

News release

For immediate release

2-6-14



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



Attn: Local news, lifestyle and assignment editors

Northern media contact – Modesto

Anthony Presto (209) 557-6472

Central/Southern media contact – Fresno

Heather Heinks (559) 230-5898

Spanish-language media contact

Ana Stone (559) 230-5851

24-hour media cell phone

(559) 284-6317

Valley schools, air and health officials join forces *Healthy Air Living Schools protects student health*

Valley education administrators, representatives of health organizations and the Valley Air District today jointly urged Valley schools to take advantage of a free, valuable school-based program that provides tools for educators to protect their students' health from the harmful effects of air pollution.

The Healthy Air Living Schools program was developed by the Air District to notify schools when air quality is not conducive to outdoor activity, and to educate their staffs and students about maintaining and improving the lung health of the Valley's students. It is administered by regional asthma education organizations throughout the Valley.

"Our goal is to encourage 100 percent of the schools in the San Joaquin Valley to become Healthy Air Living Schools," said Destiny Rodriguez of the Central California Asthma Collaborative, the Air District's partner in administering the program in Madera, Fresno, Kings and Tulare counties.

Healthy Air Living Schools are provided free tools and education to bring air quality information to their school sites. Some of the components of the program are:

- Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN), which offers 24-hour access to air quality monitors throughout the Valley for current, localized air quality data
- Anti-idling signage and materials, which remind parents and drivers of students to cut their engines when dropping off and picking up students, reducing exposure to harmful emissions
- Air Quality Flag program, which provides a set of color-coded flags that correspond to the daily air quality forecast

"The schools program is an effortless way to help schools provide an important service to their students and families," said Jaime Holt, the District's chief communications officer. "It allows them to be proactive in addressing this serious health issue."

When a school enrolls in the program, the Central California Asthma Collaborative provides immediate materials delivery, along with training in using them. Air District staff provides support and guidance.

For information about Healthy Air Living Schools, to enroll and to request materials, please contact an Air District office in Fresno (559) 593-3138, Modesto (209) 557-6400 or Bakersfield (661) 392-5500, or contact the Central California Asthma Collaborative at (559) 272-4874.