

## **District launches portable air monitors in Arvin**

By Kellie Schmitt, Californian staff writer  
Bakersfield Californian, Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District will dispatch vans to monitor Arvin's air this week to see if there's any truth to the complaint that the new monitor doesn't accurately reflect the city's pollution.

The district hopes its mobile effort during a bad ozone week -- an air alert will be in effect from Tuesday to Thursday -- will clarify the concerns that prompted Arvin residents to start their own monitoring effort.

"If they're willing to create good air quality monitoring in Arvin, it's welcome," said Sal Partida, the head of the group pushing for better air quality. "We need all the help we can get."

Partida and other residents were angry when they learned the state's Air Resources Board moved the longtime Arvin monitor after losing the lease on that land. The board moved the monitor to Di Giorgio Elementary School, about two miles away, where it has registered cleaner readings.

Last week, those residents learned they will receive \$130,000 from the California Endowment to monitor their air, readings that can't be officially used but may fuel more discussions.

Now, the air district is adding to the effort with portable monitors it'll send around downtown Arvin this week, said Seyed Sadredin, the executive director. Sadredin said it's likely that downtown Arvin may have cleaner air than the Di Giorgio site since that's the end of the so-called bucket, where smoggy air accumulates.

But, if it finds that other Arvin locales do have higher readings, that could build a case for a new, permanent station in one of those places, he said.

Meanwhile, the state board said it is comfortable with the current Arvin location because its goal is to monitor the overall ozone in the region, not a specific locality, said Dimitri Stanich, a public information officer:

"Our focus is wide areas, and the local district has better insight into local issues."

Sadredin said he's hopeful the valley will make it through this week of high temperatures, a few fires and stagnant conditions without a violation that would trigger a \$29 million federal fine.

This week, Sadredin clarified that one violation is defined by any one site surpassing the one-hour, 125 ppb limit three times in three years.

Last year, Clovis was the only site that crossed that threshold three times. That means that monitor has to stay below 125 ppb this year if the valley wants to stay "clean" for this year and next, after which time the fee could be removed.

Other sites such as Arvin, which surpassed the threshold twice last year, could cross the limit once more over next two years without triggering a violation. And sites like Bakersfield, which stayed below the limit all of last year -- could surpass it three times over this year and next and not affect the valley's winning record.

## **Smog build-up prompts air alert for Valley**

The Fresno Bee, Monday, Sept. 19, 2011

An air alert for the Valley is in effect today through Thursday because of expected smog buildup from high temperatures and stagnant air, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District said.

The alert -- called when an area is in danger of exceeding a federal standard for ozone -- possibly could be extended until Friday, district officials said.

During the alert, the air district is asking people not to idle their cars when picking up or dropping off students, to skip drive-throughs, to carpool or to use an alternate form of transportation.

Businesses can reduce emissions by shifting some operations, such as lawn care, to early mornings or late evenings, offering flexible work schedules and telecommuting, and promoting carpools.

The air alert is in effect for the counties of Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus and San Joaquin and portions of Kern County.

### **Valley Air Alert begins today**

Visalia Times-Delta and Tulare Advance-Register, Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution District has issued an Air Alert today through Thursday, and may be extended to Friday.

High temperatures, a high pressure system and stagnant wind patterns are contributing to a build-up of smog (ozone).

The alert includes the counties of Tulare, Kings, Kern, Madera, Merced and San Joaquin. The alerts are called when conditions may lead to ozone formation, which could result in exceeding the health-based 1-hour ozone standard.

Exceeding the standard could lead to millions of dollars in fines. Residents and businesses are encouraged to take steps to prevent this. Residents can reduce smog-forming emissions by:

- Refraining from idling when dropping off/picking up students
- Carpooling, vanpooling or using alternate transportation
- Refraining from using drive-through serviced

Businesses can reduce emissions by:

- Shifting operations to early morning or late evening
- Offering flexible work schedules
- Promoting carpools and vanpools for employees
- Implementing telecommuting
- Becoming a Healthy Air Living Partner

Updates will be issued by the district during the Air Alert.

For more information visit [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).

### **New air alert to begin today**

By Ross Farrow

Lodi News Sentinel, Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011

Eight counties from San Joaquin to Kern will be subject to an air alert today through Thursday, according to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

Residents will be asked to refrain from idling while dropping off or picking up students, carpooling or vanpooling, and using drive-through services is discouraged, according to the air pollution district.

A large compost fire in Lathrop is producing localized smoke which affects Manteca, district officials said in a news release. Smoke contains small pieces of airborne material such as soot and ash that are dangerous to human health, according to the district.

### **SJV Air Alert from today through Thursday**

Sun-Star staff

Merced Sun-Star, Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011

The San Joaquin Valley Pollution Control District said the Valley air basin is in an Air Alert from Sept. 20 through Thursday, Sept. 22, and may be extended to Friday.

