



"Poor Americans Don't Buy New Cars" – Recent Federal Rules for Cleaner, More Fuel-Efficient Cars Are Very Welcome News, But More Must Be Done Now to Improve Access for All to Better Alternatives



Several recent actions by federal agencies, namely by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), to undo the regressive rules of the previous administration, restore California’s authority, and set more stringent vehicle emission and better fuel economy standards for cars starting in 2024 are very welcome news. These actions will put the future U.S. vehicle fleet on a cleaner, lower-carbon path while spurring technological innovation and millions of investment dollars for research and development in the automotive industry. Once again letting California set its own cleaner, more stringent vehicle emission standards than the federal government and allowing other states to do the same is a huge deal. According to the EPA, actions taken under the Trump administration to revoke California’s authority were “decided in error” and would be “entirely rescinded.”

However, the natural turnover of the vehicle fleet takes a very long time - on average more than 15 years. Only a quarter of all car buyers buy new cars. This means, contrary to some federal assertions, the new rules will not promptly address the environmental justice goals of the Biden Administration. These cleaner, more fuel-efficient cars will not trickle down to the used car market to reach our priority consumers for years. These consumers are the low-income Americans that make up most of our marginalized communities lacking the environmental justice that President Biden made a day-one priority for his all-of-government approach.

So, what should be done? As a complement to the new rules, the federal and California governments can direct more funding and expand programs that are already working on the ground and making a difference. More funding for programs and support for state and local governments implementing solutions will ensure that starting today, not in a decade, low-income Americans also can partake in the long-awaited transition to a cleaner, more efficient electric car future. Programs such as the District’s Clean Cars 4 All, Our Community Car Share, our eMobility Hub Car Sharing and Works Program, and others are ready to scale up and reach deeper into disadvantaged communities. These programs give immediate access to participants to the very technologies of the future that the new federal rules will usher in.

-Alberto Ayala, APCO, Sac Metro Air District


For more detail on EPA’s decision, please see their [March 9 press release](#). For more detail on NHTSA’s decision, please see their [April 1 press release](#).


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District Updates & Highlights

The California Mobility Center Showcase – Sac Metro Air District Supports Launching the Sacramento Region to Lead the Future of Zero Emission Mobility



Division Manager Jaime Lemus takes a ride in an Archimoto electric vehicle.



Sac Metro Air District staff attend the CMC Showcase.



APCO Alberto Ayala explores SMUD's new Zeus All-Electric Truck.

The California Mobility Center's (CMC) inaugural Showcase event on March 17 at its “Ramp-up Factory” commemorated its first year of operations and celebrated major milestones reached. The Showcase offered more than 300 guests access to a future mobility technology expo, networking, and an EV showcase and ride-and-drive. Distinguished guests included several state and local elected officials, international partners of the CMC, leaders of prominent regional organizations and universities, media, and representatives of a wide range of sectors including business, automotive, technology, venture capital, and academia.

As a strong supporter and original partner of the CMC, the Sac Metro Air District was a proud co-sponsor of the Showcase. Various leading mobility and equity programs being administered by the District such as Clean Cars 4 All, Our Community Car Share, EV School Bus Deployment, and several others were on display. In addition, APCO Dr. Alberto Ayala kicked off the formal agenda with a keynote address on Clean Air Policy, EVs, and Equity. During the event, he also took some time to speak with respected journalist Jon Rosner, with the Clean Fleet Report, about California’s “secret sauce” for success in the clean mobility arena.

“There is no accident that Sacramento is the seat of government, and the state of California has been leading the environmental fight for many years. The policies that have helped create markets were born here,” Ayala said. “You’ve got folks that have these new ideas and the rest of us are here to understand the ideas and to better design the policies, or advocate for the policies, that best support these innovations. And now when you consider what is happening at the federal level the potential for impact from the CMC is even greater.”

To read the full story featuring Dr. Ayala’s interview, please visit the Clean Fleet Report website [here](#).

Board and Elected Officials Tour Future Site of the Region's First Zero Emission Mobility Hub



In March, the Sac Metro Air District Board of Directors and elected officials toured the future site of the region’s first zero emission mobility hub. The hub is located at 3741 May Street on the corner of May Street and Grand Avenue in Del Paso Heights. An idea borne out of a coordinated multi-agency regional vision of future e-mobility, eMobility Hubs are nodes of community transportation options and future jobs and housing.

Principally funded by the District, this first hub is an innovative concept for mobility that will greatly benefit the community by revitalizing the area, reducing air emissions, and providing transportation services to residents, helping them make trips to social services, training, school, and medical appointments. District staff and project partners welcomed attendees and provided tours of the facility, which included rendered pictures of what the site will look like when finished later this year as well as a virtual reality tour offering a simulation of how to use an EV charger.

When finished, the site will host zero emission micro-transit programs including a fleet of hydrogen fuel cell Toyota Mirais and ZipCar electric vehicles. The hub will also include a parklet, benches with charging stations, and community resources.

For more project information click [here](#).



Protecting Your Health: Sacramento Regional Air Monitoring Projects You Should Know About

From the air monitoring stations we operate as part of a vast federal regulatory network to highly localized projects to monitor air quality in Sacramento’s environmental justice communities, and more, the Sac Metro Air District is working to expand access to air quality data, clean our air, and improve health outcomes for Sacramento County residents!

