

# SB 705: San Joaquin Valley Implementation to Date and Future Obligations

**Central Valley Summit on  
Alternatives to Open Burning of Agricultural Waste  
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**Samir Sheikh**

Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer  
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District



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# Background

- The San Joaquin Valley has the toughest restrictions on burning of agricultural materials in the state (Rule 4103)
- District operates a comprehensive Smoke Management System (no burning allowed when atmospheric conditions are not conducive to good dispersion)
- Until 2014, restrictions reduced ag burning by 80%
  - Exceptional drought and demise of biomass power industry threaten this progress
- If an adequate number of feasible alternatives are not made available, the District may have to roll back the successful measures that have reduced emissions from open burning of agricultural waste or endure the economic devastation of Valley agriculture



# Reduction of Open Burning

- 2003 Senate Bill 705 (Florez) adopted requiring the phase-out of ag open burning by crop type according to the following schedule:
  - 2005: Field Crops, Prunings, and Weed Abatement
  - 2007: Orchard Removals
  - 2010: Other Materials, Vineyard Removals, and Prunings from Surface Harvested Crops
  - Strict criteria allows for conditional permits for burning diseased crops, and postponement of phase-out allowed where justified by economic and technical impediments
- SB 705 implemented by the District through Rule 4103 and the District's Smoke Management System



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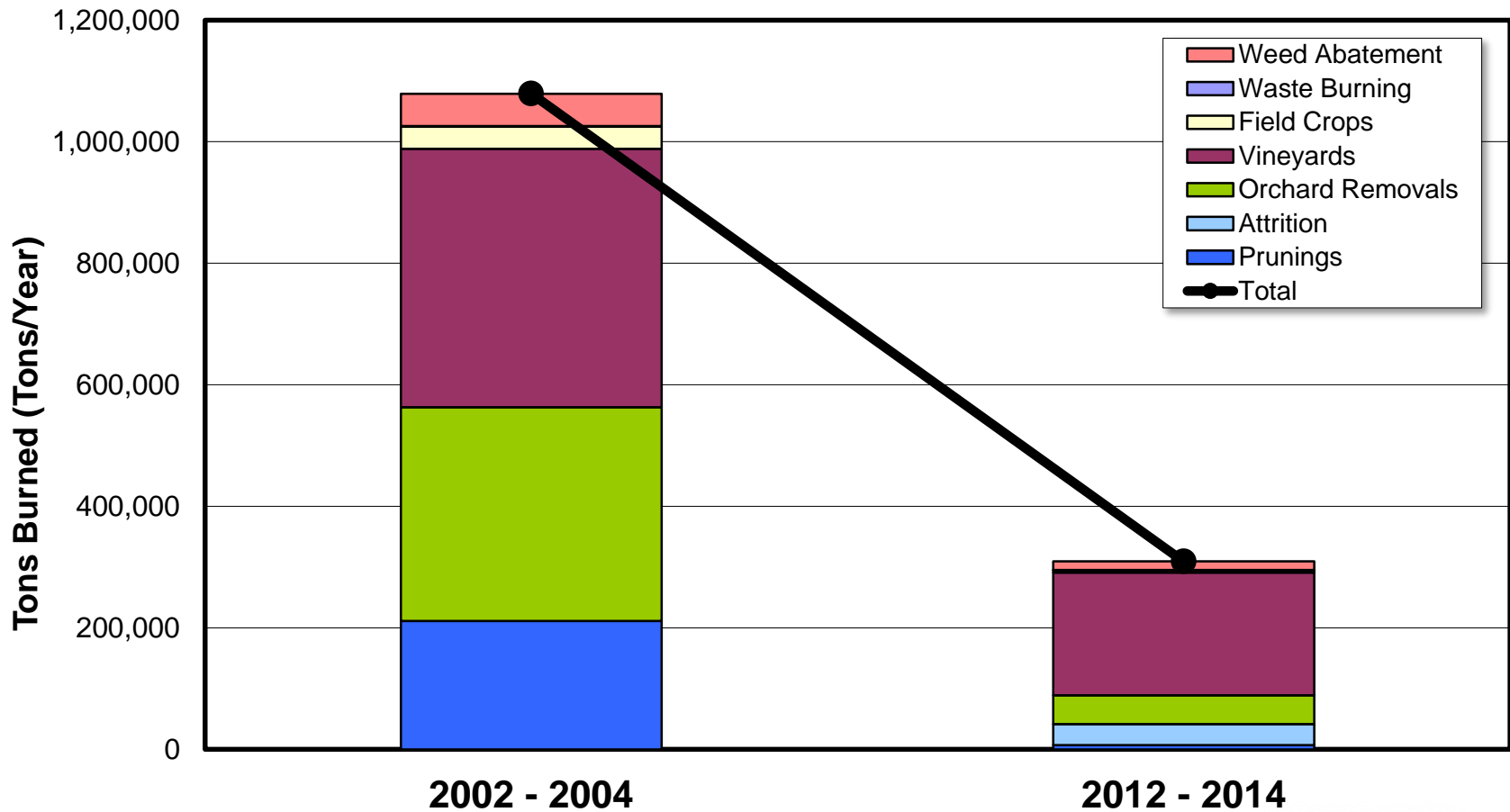
# Smoke Management System

- The limited open burning still allowed is managed under the District's comprehensive Smoke Management System to minimize ambient air quality impacts
  - Burn permits and daily authorization required
  - Analyze potential impacts, local meteorology, air quality conditions, atmospheric holding capacity, and amount of burning allowed
  - Limit burn allocations by zones (103 zones across the Valley)
  - Burning is only allowed if atmospheric conditions are such that no adverse air quality impacts are expected
- District balances the impacts of agricultural burning, wildfires, prescribed burning and residential wood burning
  - No agricultural burning is allowed when wildfire impacts are severe
  - No agricultural burning is allowed when no burn day for fireplaces
- Valley had cleanest year on record in 2016 despite increase in agricultural burning



# Phase-Out of Ag Open Burning

Annual Average Agricultural Open Burning Emissions  
Tons of Material Burned



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# Current Restrictions Under Threat

- Under SB 705, burning prohibitions can be suspended if:
  - No long-term funding commitment for biomass power plants
  - No economically feasible alternative means of eliminating the waste
  - Open-burning of material would not contribute to air quality violation
- District wishes to avoid rolling back current prohibitions on open burning of agricultural waste
  - Hearing Board abatement order as a temporary measure until viable alternatives avoiding rollbacks called for under SB 705 are identified
- Valley has lost significant biomass capacity (biomass plants main alternative to open burning of ag waste)
  - Over 20 plants in 1980s, down to 5 plants today
  - Drought and tree mortality have created large amounts of woody waste
  - State pushing more forest waste to remaining biomass plants
- Estimated 1.8 million tons of agricultural woody material generated annually

