

Actions by the Governing Board – April 25, 2024

Review and Provide Comment on the 2023 Annual Report to the Community

The purpose of the Annual Report to the Community is to provide Valley residents with a detailed account of the District's operations in the preceding year. In contrast to the many detailed, highly scientific and technical reports that are regularly published by the District, this report outlines the District's goals, objectives, legal obligations, and actions in a more concise and easy to follow format for the general public. At the April Governing Board meeting, the Board provided comments and feedback on the 2023 report. The report details the milestone clean air year for air quality, current regulatory challenges faced by the District and the extensive growth in the District's emissions reduction incentive programs, reviews the accomplishments of the past year and highlights key issues faced by Valley with regard to air quality. Once finalized, the report will be translated into Spanish and copies will be available online at www.valleyair.org and as printed hardcopies upon request.

Report on 2023-2024 Winter Residential Woodsmoke Reduction Strategy

The Valley Air District Governing Board heard a comprehensive report on the 2023-2024 Winter Residential Woodsmoke Reduction Strategy. This was the fifth season implemented under the 2019 amendments to the wood-burning rule, which significantly increased the number of no-burn days in the Hot Spot counties of Madera, Fresno, and Kern. As described in more detail below, the Valley achieved the following PM_{2.5} air quality milestones during the 2023-2024 winter season:

- Set record low average PM_{2.5} concentration across the counties of the Valley
- Recorded zero exceedances of the 65 µg/m³ federal 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard for a fifth consecutive year, contributing to the Valley's ongoing attainment of this standard and progress towards attaining other PM_{2.5} standards
- Measured lowest number of days Valley counties exceeded 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard of 35 µg/m³ and set new record of zero exceedances of the 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard for the months of January and February (95% of days across counties met 24-hour PM_{2.5} health standard during 2023-24 winter season)
- Maintained continued progress in increasing number of "Good" and "Moderate" Air Quality Index (AQI) days across all of the counties in the District
- Winter season PM_{2.5} speciation analysis shows that air quality has greatly improved for key components of PM_{2.5} as a result of the District's Residential Woodsmoke Reduction Strategy, Fireplace and Woodstove Change-out incentive program, and other air quality improvement strategies

This winter season also included the successful implementation of the Fireplace and Woodstove Change-out grant program, with over \$5.5 million in funding for over 1,400 vouchers issued for residents to upgrade to clean wood burning devices during 2023-24. Nearly 96% of the funding was used to purchase natural gas devices. Since 2009, the District has issued over 30,000 vouchers for an allocation of over \$64.3 million.

This past winter saw another successful outreach campaign implemented with an increased emphasis on health impacts of wood smoke through messaging within paid advertisements, educational videos, social media and other outreach opportunities. Valley residents expressing significant interest in residential wood burning and air quality with over 260,000 visits to the District's daily curtailment status webpage, over 34,000 calls to the District's 1-800-SMOG-INFO number, and over 290 complaints for suspected wood burning activity. The success of this past winter season would not have been possible without the commitment from Valley residents to reduce their wood burning emissions, coupled with the District's multi-faceted program that utilizes wood burning curtailments, incentives, public education/outreach, and strong enforcement to reduce wood smoke.

Approve Project Plans and Reallocate Community Emissions Reduction Program Funding for Implementation of Incentive Programs within AB 617 Communities of Shafter, Arvin/Lamont, and Stockton

The Governing Board took action to approve and reallocate funding for various Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP) projects under within the AB 617 communities of Shafter, Arvin/Lamont, and Stockton. These CERP measures, which were co-developed with community residents and stakeholders, and approved by the District's Governing Board and the California Air Resources Board (CARB), aim to reduce emissions and exposure to local air pollution. Board approval gives the District authority to use CERP funding for the construction of new bike lanes and sidewalks, paving of roads to reduce dust emissions, and replacement of gas- and diesel-powered landscaping equipment with electric alternatives. These projects are designed to reduce emissions, enhance safety, and promote sustainable transportation, thereby improving air quality and public health in these communities.

