

Arvin's Electric Busses and the City's Progress Towards Air Monitoring

By Erica Murillo

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Arvin's air monitoring has been a primary goal of Assembly Bill 617 (AB 617), a community air protection program to help the most severely impacted communities with air pollution.

AB 617 requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and air districts to develop and implement additional emissions reporting, monitoring, reduction plans and measures in an effort to reduce air pollution exposure in disadvantaged communities.

Electric vehicles have been a prominent tool and great solution for fighting outdoor pollution. Arvin's electric busses have been of great use, and will provide improvement in the air quality of the community.

Air monitoring will be in progress with the help of active community members who voice their concerns on where air monitors should be installed in the community such as multi-pollutant air monitoring systems, air monitoring trailers, and air monitoring vans.

"We have 3 [busses] that started in May of 2019 right before the pandemic started," said Jeffery Jones, Interim City Manager and Finance Director. "They have been running well and the citizens love them. They are moderned up to date, they have wifi services, they have good air conditioning, and a good ride service."

Electric busses can help with air quality improvement because they have no tailpipe; therefore, certain gasses are not released in air. Shifting to a zero-emission vehicle powered by renewable energy will help improve air quality.

Electric busses also help the city generate revenue back to the city. The use of the money is decided by the city counsel, and this money can be used for different purposes such as road or park improvements.

Gustavo Aguirre Jr., Kern County Director of Central California Environmental Justice Network (CCEJN), explained that getting to know the sources of pollution, what they release, how much, and what emissions pollute these communities can help plan for a Community Air Monitoring Network (CAMN).

"Of course none of this could have been possible without the amazing support of all the community members from Arvin, Lamont, and beyond because we work with Lost Hills, Shafter, and other San Joaquin Valley communities," said Gustavo Aguirre.