

# LATEST UPDATES

## FROM THE SAC METRO AIR DISTRICT



### Remembering Mat Ehrhardt

With a heavy heart, we share the very sad news that Mat Ehrhardt, P.E., the long-time Executive Director and Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO) of the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District, was tragically killed by a car while riding his bicycle around downtown Sacramento on June 26.

Mat was an influential player in the air quality space in the greater Sacramento region and a strong voice for rural efforts. In addition to directing a leading air district in California and implementing many innovative initiatives, he was involved with the Cleaner Air Partnership, the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, and the Sacramento Valley Basinwide Air Pollution Control Council. Mat was also a key decision-maker in the region's group of five air districts included in the Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area, a federal designation for air quality planning.

Mat was an exceptional APCO, a brilliant engineer, and a very capable golfer among other talents. He will be sorely missed. We encourage you to take a moment of reflection for Mat and the family and colleagues he leaves behind.

-Alberto Ayala, APCO



## District Updates & Highlights



### Protect Yourself From Wildfire Smoke *New Resources Now Available*

With wildfire season upon us, learn how to protect your family from wildfire smoke impacts. The Sac Metro Air District has published several new resources to help!

Check out our [Wildfire Smoke Information page](#) for a link to the [EPA AirNow Fire & Smoke Map](#), information about current smoke impacts in the Sacramento area, and new Air Quality Action charts for [schools](#), [businesses](#), [public agencies](#), and the [general public](#), among other resources. The District continues to create additional resources and will soon have a video to help schools prepare for wildfire smoke events. Keep an eye out for the video and other tools online.

### Up to \$9,500 Per Household Available for Clean Air Cars... Help Us Get This Funding Into Your Community *Now Accepting Applications*

The District is currently accepting applications from income-qualified residents in eligible zip codes for grants to replace 2007 or older cars or trucks with a hybrid or electric vehicle. Participants can also choose a pre-loaded transit card from Sacramento Regional Transit to use for their public transportation needs. This is the Sac Metro Air District's Clean Cars 4 All (CC4A) program and you can help us spread the word; no one knows your community like you!



Share our [CC4A outreach toolkit](#) with organizations and individuals you think would benefit from the CC4A program. It's easy. The toolkit includes ready-to-use newsletter articles, social media posts, photos, and logos.

The Sac Metro Air District has been working with community partners to promote the program through in-person events in disadvantaged and low-income communities. If you are aware of a community or organization that would like a presentation and/or have questions answered about applying to CC4A, please contact Lia Kollen ([lkollen@airquality.org](mailto:lkollen@airquality.org)).

CC4A is also looking to expand its list of participating car dealerships to provide more options for our grant recipients in the current vehicle market. Any interested car dealerships are encouraged to contact

Gary Bailey ([gbailey@airquality.org](mailto:gbailey@airquality.org)) to become one of our participating car dealerships. See our [list of current car dealerships](#).

CC4A is part of [California Climate Investments](#), a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment — particularly in disadvantaged communities.

To learn more about CC4A, please visit <http://www.SacCleanCars4All.org>.

## Upcoming CC4A Outreach Event

### SMUD Ride & Drive

Saturday, July 23 & Sunday, July 24  
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Arden Fair Mall

### Galt Home & Auto Show

Sunday, October 9  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Littleton Center, Galt

### Oak Park Neighborhood Association

Saturday, August 13  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
McClatchy Park

### Sacramento International Auto Show

Friday-Sunday, October 14-16  
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Cal Expo

### Gardenland Northgate Neighborhood Association

Saturday, September 24  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Smythe Elementary School

## Turning Clean Air Violations Into Community Clean Air Investments 2021 Supplemental Environmental Projects Awarded

The Sac Metro Air District's Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) program funds community-based projects using a portion of penalties collected from air quality violations. We are excited to announce our first awardees.



### Midtown Association - \$85,000

Midtown Association's mission is to make Midtown the center for culture, creativity, and vibrancy in Sacramento's urban core. **Project:** Reduce Midtown Association's carbon footprint by purchasing two electric vehicles, a solar power generator, and converting 53 high-pressure sodium streetlights to LED.



