

# AIR CURRENTS

BAY AREA AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## New Wood-Burning Regulation Enforced Winter Spare the Air Season Closes

The Bay Area's *Winter Spare the Air* season came to a close on February 28, with a total of 11 *Winter Spare the Air Alerts* issued, and 13 days over the federal air quality standards.

This year, getting the word out about *Winter Spare the Air Alerts* mattered more than ever as the Air District began enforcing a new rule regulating residential wood burning in the Bay Area.

The Air District's wood burning rule, passed by the Air District's Board of Directors in July 2008, was developed to protect Bay Area residents from the hazards of wood smoke.

Wood smoke pollution is a serious health concern, primarily because it contains fine particulate matter, or PM2.5. These small particles, which are 2.5 micrometers or smaller, are less than one

quarter the size of a human hair, can bypass filters in the nose and throat, and can be inhaled deeply into the respiratory system. Exposure to high concentrations of PM2.5 is linked to respiratory illnesses such as asthma and bronchitis, and even increased mortality rates.

Wood smoke also contains common pollutants such as carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen, as well as harmful toxins like formaldehyde, benzene and dioxin.

The Air District's new rule bans wood burning in fireplaces and woodstoves during *Winter Spare the Air Alerts*, when air quality is forecast to be unhealthy. It sets restrictions on visible chimney emissions and forbids burning of garbage, plastic, or other inappropriate materials in fireplaces and woodstoves.

In the wintertime, when the weather becomes stagnant, particulate matter can accumulate rapidly. On such evenings, wood burning from the Bay Area's 1.4 million fireplaces and woodstoves accounts for about one-third of the total amount of particulate pollution.

The Air District's wood-burning regulation was developed with input from Bay Area residents who attended a series of workshops and public meetings. Similar regulations have been passed in California by the San Joaquin and Sacramento air districts, as well as in other states such as Washington and Colorado. Stipulations in the rule affect not only residents, but also builders, manufacturers, and retailers, among others.

The wood-burning regulation prohibits the sale and installation of wood-burning devices that are not EPA-certified. Firewood suppliers are re-

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## Air District Issues Inventory of Bay Area Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In December 2008, the Air District released a source inventory of Bay Area greenhouse gas emissions, which estimates greenhouse gases produced by the San Francisco Bay Area in 2007.

This inventory updates the Air District's previous report for base year 2002, which was published in November 2006. All data has been updated to reflect current industrial activity, motor vehicle travel, and economic and population growth. A wider variety of direct and indirect emission sources was incorpo-

rated in the current report. For example, emissions from electricity consumed in the Bay Area but generated outside the region are now included.

The Air District is the only district in California that produces a regional inventory of greenhouse gases. The Air District has also hosted workshops for local governments to develop city and county-wide climate protection strategies based on the inventory data.

To download a copy of the report, go to [www.baaqmd.gov/pln/ghg\\_emission\\_inventory.pdf](http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/ghg_emission_inventory.pdf).



### TOLL-FREE NUMBERS

DAILY AIR QUALITY	1-800-HELP-AIR
COMPLAINT LINE	1-800-334-ODOR
SMOKING VEHICLES	1-800-EXHAUST

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## Air District Begins Developing Clean Air Plan

The Air District is making steady progress in preparing the *Bay Area 2009 Clean Air Plan*. The *2009 Plan* will update the *Bay Area 2005 Ozone Strategy* and review progress in improving air quality in recent years.

The *2009 Plan* will comply with the requirements of the California Clean Air Act to implement “all feasible measures” to reduce ozone. In addition to reducing ozone, the *2009 Plan* will also consider the impacts of control measures on particulate matter, air toxics, and greenhouse gases and provide an integrated plan to address multiple pollutants.

The Air District held public workshops to discuss potential control measures on April 27 in Redwood City, April 29 in Oakland, and April 30 in Petaluma. Additional workshops will be scheduled as the agency progresses toward adopting the plan in fall 2009. For more information about the *Bay Area 2009 Clean Air Plan*, visit the Air District’s website at [www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov).

## Air District Amends Dry Cleaner Regulations

On March 4, 2009, the Air District’s Board of Directors approved a series of amendments to the agency’s dry cleaning regulations. These changes prohibit any new installation or relocation of dry cleaning equipment that uses perchloroethylene, or Perc, a toxic solvent associated with an array of health concerns.

These amendments incorporate recent changes to California state law that phase out all existing Perc dry-cleaning equipment by the year 2023. Stipulations on replacement solvents and equipment are also included in the Air District’s amendments, along with a series of new operational requirements.

The majority of cleaners converting to alternative technologies to meet the new state law have adopted hydrocarbon-based cleaning methods, which are not as environmentally benign as the water-based and carbon-dioxide based methods. In order to investigate these water-based and carbon-dioxide-based cleaning alternatives to Perc, the Air District has also initiated a project with the Institute for Research and Technical Assistance.

Under the Air District and IRTA’s initiative, research and development has been undertaken to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of various water-based and carbon-dioxide-based cleaning systems in order to improve their attractiveness to dry cleaners in the Bay Area and throughout the state.

For more information, contact Air District Air Quality Specialist Marc Nash at 415-749-4677. To view the newly adopted amendments, visit the Air District’s website at [www.baaqmd.gov/pln/ruledev/regulatory\\_public\\_hearings.htm](http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/ruledev/regulatory_public_hearings.htm).

## Air District Continues to Offer Grants for Clean Air Projects

Despite this year’s uncertain economic climate, the Air District will continue to offer a robust program of grant funding in 2009.

Providing incentives for clean air projects is an integral part of the Air District’s ongoing agenda; each year, the agency’s grant programs lead to reductions of tens of thousands of tons of pollutants that would otherwise be emitted into the region’s skies.

