

VALLEY AIR NEWS

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Have you registered for eTRIP?

The District's new Rule 9410 (Employer-based trip reduction, or eTRIP) requires employers of at least 100 eligible people in the San Joaquin Valley to offer their employees programs that encourage them to carpool and reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips – a significant source of vehicle emissions.

The deadline to register with the Air District for those organizations that are subject to this rule was July 1. Eligibility for compliance with this rule is determined by the number of eligible employees. Not all employees in an organization may be eligible.

If any of your employees meet any of the following criteria, they are NOT considered eligible for the purpose of determining your organization's requirement to comply:

- Employees who DO NOT report to work between 6 AM and 10 AM;
- Part-time seasonal and temporary employees;
- Employees who home garage their employer-owned vehicle;
- Farm workers, field personnel and construction workers;
- Independent contractors and volunteers;
- Emergency health and safety employees; and
- Employees who are on-call at least 50 percent of the time.

Employers that are subject to this rule are required to attain a certain number of compliance "points" by choosing from a wide variety of menu-based options aimed at reducing commute-related pollution.

Examples of some options are:

- Organizing a vanpool for employees to commute to and from work;
- Installing an ATM at the worksite;
- Rewarding employees for carpooling, bicycling, riding the bus or walking to work;
- Setting up a rideshare bulletin board;
- On-site lunch service;
- Setting up direct deposit for all employees; and
- Becoming a Healthy Air Living partner.

The next rule-related deadline is September 2011, when the first phase of employer eTRIP plans must be submitted to the District.

For more information and online registration for eTRIP, visit the Air District's website at:

www.valleyair.org/tripreduction.htm. You can also e-mail questions to tripreduction@valleyair.org.

Air District offers many programs for students

Educating our children on environmental issues helps to usher in a cleaner, brighter future for everyone.

The Air District educates children about air quality through three ongoing programs; an elementary school curriculum titled "Blue Sky, Brown Sky ... It's Up to You!," the Air Quality Flag Program and the Healthy Air Living Kids Calendar Contest.

"Blue Sky, Brown Sky..." is a standards-based air-quality curriculum provided free to all schools in the San Joaquin Valley air basin for grades K-5. This program introduces students to the causes and effects of air pollution while teaching them behaviors that promote clean air and ecological responsibility.

"Blue Sky, Brown Sky ..." incorporates science, math and language arts, and includes activity books, pencils, crayons and stickers as part of the program.

Another program free to all public schools is the Air Quality Flag Program. Four flags, each a different color, are supplied to participating schools to advise students, teachers and parents of their local air quality each school day.

The Air District, along with the American Lung Association and participating Valley asthma coalitions, provides the flags, posters, refrigerator magnets and training for school personnel on how to use the flags.

The flags are color-coded to correspond with the Air Quality Index:

- A green flag indicates good air quality with no restrictions on outdoor play.
- A yellow flag indicates that air quality is moderate that day. Unusually sensitive children may consider limited outdoor playtime on a yellow day.
- Orange indicates that air quality is unhealthy for sensitive groups and those children with asthma or other breathing-related problems should avoid outdoor exertion.
- A red flag indicates unhealthy air for everyone. Everyone should avoid outdoor exertion.

A lesson plan called Active Indoor Recess (AIR) offers fun, indoor alternatives to outdoor exercise on days when air quality is poor. Schools may choose to use it as part of the flag program.

The Air District also offers presentations to faculty and staff, as well as to students, to educate them about the flag program and general air quality.

In addition to these educational programs, the Air District conducts the annual Healthy Air Living Kids Calendar Contest. Students from throughout the Valley in grades K-12 are encouraged to enter their drawings depicting messages about living a Healthy Air Life and how to clean the Valley's air. Fourteen artists are chosen each year to have their work featured in the Air District's calendar.

Here are examples of messages that might be appropriate for the calendar:

- Live a Healthy Air Life!
- Healthy air starts with me!
- When we breathe cleaner, we live better!
- Carpool to school or work
- Ride your bike (or skateboard or scooter)
- Check before you burn wood in your fireplace
- Practice clean air yard care
- Barbecue with propane or natural gas instead of charcoal.

The deadline to submit entries for the calendar contest is October 12, 2010. Submissions must be on a white, 8 1/2" X 11" piece of paper, turned to landscape or horizontal orientation. Do not fold drawings. Mail entries in a large envelope or deliver to: San Joaquin Valley Air District, Attn: Calendar Contest, 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave. Fresno, CA 93726.

For more information on these and many other Air District-sponsored programs and contests, visit www.valleyair.org and www.healthyairliving.com.