### 350 Sacramento - \$56,900

350 Sacramento focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution in the Sacramento region. **Project:** Provide educational materials and host air filter construction events in South and North Sacramento low-income communities. The air filter workshops will help approximately 600 families in the region protect themselves against wildfire and other pollution.

The Supplemental Environmental Project program is a part of the District's contribution to a local strategy to reduce emissions in our underserved communities. Get more information on the [program](#).

## District Makes a SPLASH by Engaging Students in Air Quality and Climate Change Issues

Each year, the Sac Metro Air District participates in a variety of community outreach and educational efforts. Some programs we've hosted so far this year include:

### Rio Americano Social Media Contest

This spring, the District partnered with Rio Americano High School and their Civitas program on a yearlong project to promote projects with positive climate and air quality outcomes. Branded as "Be the Change to Climate Change," students were asked to create a two-to-three-minute video on a topic related to climate and air quality that was important to them.

Led by Isabella Jimenez, a District intern and senior in the Civitas program, student videos were judged by a panel of experts from the District, and prizes were awarded to first (\$500) and second place (\$300). Watch first place winner [Joceline Perez's video](#).

Thank you to Isabella for all her hard work throughout the year. Best of luck in your future endeavors.



### Splash Sacramento's Youth Environmental Leadership Camp

In June, the District hosted three field trips for 6th- and 7th-grade students participating in Splash Sacramento's Youth Environmental Leadership Camp. Students visited the District's newly renovated Folsom Monitoring Station to tour the station, learn about the equipment and careers at the District, test portable air sensors, and participate in a fun trivia game to test their air quality knowledge.

## District and City of Sacramento Partner to Empower Residents with Air Quality Data

The Sac Metro Air District has partnered with the [City of Sacramento](#) on a new [portable air monitoring project](#) to enhance real-time local air quality information in the City of Sacramento's underserved communities.

The project will deploy portable air sensors that primarily measure particulate matter, empowering residents to adjust their daily outdoor activities and take steps to protect themselves, especially during wildfire smoke events. This project will also enhance air quality data by increasing the number and locations of portable air sensors in more neighborhoods.

The project is supported by a one-time investment from the Sacramento City Council to advance the City's near-term climate action priorities, as outlined in the [2021 Climate Implementation Work Plan](#).

For the first part of the project, which will begin in late summer or early fall, the District will deploy 100 portable sensors in Sacramento. Businesses, residences, and schools will have the opportunity to apply to receive portable air sensors, with priority going to underserved communities.

The second part of the project, slated for this winter, involves innovative block-by-block monitoring, which will provide air monitoring at a finer scale. Street-level monitoring may include air quality instruments equipped on aerial vehicles, on-road vehicles, drones, or other mobile platforms. The goal is to create a dense network of portable sensors that can provide a high-quality representation of pollutant concentrations at the street level. Watch for more information about this project in the coming months!



## The Largest Electric School Bus Fleet in North America Just Got Bigger

The Sacramento region has the largest all-electric school bus fleet in North America thanks to the Sac Metro Air District's clean air incentive program . . . and that fleet just got bigger! The Natomas Unified School District has been awarded \$180,000, while the Roseville Joint Union High School District will receive \$400,000, for new EV buses.

The replacement of high-polluting diesel buses with new, zero emission, clean school buses greatly reduces passenger and community exposure to transportation-related air pollution. It also helps school districts with cost savings on fuel, regular maintenance, and repairs.

Learn more about the District's [school bus replacement program](#).

## Hydrogen Fuel: Coming Soon to a Station Near You

The Sac Metro Air District is supporting the growing market for hydrogen and hydrogen fueling stations as part of its commitment to move the region towards adopting zero emission vehicles that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.

When consumed in a fuel cell, hydrogen only emits water and can be produced in a clean manner. This helps improve air quality in our region, especially in communities often impacted by transportation-related emissions.