In 2009, the Air District will have approximately \$100 million available in incentive funding for public and private agencies. This includes \$20 million from the annual Transportation Fund for Clean Air program, as well as monies that will be disbursed through the Goods Movement and Carl Moyer programs, among others. Most of this funding is restricted for use on heavy-duty engine projects, such as replacing, repowering, or retrofitting heavy-duty diesel trucks or school

buses, but there is also funding available to help implement alternative fuel vehicle projects and trip reduction projects such as shuttles, ridesharing, bicycle facilities, and smart growth. The Air District’s Vehicle Buyback Program will continue to purchase older, more-polluting vehicles from Bay Area residents for scrapping.

The District’s Carl Moyer Program opened for applications on April 15, 2009, and a kickoff workshop was held at the District’s office on April 17, 2009, to provide information to prospective grantees. This program focuses on the reduction of emissions from heavy-duty engines such as trucks, locomotives, off-road equipment, marine vessels, and oceangoing ships.

Visit [www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov) for more information about the Air District’s grant and incentive programs or e-mail us at [grants@BAAQMD.gov](mailto:grants@BAAQMD.gov).

# Air District Conducts Truck Traffic Survey

According to the California Air Resources Board's recent Health Risk Assessment, the average background concentration of diesel particulate matter in West Oakland is three times higher than in the rest of the Bay Area.

The study determined that 71 percent of the health risk from diesel exhaust is related to the emissions from on-road heavy-duty trucks that run through the Port of Oakland daily via the I-580, I-880, and I-980 freeways. These heavy-duty trucks emit diesel particles that can cause respiratory problems, cancer, and premature death.

Due to the key findings concerning overall health impacts to the West Oakland community, the Air District contracted to implement a truck survey that studies the truck traffic patterns and idling activities of West Oakland businesses and refines the truck traffic data used to develop the Health Risk Assessment.

This project was headed by Dr. Phil Martien, Senior Advanced Projects Advisor at the Air District. Local community members were recruited as truck counters and supervised by the West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project. Air District staff participated in the study to audit the initial truck counts.



Air District staff member Amy Leung participates in the Air District's truck traffic survey project, designed to provide data about diesel truck activities near the Port of Oakland.

The truck survey began in August 2008, and consisted of teams of two stationed at 38 survey locations. The surveys were completed in two shifts, morning and afternoon. Each team was trained, assigned to a designated intersection, and equipped with all necessary materials and safety equipment.

Each team counted trucks manually by observing six of the twelve possible truck movements on an hourly basis, while recording the number of axles on

each truck and assessing whether Port truck types were bobtail, chassis, or container. The traffic counters were also instructed to write down at least ten truck license plates per hour, data that would be used to develop an age distribution of diesel trucks in West Oakland.

With the Air Resources Board's regulation prohibiting heavy-duty trucks from idling for more than five minutes, another objective of this truck survey was to find out where

and for how long trucks idle in the West Oakland community.

The Air District will compile and analyze the information collected, compare it with the data used in CARB's Health Risk Assessment, and issue a report in the summer of 2009 summarizing the study and findings. This report will be used to help the District improve outreach to the West Oakland Community and develop further strategies for reducing emissions.

## Winter Spare the Air

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quired to label their wood as "seasoned" or "unseasoned" appropriately.

In order to spread the word to Bay Area residents, the Air District undertook an extensive public outreach campaign that included PSA messages on TV and radio; op-eds placed in local papers; advertising in movie theaters, and on milk cartons, grocery carts, and billboards; letters to elected officials, local government and community and trade organizations; presentations at local rotary clubs and chambers of commerce;

and even neighborhood door-to-door canvassing.

A new phone line, 1-877-4NO-BURN, was set up to inform residents when *Winter Spare the Air Alerts* are in effect and provide a means of submitting wood smoke complaints. Nearly 500,000 calls were placed to the 1-877-4NO-BURN line. For the first time, Bay Area residents were offered the option of registering for automatic Phone Alerts notifying them on days it was illegal to use their wood-burning devices. Over 12,000 residents signed up for this service. And the Air District's automatic e-mail AirAlert

notification subscriber list doubled, from 50,000 at the beginning of the *Winter Spare the Air* season to 100,000 at the season's close.

The Air District's Compliance and Enforcement staff received almost 1,500 complaints and issued 254 warning letters for first-time offenders. Air District surveys indicated that 77 percent of respondents supported the wood burning rule.

For more detailed information about the new wood burning regulation, visit our websites at [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org) and [www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov).

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## Air District Invites Public to Sign Up for PSD Mailing List

The Air District is inviting members of the public to be included on a mailing list to receive written notice of events relating to the issuance of Prevention of Significant Deterioration, or PSD, permits.

PSD permits are federal air pollution permits issued by the Air District under the federal Clean Air Act for facilities that emit more than U.S. Environmental Protection Agency specified amounts of certain air pollutants. When the Air District proposes to issue a PSD permit in the Bay Area, it publishes a draft of the permit and invites members of the public to comment on it. The Air District also publishes a notice when it has scheduled a public hearing on a draft PSD permit, when it proposes to deny a PSD permit, or when an administrative appeal of a PSD permit has been granted.

To receive written notice of PSD permitting events, contact:

Vanessa Hodgson  
Bay Area Air Quality Management District  
939 Ellis Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117  
VHodgson@baaqmd.gov

## Spare the Air on Facebook!



February marked the launch of the "Spare the Air, Bay Area" Facebook page. Show your commitment to clean air by becoming a fan at [www.facebook.com/pages/Spare-the-Air-Bay-Area/47318701051](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Spare-the-Air-Bay-Area/47318701051). Participate in polls and discussions, check for events near you, and share the page with friends.

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