

VALLEY AIR NEWS

A monthly publication of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District - March 2015

Cleaner wood burning devices allowed to burn more this winter

The first winter of the amended residential wood-burning program ended Feb. 28 with more days that newer, cleaner wood-burning devices could be used compared to past winters.

Check Before You Burn, the program that minimizes the build-up of harmful fine-particle pollution, runs each winter from November through February.

Each day during this period, a wood-burning declaration is issued for each county in the air basin that determines what, if any, residential wood-burning devices may be used.

This winter, the regulation was amended to allow users of EPA Phase II-certified wood-burning devices to register them with the District and use them more frequently than in past winters.

Simultaneously, the District lowered the threshold at which the use of older, noncertified units and open-hearth fireplaces would be allowed to be used. Together, these two changes reduced the amount of particles in the air basin.

"The response we received to these changes was enthusiastic," said Seyed Sadredin, the District's executive director and air pollution control officer.

Through February, nearly 3,000 wood-burning devices were registered with

the District as meeting current EPA emission standards.

This winter, there were 36 days when wood burning was not allowed for anyone throughout the air basin. Comparatively, last winter, the total number of curtailments for the Valley was 376.

The District also offered Valley residents more money to upgrade their devices; \$1,000 to most residents (up from \$500 last year) and \$2,500 to low-income residents, with an additional \$500 available for installation to anyone who purchased a gas-burning device. This increased funding removed some of the financial obstacles to upgrading wood-burning devices.

This season, there were fewer days during which the fine-particle level exceeded the federal health standard of 35 micrograms per cubic meter. There was also more rain and less atmospheric stagnation than last winter, although the statewide drought continues with associated air-quality effects.

As of March 1, the District no longer issues a daily residential wood-burning status for each county. While no formal-burning restrictions are in place until the wood burning season begins again on Nov. 1, the District discourages residential wood-burning.

2014-15 wood burning statistics

County	No Burning Unless Registered	No Burning for All	Notices of Violation
San Joaquin	58	1	86
Stanislaus	69	1	110
Merced	62	0	74
Madera	66	5	32
Fresno	74	6	96
Kings	68	7	13
Tulare	66	7	68
Kern (Valley portion)	72	9	51
Sequoia National Park	6	0	0
Frazier Park	1	0	0
Totals	542	36	530

Mark your calendar

March 24 - Annual Spring Extravaganza, Clovis Community College

March 28 - Tune In & Tune Up - Chowchilla Fairgrounds, 9am-3pm

April 11 - Tune In & Tune Up - Fresno Fairgrounds, 9am-3pm

April 11 - Lung Force Walk - Yocuts Park, Bakersfield, American Lung Association. 661-282-3298

April 18 - Garden Fest - Bakersfield College, 9am-4pm

April 18 - Modesto Earth Day Celebration, Graceada Park, 10am-4pm

April 18 - Delaware North Earth Day Fair - Grant Grove at Kings Canyon National Park, 11am-3pm.

April 25 - Tune In & Tune Up - Stanislaus County Fairgrounds, Turlock, 9am-3pm

April 25 - Earth Day Fresno - Radio Park, 10a-4pm: <http://www.earthdayfresno.org/>

April 25 - Earth/Arbor Day Visalia - St. John's Riverwalk Park, 10am-2pm

April 25 - Greater Bakersfield Green Expo, Yokuts Park: <http://www.gbgreenexpo.org/>

April 26 - Stockton Earth Day, Victory Park: <http://livegreensanjoaquin.org/>

May 9 - Tune In & Tune Up - Kern County Fairgrounds, 9am-3pm

May 14 - Bike to Work Day - Modesto

May 30 - Tune In & Tune Up - San Joaquin County Fairgrounds, Stockton, 9am-3pm

June 13 - Tune In & Tune Up - International Ag Center, Tulare, 9am-3pm

June 27 - Tune In & Tune Up - Merced Fairgrounds. 9am-3pm

Transboundary Ozone Pollution Conference

At Tenaya Lodge, Yosemite
March 31 - April 2, 2015
<http://www.valleyair.org/topc/>