Specifically, the Board took action to approve the Road, Sidewalk, and Bike Lane Improvements project plans for Arvin/Lamont, reallocate \$1,275,000 for a City of Shafter Bike Lane project, and shift \$600,000 from the Locomotive Switcher Replacement Measure to road and bike lane improvements in the Mexican Colony area in the Shafter community. Additionally, \$386,628 was reallocated from the School Air Filtration Measure to the Commercial Lawn and Garden Equipment Measure in the Stockton CERP. These measures were proposed to enhance local infrastructure and reduce emissions in the AB 617 communities, reflecting the priorities set by the respective Community Steering Committees (CSCs).

Adopt Proposed Ozone Contingency Measure State Implementation Plan Revision for the 2008 and 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standards

The Valley Air District's Governing Board adopted the Ozone Contingency Measure SIP Revision for the 2008 and 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standards to revise the District's contingency measure commitment for the 2008 and 2015 8-hour ozone NAAQS. The strategy, which follows EPA's recently published draft guidance on contingency, includes an analysis of potential contingency measures, previously adopted contingency measures within District Rule 4601 (Architectural Coatings) and CARB's smog check contingency measure for mobile sources, and District commitments to include contingency measures for several identified coating categories and VOC contents. The District will continue to work with CARB and EPA as this strategy is evaluated and implemented over the coming years.

March District Activities

Outreach and Communications

- In March, the District dedicated many days to visiting numerous school campuses, speaking to classrooms, and presenting on air quality challenges and ways students can make a difference. Additionally, we attended several school carnivals to engage with Valley families and share resources and tools available through the Air District.
- The District spent March promoting the Clean Green Yard Machine grant program (for Valley residents) and Zero-Emission Landscaping Equipment Voucher Program (for Valley professional landscapers). To learn more about these programs, visit valleyair.org/CGYM and valleyair.org/ZELE.
- In March, District staff responded to 4 media calls, 22 public calls, 41 emails, and participated in twenty-two events/presentations.

Grants and Incentive Programs

	March 2024	Grants Offered		Amount Paid
Key	Program	Number of Contracts Sent Out	Sum of Grant Funding	Sum of Grant Funding
AB617	Vegetative Barriers	0	\$0.00	\$48,724.01
Burn Cleaner	Wood Stove Change Out	190	\$739,050.00	\$1,282,679.00
Community Benefit	Alt to Fireworks	1	\$20,000.00	\$0.00
	Residential	0	\$0.00	\$21,089.16
Heavy - Duty	Ag Burn Alternative	125	\$5,058,168.10	\$15,022,025.37
	Ag Engine	0	\$0.00	\$39,516.56
	Ag-UTV	85	\$1,147,500.00	\$612,549.73
	Dairy Feed Mixer	0	\$0.00	\$399,381.92
	Infrastructure	4	\$6,502,548.00	\$0.00
	Off-Road	142	\$16,770,850.01	\$8,685,378.80
	On-Road	6	\$382,805.50	\$416,640.00
	School Bus	0	\$0.00	\$1,885,703.12
Lawn & Garden	Commercial	101	\$344,838.42	\$107,908.32
	Residential	347	\$35,198.41	\$22,452.10
Light Duty	Charge Up	12	\$388,000.00	\$232,000.00
	Drive Clean	2	\$6,000.00	\$465,000.00
	EFMP	357	\$4,096,500.00	\$1,947,000.00
	TITU	211	\$1,414,833.43	\$940,260.81
Public Benefit	Alternative Fuel	14	\$278,100.02	\$140,000.00
	Clean Air Centers	0	\$0.00	\$4,428.30
Special Projects	Raisin Tray Rebate	8	\$4,479.21	\$9,909.08
VW NOx Mitigation	Replacement	18	\$4,639,547.58	\$0.00
	Totals	1,623	\$41,828,418.68	\$32,282,646.28

Reductions from Executed Contracts (tons)			
NOx	PM	ROG	Total
560	2,800	416	3,776

Upcoming Meetings

Governing Board*

9:00 AM, Jun. 20

Citizens Advisory Committee*

10:00 AM, Aug. 6

Environmental Justice Advisory Group

5:30 PM, Jun. 27

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

Details: www.valleyair.org

**Webcast*