

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT MEDIA RELEASE

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Air District's PM10 Attainment Plan Approved

This afternoon, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Governing Board approved a plan that will reduce 275 tons per day of harmful particulates from the Valley's air by 2010. The controls specified in the plan address particulates from a variety of sources including businesses, industry, mobile, agricultural, construction and wood burning.

The controls will include new and stricter regulations for industry, as well as controls on mobile sources under the authority of state and federal agencies. Additionally, for the first time particulate matter controls will be enforced upon on-field agricultural operations. Among the components of the District's 2003 PM10 Attainment Demonstration Plan is the implementation of the Agricultural Conservation Management Practices (CMP). These will be highly individualized plans developed in cooperation with the agricultural community and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. These plans are tailored to the specific crop being farmed.

The plan includes other important strategies for achieving its objective of reducing PM10 emissions - tiny particulates in the air less than 1/7 the width of a human hair - by five percent per year as required by the federal Clean Air Act. These include Regulation VIII - Fugitive Dust Rule Upgrades, which addresses dust that is released into the atmosphere as a result of travel on unpaved roads, construction and other activities that disturb the soil; and amendments to Rule 4901 - Residential Wood Combustion, which include wood stoves and fireplace restrictions.

The Valley has significantly reduced particulate levels over the last decade. During the early 1990s, the Valley violated the 24-hour federal particulate matter standard on an average of 35 days each year. During 1999 to 2001, Valley Air District monitoring stations captured only two violations of the federal standard. Because PM10 is monitored once every six days, these two instances translate to an estimated 12 days over the federal limit. Despite this progress, the San Joaquin Valley still fails to achieve attainment of the federal one-hour particulate matter standard.

As a result of today's approval, the California Air Resources Board will hold a rare hearing in the San Joaquin Valley to consider the 2003 PM10 Attainment Demonstration Plan prior to potential submission to the Environmental Protection Agency. The meeting will be held 9:00am on Thursday, June 26 in the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District office, 1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue in Fresno. Residents also can participate via video teleconference at the Air District's regional offices at 2700 M Street, Suite 375 in Bakersfield and at 4230 Kiernan Avenue, Suite 130 in Modesto.