

Valley's poor air quality subject of two workshops

MODESTO BEE STAFF REPORTS, November 5, 2002

Two public workshops to discuss the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's progress on developing a plan to reduce airborne dust and soot are set for Wednesday.

The valley is among the six worst places in the nation for these particles, which are associated with lung disease, cardiac disease and increased risk of cancer.

The workshops are scheduled at 1:30 and 6:30 p.m. at the district's regional office in Fresno; people can participate at the Modesto regional office via videoconferencing.

Officials said the first workshop will provide detailed technical information about how the district is coming up with emissions data, and the second will provide more background on the problem and a less technical discussion of emissions.

At both workshops, the district is expected to present a list of control measures being considered.

The air district's Modesto regional office is at 4230 Kiernan Road. For more information, call Dave Mitchell, (559) 230-5800.

Air quality folks fine Shell refinery \$510,000

The Associated Press, November 5, 2002

Martinez(AP) - - **San Francisco Bay area air quality** regulators have slapped a 510,000 dollar fine on the Shell Oil refinery in Martinez.

The latest bill brings the total fines for Shell's Contra Costa County operation to nearly one-point-two (m) million dollars in the past month.

The latest fine settles two years of air quality violations. Some are related to an October 2001 incident that sent black smoke, gritty powder and a noxious yellow plume over Martinez for almost a week.

The fine also covers a sulfur release last April.

Last month, the refinery paid \$675,000 to settle criminal charges of negligence over that accident last October.

(San Francisco Chronicle)

[Letter to the Editor, Modesto Bee, November 5, 2002:](#)

Clean technology

Your recent article discussing consumer preference for large, low mile-per-gallon vehicles ("Fuel efficiency falls," Oct. 30, Page A-1) contained an excellent discussion of how low fuel-efficiency vehicles contribute to smog and air pollution.

Burning fossil fuels, such as coal, oil and natural gas, causes increased heat by blanketing the planet in carbon dioxide, trapping heat in the atmosphere. This global warming means more heat, more smog, and many more related health problems.

Fortunately, alternatives to fossil fuels exist. All styles of automobiles can be powered by fuel cell technology. It's up to automakers to offer this technology to consumers.

Fossil fuels mean a dirty future for our air and our health. Clean energy is the smart choice for a healthier tomorrow. Automakers must do more to offer consumers the styles of vehicles they want with the fuel efficiency or fuel cell technology that we all need.

MELANIE SCHMIDT

Washington