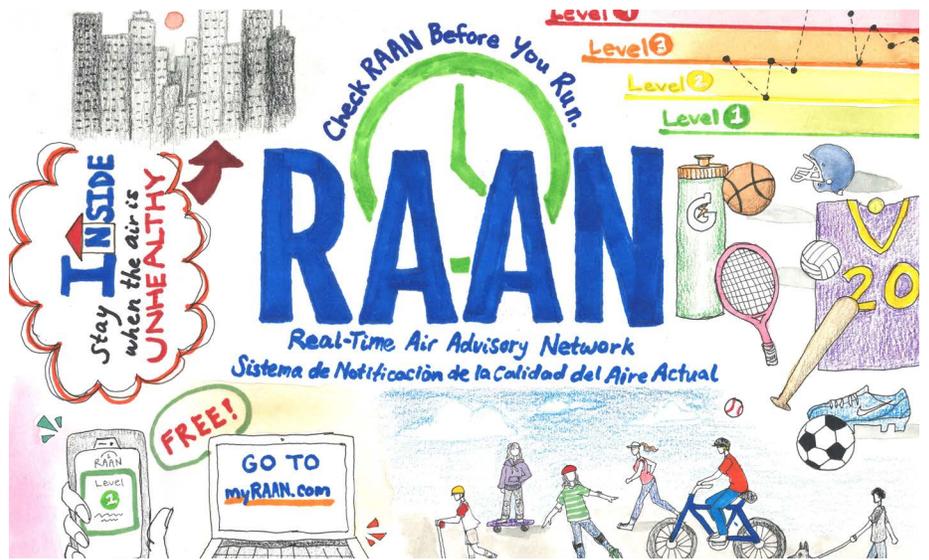


VALLEY AIR NEWS

December 2020



District asks residents to refrain from burning wood

The Valley Air District urges residents to consider the health of their families and the public when heating their homes, and avoid burning wood, even when allowed.

The Valley Air Basin, which includes the counties of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley portion of Kern, has a uniquely difficult time reaching and maintaining federal health standards for PM2.5 (fine particulate matter) because of its geography, meteorology and topography. Our Valley experiences very little air movement, which prevents smoke and other pollutants from dispersing, causing PM2.5 to reach high concentrations very quickly.

When residents burn in their fireplaces, wood/pellet stoves, fire pits and chimeneas, smoke can remain trapped in their neighborhood for weeks at a time, because of frequent, stagnant conditions in the Valley. Even when we experience rain, it is often ineffective at scrubbing these fine particles from our air.

Residential wood burning is one of the Valley's largest sources of wintertime PM 2.5, impacting public health by triggering asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis, sometimes causing lung infections and even increasing the risk of heart attacks and strokes. Ultrafine particulate matter can also creep into the home when using your wood burning device, resulting in poor indoor air quality and putting family members at risk.

In order to keep our air cleaner, protect your health, the health of your family and your neighborhood, the District asks that all residents refrain from burning solid fuel, even when allowed, unless it is truly your sole source of heat.

District congratulates 2021 Healthy Air Living Kids Calendar winners

Be on the lookout for the release of the Valley Air District's 2021 Healthy Air Living Kids Calendar. This year's calendar will be a print-at-home edition and will feature interchangeable art (pick your favorite!) atop a 'year-at-a-glance' calendar.

We are proud to announce Aria Delgado from Sanger, as this year's grand-prize winner. Aria's amazing and inspirational artwork and understanding of the air quality tools available in the San Joaquin Valley have earned the high school junior this year's top prize—a new bike to provide her with emission-free transportation. Other contest winners whose art will also be featured in the new calendar are as follows:

- Giselle Chavez of Bakersfield
- Beneil Danielo of Turlock
- Daniel Rodriguez of Biola
- Gracie Lopez of Bakersfield
- Kya Bitter of Madera
- Lexi Ramos of Stockton
- Meghan Lucero of Porterville
- Olivia Miracle of Fresno
- Paul Voight of Turlock
- Sofia Mancero of Sanger
- Tabitha Hitchman of Hanford

All of these talented students have artistically communicated valuable air quality-related messages in their drawings which will be showcased in the coming months on the District's social media pages.

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