

The San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District FAQ

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is made up of eight counties in California's Central Valley: San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley portion of Kern.

The District is governed by a fifteen (15) member Governing Board consisting of representatives from counties, large and small cities, and representatives appointed by the Governor.

The Air District's Mission

The San Joaquin Valley Air District is a public health agency whose mission is to improve the health and quality of life for all Valley residents through efficient, effective and entrepreneurial air quality-management strategies.

Is there an air pollution problem?

Currently, the Valley is federally classified as extreme non-attainment for the federal 1-hr ground-level ozone, serious non-attainment for the federal 8-hr ground-level ozone, serious non-attainment for particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM10) standard, and non-attainment for particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5) standard.

What causes air pollution?

Ozone precursor emission sources are generally divided into two categories: stationary and mobile. PM10 sources generally fall into two categories: human (anthropogenic) activity and natural sources (nonanthropogenic).

How much comes from other areas?

While some of our pollution is blown in from other areas, most of our air pollution is home grown and it is our responsibility to clean it up.

What are the health effects of pollution?

Some health effects of smog and other types of air pollution include:

- Irritation of mucous membranes
- Coughing and wheezing
- Chest pain and tightness
- Dry throat
- Headache
- Nausea
- Fatigue

Air pollutants such as ground-level ozone and particulate matter can aggravate chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma and bronchitis. When exposed to high levels, people may experience shortness of breath, pain during deep breaths, and impaired lung function.

What you can do to reduce air pollution?

- Learn about the Healthy Air Living movement at <http://www.healthyairliving.com/welcome.htm#WhyHal>
- Join the Healthy Air Living movement and fill out a pledge form for yourself personally at http://www.healthyairliving.com/docs/Individuals_Pledge%20Card.pdf , your business at http://www.healthyairliving.com/docs/Business_PledgeCard.pdf, or your faith community at http://www.healthyairliving.com/docs/Business_PledgeCard.pdf
- Encourage your employer to become a Spare the Air Employer Partner to educate and encourage employees on pollution prevention activities. Sign up at <http://www.valleyair.org/sta/staidx.htm>
- Carpool whenever possible.
- Organize errands into one motor vehicle trip, not several.
- Walk, ride a bike, or use public transportation.
- Shop by phone, mail, or Internet.
- Telecommute.
- On smoggy days, postpone yard care with gasoline-powered equipment, or better yet, use electric or manual tools.
- For clean fun in the sun, try sailing, swimming, hiking or cycling but remember to consider air quality and your health when planning outdoor activities.
- When air quality is poor, postpone the use of your motor boat or off-road vehicle for 24 hours.
- Start your briquettes with electric or chimney starters or use a propane or natural gas barbecue.
- Paint with rollers and brushes, and use water-based paints instead of oil-based.
- Keep the tops closed on all paints and solvents and store them in airtight containers.
- Use solid or gel alternatives to aerosol and pump sprays.
- Keep your car in good working condition.
- Maintain proper tire pressure.
- Don't top off the gas tank.
- When replacing your vehicle, look for the most efficient, lowest polluting model.
- Redesign or modify processes at the worksite to reduce waste, energy, and emissions.
- Improve methods for handling of materials, storage, and management practices to reduce waste, spills, leaks, and fugitive emissions.