

## **EPA grants \$2.8 million in latest effort to help Valley residents breathe easier**

By John Holland

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A \$2.8 million federal grant will help bring more clean-burning trucks and tractors to the San Joaquin Valley.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the grant Monday, along with about \$12 million for other efforts against diesel emissions.

The \$2.8 million will be combined with about \$4.9 million from other sources for the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. It will help farmers replace 73 tractors with newer models, and do the same for 33 trucks in commercial fleets.

The programs are part of a decade-long campaign to reduce the risk of asthma, emphysema and other ailments among Valley residents.

“Reducing diesel use is a central strategy to environmental justice,” said Martha Guzman, regional administrator for the EPA’s Pacific Southwest, in a news release.

More information on applying for the money is on the district website, [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).

The grants were awarded through the Diesel Emission Reduction Act. California got more than \$8 million, including:

- \$2.3 million to replace 14 diesel “yard hostlers” with electric versions of this cargo-handling equipment at four distribution centers and the Long Beach Container Terminal. The South Coast Air Quality Management District received the money.
- \$2 million to the Los Angeles Harbor Department to replace an old switcher locomotive with a battery electric model. The Union Pacific Railroad is a partner with the city and air district.
- Money to replace 10 school buses and five trucks around the state.

The news release also noted that the EPA will get \$5 billion for school bus replacement over five years under the new \$1.2 trillion infrastructure act. The EPA has awarded more than \$1 billion in grants since the diesel act was approved in 2008.