be called to help the Valley maintain its progress in minimizing ozone.

Goals of this summer’s program are:

- To ensure that the Valley stays in attainment of the 1-hour standard (125 ppb) as the EPA has not acted on the District’s formal request for attainment designation.
- Work to reach the 8-hour standard (75 ppb) and avoid further penalties by calling Air Alerts for multi-day episodes when ozone concentrations are expected to exceed 100 ppb anywhere in the Valley.

AIR ALERT!

- To reduce vehicle miles traveled throughout the air basin.
- To encourage residents to use the Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) determine current, localized air quality conditions and take appropriate health-protective action.

In order to keep ozone levels beneath exceedance levels, air officials ask residents to take steps to minimize vehicle emissions, in particular:

- Refrain from idling when dropping off/picking up students
- Carpool, vanpool and use alternate transportation
- Refrain from using drive-through services.

Businesses and municipalities can reduce emissions by shifting operations to early morning or late evening, reducing their impact on ozone levels, offering flexible work schedules, promoting carpools and vanpools for employees, and becoming Healthy Air Living partners.

To receive notification of an Air Alert, call 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463), visit the Air District’s website at www.valleyair.org, or subscribe to the free automated Air Alert email list at www.valleyair.org/list.list.htm.

You can also find current Air Alert information on Facebook at Healthy Air Living and on Twitter (@Valley Air).

Drive Clean!

Driving an EV (electric vehicle) just keeps getting more practical and affordable for local commuters, especially with so many incentives in place.

Completely electric vehicles produce zero emissions and cost considerably less to drive and maintain than their gas-powered counterparts. This is a huge benefit to the San Joaquin Valley, where a majority of air pollution is caused by motor vehicles.

The Air District’s Drive Clean Program, launched in spring 2012, has been instrumental in seeing the number of EVs grow on Valley roads with 950 vehicles funded to date.

The program offers Valley residents rebates of up to \$3,000 when purchasing or leasing a new EV.

In addition, California’s Clean Vehicle Rebate Program provides EV rebates of up to \$2,500.

On top of that, the federal government offers a tax incentive of up to \$7,500 for new EV purchases.

This effectively reduces the overall cost of an EV by as much as \$13,000. With some EVs priced as low as \$24,000, this is a significant cost reduction. However, these incentives are not permanent. Funding is only available until exhausted.

The Air District is also working to improve the Valley’s EV charging infrastructure. An EV Readiness Plan is in place and a complete Plug-In Electric Vehicle Resource Center is available on the District’s website at <http://valleyair.org/grants/pev.htm>.

Additional incentives are being developed for businesses and public agencies to increase the number of public charging stations Valley-wide.

For more information on the grants currently available click on these links: www.valleyair.org/DriveClean, <http://energycenter.org/>, [www.irs.gov/Businesses/Plug-In-Electric-Vehicle-Credit-\(IRC-30-and-IRC-30D\)](http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Plug-In-Electric-Vehicle-Credit-(IRC-30-and-IRC-30D))