

Actions by the Governing Board – Oct 19, 2023

Authorize Incentive Program for Non-Combustion Alternatives to Open Burning of Raisin Trays

The Valley Air District is the only region in California and nation with stringent requirements that phase-out agricultural open burning. Through the implementation of state law under SB 705, the District has adopted prohibitions that have significantly reduced open burning, supported by continued efforts to identify and demonstrate new alternatives to reduce open burning. As the most recent activity in this ongoing effort, the Governing Board, in collaboration with the California Air Resources Board, adopted a final phase-out strategy in 2021 for remaining agricultural burning by the end of 2024. As one component of the adopted phase-out requirements, all raisin tray open burning will be prohibited effective January 1, 2024. In considering the adopted phase-out requirements, the Governing Board recognized that growers would have difficulty in quickly transitioning to the impending phase-out deadline of January 1, 2024, and supported a program to assist in the transition to non-burning alternatives such as recycling or waste disposal, with specific focus on providing assistance to small growers.

To assist in the transition the Governing Board approved the following program to aid in the deployment of non-burning alternatives for the disposition of raisin trays under the following criteria: (1) program funding is available for the 2023 harvest season to assist in the transition to non-burning alternatives ahead of the adopted phase-out deadline of January 1, 2024 for raisin tray burning, (2) funding is on a per acre basis, not to exceed \$35 per acre or total cost of utilizing the non-burning alternative, (3) operate on a first-come first-served basis through an easy-to-access rebate process that includes verification of the total acreage farmed for eligibility and the utilization of a non-burning alternative, (4) reserve a minimum of 50% of program funds for small farming operations that are less than a total of 100 acres farmed throughout the Valley, (5) a funding cap for all farming operations with a total acreage of over 100 acres farmed throughout the Valley to \$2,000 per entity.

Approve Zero-Emission Heavy-Duty Truck Demonstration Project with OK Produce

The Valley Air District Governing Board approved a zero-emission heavy-duty truck demonstration project with OK Produce. Under funding previously approved by the Governing Board in the amount of \$23,422,298, the District is partnering with OK Produce to deploy 50 advanced technology, zero-emission heavy-duty trucks and associated charging infrastructure at their Fresno facility. OK Produce was identified as a partner due to their existing electric truck demonstration activities, their location in the South Central Fresno AB 617 community and the existing availability of necessary electrical power at their facility to support the associated vehicle charging infrastructure. OK Produce is a local Valley fleet and has committed to retire 50 existing in-use diesel trucks and deploy 50 zero-emission class 8 battery electric heavy-duty trucks and associated charging infrastructure to serve their routes throughout the region. Upon full project implementation, more than half of OK Produce's heavy-duty truck fleet will be zero-emission.

Adopt Emissions Inventory, Precursor Demonstration, and BACM Analysis for 2012 Annual PM2.5 Standard

The Governing Board took action through approving the Initial SIP Requirements for the 2012 Annual PM2.5 Standard (Initial SIP Requirements), which fulfills the first portion of SIP elements required by the CAA for Serious PM2.5 nonattainment areas, including an updated emissions inventory, precursor demonstration, and the demonstration that BACM requirements continue to be satisfied in the Valley. Additionally, the District has fulfilled NNSR requirements through amendments to District Rule 2201 (New and Modified Stationary Source Review Rule) in April 2023. These actions continue the District's progress in developing the revised attainment plan for the 2012 annual PM2.5 standard of 12 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

The District and CARB will continue to conduct an open public process as the remaining elements of the Plan requirements are developed over the coming months. These elements include the final modeling analysis, attainment strategy and emission reduction commitments, reasonable further progress/quantitative milestones, and contingency measures to support the Valley’s attainment of this standard as early as practicable. Following an ongoing public process, the final plan elements are expected to be brought before the Governing Board for consideration in early 2024.

September District Activities

Outreach and Communications

- In September, the Valley Air District announced Clean Air Centers map now available. During episode of poor air quality due to impacts by wildfires, the public can visit a Clean Air Center. Similar to the Valley’s cooling centers, the District’s Clean Air Centers provide a place for relief when wildfires and smoke events occur. To see a map of locations, visit the clean Air Centers website: www.valleyair.org/cleanaircenters
- The District spent September reminding growers that the phase out of open agricultural burning continues. Starting January 1, 2024, tighter restrictions will begin for some in the ag community. To help farmers with the transition, the Valley Air District encourages farmers to take advantage of the Ag Burn Alternatives grant program, which provides incentives with the processing of vineyard and orchard removals through non-burning alternatives. For more information on the upcoming phase-out requirements and the Ag Burn Alternatives grant program, visit www.valleyair.org/agburnalternatives
- In September, District staff responded to 6 media calls, 33 public calls, 32 emails, and participated in fourteen events/presentations.

Grants and Incentive Programs

	September 2023	Grants Offered		Amount Paid
Key	Program	Number of Contracts Sent Out	Sum of Grant Funding	Sum of Grant Funding
Burn Cleaner	Wood Stove Change Out	194	\$692,650.00	\$682,006.09
CAP & Trade	Demonstration	0	\$0.00	\$50,683.16
Community Benefit	Residential	2,800	\$546,755.97	\$680,708.50
Commuter Subsidy	Transit Bus Subsidy	0	\$0.00	\$1,700.00
Heavy-Duty	Ag Burn Alternative	122	\$4,749,360.00	\$3,050,756.78
	Ag-UTV	68	\$918,000.00	\$656,821.17
	Dairy Feed Mixer	0	\$0.00	\$2,772,000.49
	Off-Road	70	\$7,935,555.13	\$9,431,270.05
	On-Road	0	\$0.00	\$2,914,000.00
	School Bus	6	\$2,998,809.06	\$0.00

Lawn & Garden	Commercial	18	\$32,000.00	\$123,924.14
	Residential	791	\$91,311.35	\$84,180.29
Light Duty	Charge Up	0	\$0.00	\$156,000.00
	Drive Clean	1,373	\$4,061,000.00	\$2,717,000.00
	EFMP	6	\$50,000.00	\$364,000.00
	TITU	203	\$1,066,796.53	\$779,538.11
Public Benefit	Alternative Fuel	5	\$81,272.83	\$0.00
	Clean Air Centers	0	\$0.00	\$44,757.56
VW NOx Mitigation	Replacement	2	\$432,000.00	\$0.00
Totals		5,658	\$23,655,510.87	\$24,509,346.34

Reductions from Executed Contracts (tons)			
NOx	PM	ROG	Total
6,169	724	605	7,498

Upcoming Meetings

Governing Board*

9:00 AM, Dec. 21

Citizens Advisory Committee*

10:00 AM, Jan. 2

Environmental Justice Advisory Group

5:30 PM, Jan. 25

Meetings are held in the Fresno office Governing Board Room, Modesto VTC room and Bakersfield VTC room.

Details: www.valleyair.org

*Webcast