



# NEWS

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## **Bay Area Air District partners with NASA to study air pollution over region Thursday and Friday**

*NASA aircraft will collect data to improve air pollution understanding*

**SAN FRANCISCO** – Bay Area residents may notice some unusual air traffic taking place this Thursday and Friday over I-680 and other parts of the region. A specially equipped NASA aircraft will be flying as low as 1,000 feet collecting air quality data as part of a central California study to better understand air pollution.

The Bay Area Air District contributed \$28,000 for the Bay Area portion and provided technical staff to collaborate on the project.

“This effort will greatly improve what we know about how air pollution forms and moves in Northern California and our region,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “The data collected through this study will refine the tools currently available to Air District planners and meteorologists who forecast and simulate air pollution in the Bay Area.”

The NASA aircraft flying over the Bay Area will be one of several making similar flights in central California. Each aircraft is specially outfitted with an array of high-tech air quality measuring instruments. The data gathered will be used in concert with ground-level air monitoring networks like the one currently operated by the Bay Area Air District and will shed light on how satellites could be used to make refined measurements through a column of air.

Air quality scientists currently do not know the magnitude of particulates and other air pollutants above the surface layer of the atmosphere. Satellites have so far been unable to distinguish between air pollution high in the atmosphere and near the surface where people live and breathe. This project will help determine where pollution is coming from and how emissions move on a broad-scale level.

NASA plans to launch a fleet of satellites in 2017 which will give scientists the opportunity to better compare the view from space with that from the ground-based information.

The project is a partnership with National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California Air Resources Board, a broad array of universities in California and across the nation, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District ([www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov)) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

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