

News Release

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For Immediate Release



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

TO:
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education and assignment
editors**

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Kids can commute, too! *Commute Green in the San Joaquin rolls out school-based competition*

A popular annual competition to encourage commute alternatives in the business community has branched out in a special kids'-only contest.

Commute Green in the San Joaquin Challenge – Kids' Edition takes place Oct. 5-9. Registration deadline is Friday, Oct. 2.

"The Valley's children have always been enthusiastic about helping to clean up our air, and this new competition is another way to involve them in making changes that reduce emissions," said Maricela Velasquez, the Air District's senior public information representative.

Through this friendly, school-based contest, schoolchildren from kindergarten through 6th-grade are encouraged to form commute teams and find safe methods of transportation such as walking, biking, skateboarding or using a scooter.

Schools compete per county for the highest percentage of participating students. One school per county will be declared the winner. Prizes – among them, bike helmets donated by the City of Fresno Fire Department -- will be awarded to winning schools.

"Vehicle use is the largest single contributor to air pollution in the Valley. As we discovered during the corporate version of this competition, Valley residents really understand that and step up in a big way to make behavior changes and live healthy air lives," Velasquez said.

To participate, schools must designate a team captain, who then fills out all required paperwork and enrolls his or her team. Complete details and regulations are available at www.healthyairliving.com. For more information, call one of the Air District offices: in Fresno, 559-230-6000; in Bakersfield, 661-392-5500; and in Modesto, 209-557-6475.

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley air basin portion of Kern. Visit www.valleyair.org to learn more.