

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT MEDIA RELEASE

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District halts financial incentive program for clean-air passenger vehicles

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution District is no longer accepting applications for the clean-air vehicle program that gave cash incentives to Valley residents, companies and agencies to purchase alternative fuel passenger vehicles. State budget constraints led the District to discontinue funding for the successful Light- and Medium-Duty Vehicle Program, which offered up to \$3,000 toward the purchase of an electric, gas-electric hybrid or natural gas car or light-duty truck.

"The program was among the first to give private citizens incentives to try hybrid vehicles," said Air Pollution Control Officer David L. Crow. "Because of this funding, the Valley will see 21 fewer tons of smog-causing emissions over the lifetimes of these vehicles."

Since the program's launch in February 2001, the District has granted \$750,000 to help defray the cost of 374 vehicles throughout the San Joaquin Valley. This includes 344 hybrid, eight electric and 22 compressed natural gas-fueled vehicles. The program also funded 44 electric police bicycles.

"The program successfully encouraged the public to accept and purchase hybrid vehicles and other alternative fuel technologies," said Mr. Crow. Hybrid vehicles powered by both gas engines and electric motors (such as the Honda Insight and Toyota Prius) were eligible for program incentives, as were vehicles fueled by compressed natural gas, liquefied petroleum, methanol, ethanol or electricity.

"Valley residents are much more comfortable with these technologies now. The program helped consumers see that hybrid vehicles are a legitimate option. These cars are practical, affordable, user friendly and cleaner than the gas-powered alternatives," Crow said.

Despite the end of the light- and medium-duty program, the District will continue to offer financial incentives to heavy-duty engine owners who switch to cleaner technologies. These Incentives help fund cleaner-burning retrofits of heavy-duty on-road vehicles, off-road vehicles, locomotives, marine vessels, electric forklifts, and stationary agricultural pumps.