The District's actions to help bring clean hydrogen to our region include:

- Awarding \$3 million in incentives for hydrogen stations\* in Folsom and South Sacramento
- Awarding over \$4 million in incentives for a heavy-duty truck hydrogen station\* at a soon-to-be-announced location in Sacramento County
- Awarding \$500K towards a hydrogen switcher locomotive and related infrastructure at the Port of Sacramento
- Advocating for hydrogen projects and collaborating with partners across the region
- Exploring additional opportunities for hydrogen production, dispensing, and vehicle use in our region

*\* District-funded hydrogen stations are expected to be operational by 2024.*



## Community Celebrates Renovated Folsom Monitoring Station

In late April, elected officials, their staff, and Folsom residents gathered to celebrate the renovation of the District's Folsom Monitoring Station, a critical capital investment ensuring the Sac Metro Air District's ability to provide the City of Folsom, as well as the larger Sacramento region, with accurate forecasts and

real-time air quality data that helps protect public health, especially during wildfires. The renovation project was a general modernization that included electrical and safety upgrades to meet current building codes as well as additional space for instruments and the site operator.

Media from every major Sacramento television station – KCRA 3/My 58, ABC 10, CBS 13/Good Day Sacramento, Fox 40, and Univision – covered the event. The event included brief remarks from APCO Dr. Ayala and Board Director Aquino before a ribbon-cutting and tours of the facility. In addition to exploring the monitoring station equipment, guests were able to view portable air sensors and review outdoor displays showcasing photos from several phases of the project and real-time air quality data from the station. Watch a [short video recap](#) of the event.

### Sacramento Region Air Districts Respond to "F" Air Quality Rating

On May 9, the Sac Metro Air District, Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District, Placer County Air Pollution Control District, Feather River Air Quality Management District, and El Dorado County Air Quality Management District issued a joint response to the American Lung Association's (ALA) State of The Air Report and the *Sacramento Bee's* coverage of the report on April 22, 2022. The Air Districts addressed the ALA report's ranking of counties based on air quality data that is skewed by extreme but short-term wildfire data and the increasing international transport of pollution that raises background concentrations, resulting in a misleading picture of air pollution emissions in the Sacramento region.

The *Bee's* article omitted these important factors in their coverage of the ALA report as well. In tandem with the joint statement, the Sac Metro Air District also submitted a Letter to the Editor to the *Sacramento Bee* which was published on May 22, 2022. Click the links to read the [May 9 joint statement](#) and [Letter to the Editor](#).

While air quality and public health are absolutely impacted by wildfires, to assign an "F" grade without naming the reason doesn't tell the full story. It also unnecessarily undermines public confidence and denies true progress, which the region has achieved. Thanks to innovative initiatives by the Sac Metro Air District and our regional partners and stringent rules and regulations, air quality in Sacramento (minus the result from wildfires) has improved significantly over the past several decades and will continue to improve.



### SacTown Magazine Q&A with Alberto Ayala

Sac Metro Air District APCO Alberto Ayala is featured in a new [SacTown Magazine Q&A](#) addressing Sacramento air quality, wildfires, the serious health impacts of fine particle pollution, the District's work to advance clean air solutions, especially in the transportation sector, and the importance of equity and environmental justice for future clean air investments.

### Spare The Air Launches New Campaign *New Television and Radio Spots Hit the Air Waves*

This year's Spare The Air season is in full swing! During Spare The Air season, alerts are issued when the Air Quality Index (AQI) is forecast to reach 126 (unhealthy for sensitive groups), or above, and residents are encouraged to drive less or take other measures to reduce pollution when a Spare The Air alert is issued.

This year's "You + Me = Community" campaign focuses on reminding residents that every action makes a difference and encouraging individuals to come together as a community to make a much larger impact on air quality in our region and combat climate change.

Check out this new [TV commercial](#) and watch for radio spots, electronic billboards, and social ads, too!

To learn more about Spare The Air and to sign up for Air Alerts, please visit [www.SpareTheAir.com](http://www.SpareTheAir.com).

## District Quick Links



[Community Air Protection](#)



[Incentive Programs](#)



[Rules](#)



[Permits](#)



[How to file a complaint](#)