Conditions such as high temperatures, a high-pressure system and stagnant wind patterns are contributing to a build-up in ozone (smog) over the next several days. The Air Alert includes the counties of Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and portions of Kern. Air Alerts are called when conditions may lead to ozone formation that results in exceeding health-based ozone standards of 125 parts per billion (ppb) and triggering substantial federal monetary penalties.

About 80 percent of the Valley's ozone-forming emissions are produced by vehicle use. Residents can reduce smog-forming emissions by refraining from idling when dropping off or picking up students, carpooling or vanpooling, and refraining from using drive-through services.

Businesses and municipalities can reduce emissions by shifting operations to early morning or late evening, as in lawn care; offering flexible work schedules, and encouraging carpools and vanpools for employees. Businesses can also enroll at no cost in the Healthy Air Living Partner program.

In addition, a large composting fire in Lathrop is producing areas of localized smoke which may impact Manteca in San Joaquin County. Smoke contains particulate matter (PM), small pieces of airborne material such as soot and ash, which is dangerous to human health. High levels of PM can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, trigger asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections. In the event of exposure to smoke, people with heart or lung diseases should follow their doctors' advice for dealing with episodes of unhealthy air quality. Additionally, older adults and children should avoid prolonged exposure, strenuous activities or heavy exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged exposure, strenuous activities or heavy exertion.

For more information about Air Alerts, please visit [http://www.valleyair.org/AirAlert/AirAlert\\_Landing.htm](http://www.valleyair.org/AirAlert/AirAlert_Landing.htm). To sign up for a free subscription to the Air Alert email notification system please visit <http://www.valleyair.org/lists/list.htm>. To receive information about becoming a Healthy Air Living Partner, please visit [www.healthyairliving.com](http://www.healthyairliving.com).

## **Summer heat isn't ready to leave**

Bee Staff Reports

Modesto Bee, Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011

The final days of summer look to be plenty warm in Modesto, where the forecast is for highs in the mid-90s through the week.

Fall will officially start with the autumnal equinox at 9:05 a.m. Friday. That's when the tilt of the Earth brings equal hours of daylight and nighttime.

It's usually the time when Modesto's highs have settled to the mid-80s and nights get down into the 50s.

Not this week. The National Weather Service forecasts overnight lows in the 60s — not quite the crisp air of autumn. The days are expected to be hot through Saturday, followed by a drop into the 80s Sunday.

The forecast prompted the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District to launch an "Air Alert" today through Thursday. Residents are asked to reduce use of vehicles and gas-powered tools to help lower high ozone counts.

The National Weather Service attributes the heat to a developing ridge of high pressure over the region.

The temperatures will fall short of the record highs for the week reported by the Modesto Irrigation District. The hottest date on record is Sept. 20, 1939, when it hit 104.

For the second straight summer, the city has had a below-average number of 100-plus days. MID tallied just five of them this year.

The mild weather has helped water managers handle the runoff from the massive snowpack in the Sierra Nevada this year. Some rivers flowed near their capacity at times, but the state has not had major flooding.

The shortage of blazing days helped the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District get through August without violating a key federal standard for ozone, a component of smog.

The district still could issue one of its Air Alerts — a new campaign urging people to drive less — if the heat combines with other factors to raise the risk of a violation.

The lack of rain in the forecast means the harvest can proceed steadily for growers of almonds, walnuts, tomatoes, corn and other crops. Much of this is behind schedule because wet, cold weather in the spring disrupted the growing seasons.

## **Compost Fire Ignites In Lathrop**

### **Fire Chief: Flames Could Possibly Burn For Five Days**

KCRA.com, Monday, Sept. 19, 2011

LATHROP, Calif. -- A fire at a compost plant erupted Monday morning in Lathrop, the Stockton Fire Department said.

The fire was sparked at Valley Organics along Frewert Road. The fire is surrounded by flat, rural farm land.

A neighbor tells KCRA that the compost pile should only be five feet high. The neighbor said that's according to a business application from San Joaquin County.

The neighbor who wanted to remain anonymous also claims there were two fires within the last year, and that the large compost piles are part of the problem.

The San Joaquin County Environmental Health department said it monitors and regulates compost facilities. But no one was available for comment.

Meantime, the San Joaquin Valley Air Quality Control District has been out at the scene.

A combination of wood and compost is burning.

"It's a green waste pile, so there is no significant concern about the smoke," said Lathrop-Manteca Fire Chief Chester Smith.

Firefighters said they will let the wood and composite fire burn out. The fire could possibly burn for up to five days, said Smith.

"I'm going to say this fire started by spontaneous combustion. The compost heated to the point of sparking its own fire," said Smith.

