



Media Contacts:

Kristine Roselius
Air District Public Information Office
415-749-4647 / C: 415-519-5419
kroselius@baaqmd.gov

Mollie Petersen
MS&L for Air District & *Spare the Air*
415-293-2806
mollie.petersen@mslworldwide.com

**SUMMER SPARE THE AIR CAMPAIGN SEASON CLOSED
WITH SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYER COMMUTE CHALLENGE**

**Competition encouraged business commuters to help
improve air quality conditions in the Tri-Valley area**

SAN FRANCISCO – November 9, 2009 – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District today announced the winners of the *Summer Spare the Air* “Great Race for Clean Air Challenge.”

Kaiser Permanente won in the Large Business category with over 100 employees participating in the carpooling challenge. For the mid-size category, the City of Pleasanton won with 40 participants, and the winner in the small organizations category was the Hacienda Owners Association, with 100 percent employee participation. The Hacienda Owners Association received an additional distinction, the greatest carbon dioxide savings per capita.

The competition encouraged Tri-Valley commuters to use alternatives to solo driving such as carpooling, transit and biking and vanpooling in an effort to help improve air quality in the Pleasanton, Livermore, Dublin and San Ramon areas.

“Anytime we can encourage people to reduce their use of single occupancy vehicles, like taking transit or joining a carpool, is a win for air quality, traffic congestion and money savings,” said Lisa Fasano, communications director for the Air District. “These organizations showed it is easy and rewarding to Spare the Air Every Day.”

This year’s Great Race for Clean Air Challenge was significantly larger over last year’s program with 14 participating companies reaching nearly 14,000 Tri-Valley employees participating in the program. The two-month Great Race competition achieved four times more CO₂ savings, or 130,000 pounds of CO₂, than in the 2008 program.

“We were proud to be a part of The Great Race – and even more excited that our employees helped us to win,” said Jodie Collins, facility manager for the Kaiser Permanente Pleasanton Technology Campus. “We always encourage our employees to demonstrate Kaiser Permanente’s role as a health advocate. Participating in a competition such as The Great Race exemplifies our commitment to the health of our members, and to the well-being of the people in our communities.”

Every day Bay Area drivers make 7 million trips driving alone, with a majority of drivers commuting to and from work. Unfortunately, studies show that currently only 17 percent of Bay Area vehicles travel in carpool lanes, despite the fact that carpoolers can cross Bay Area bridges toll-free during peak commute hours and enjoy a faster commute. Vehicles in the HOV lanes travel an average of 30 percent faster than in the regular lanes.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency chartered with protecting air quality in the Bay Area. For more information about *Spare the Air*, visit www.sparetheair.org.

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