Learn more about the Sac Metro Air District’s efforts and partnerships with [our Regional Air Monitoring flyer](#) detailing monitoring projects

and programs including our [new partnership with the City of Sacramento](#), among others.

Together, these efforts represent an unprecedented level of air quality monitoring activity that will generate new data to empower communities and inform policies. These projects and programs demonstrate the District’s deep commitment to its mission to achieve state and federal clean air and climate goals, working with partners and residents to expand air quality data in our region, and improve public health in Sacramento communities.

For more air quality information, please visit www.AirQuality.org, and don’t forget to follow us on [Twitter!](#)

Congratulations, Clean Air Project Grant Recipients!

Each year, the Sac Metro Air District awards clean air grants for a wide variety of projects in our region. Below are a few highlighted award recipients that are moving to the next step! Congratulations to all our partners for helping to ensure a clean air and a low-carbon future for all! Check out the full list of awarded projects [here](#).



Southgate Recreation & Parks District Sacramento, CA

After receiving more than \$850,000 in Sac Metro Air District incentive funds, the Southgate Recreation & Park District is investing in a full electric conversion program, including lawn and garden equipment, two electric vehicles, and charging infrastructure.

Hear from Southgate Recreation & Parks Planning Manager Vincent King on what this means for his organization and the Sacramento residents they serve in this [video](#).



City of Folsom
Folsom, CA
\$200,000
Two electric refuse trucks



**Dry Creek Joint
Elementary School District**
Roseville, CA
\$220,000
Electric School Bus

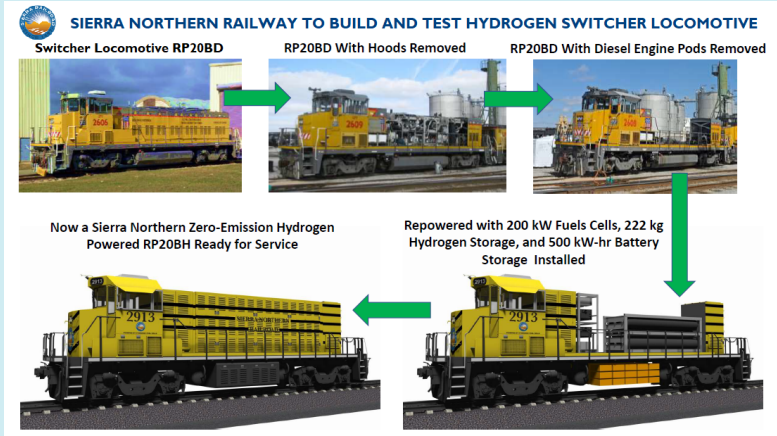


Rajinder K Toor
Yuba City
\$10,912
Electric UTV

**Sierra Northern
Railway**
West Sacramento, CA

The Sac Metro Air District has awarded \$500,000 to Sierra Northern Railway to help bring its multi-million-dollar hydrogen fuel cell locomotive project to the Port of West Sacramento!

Read more about this innovative project [here](#).



Vice President Harris Announces \$1.5 Billion To Help Electrify Buses, Trucks, and Transit

Vice President Kamala Harris announced that the federal government will spend \$1.5 billion to help cities expand green transit systems, reduce heavy-duty vehicle emissions, electrify school buses, advance clean port equipment, and reduce costs for hydrogen and battery-electric trucks using funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and American Rescue Plan investments.

The \$1.5 billion includes \$1.1 billion for the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Low- and No-Emission Transit Vehicle Program, \$372 million for the DOT's Bus and Bus Facilities Program, and \$17 million for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to fund low- and zero-emission school buses. Additionally, DOT announced \$2.2 billion from the American Rescue Plan to distribute to 35 transit agencies to help ensure transit worker employment and keep services running.

The EPA also has proposed a new rule to reduce nitrogen oxides emissions from heavy-duty vehicles and set heavy-duty vehicle emissions standards for certain categories in a bid to reduce truck air pollution, particularly for disadvantaged and marginalized communities living near congested roads and highways.

"This funding is a welcome boost to the sustainable transportation programs and efforts the Sac Metro Air District has advanced for years," says Transportation and Climate Change Division Manager Jaime Lemus. "These dollars will ensure that even more zero emission school buses and clean transit options are available in our region and will help protect public health, especially for our most vulnerable residents."

For more detail on Vice President Harris' announcement, please see this [White House fact sheet](#).

Check Before You Burn Season Ends

The 2021-22 Check Before You Burn season has concluded. Each year, from November 1 through February, residents, and businesses in Sacramento County and the cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Rancho Cordova, and Sacramento must check the daily burn status before using a wood-burning fireplace or other woodburning devices. No Burn days are called when weather conditions trap wood smoke particles near the ground. When burning restrictions are in place, it is illegal to burn wood, pellets, manufactured logs, or any other solid fuel when fine particle pollution (PM2.5) is forecast to be high.

This season, there were 37 days when Stage 1 or Stage 2 burning restrictions were declared. There were 180 complaints and 26 violations issued.

As a reminder, this law is in place to protect public health and achieve federal air quality standards. If these standards are not met, the region risks losing eligibility for millions of federal dollars for transportation infrastructure.

Spare The Air Launches May 1

May through October is smog season in the Sacramento region and during this time, you and your family may feel the health effects of ground-level ozone air pollution, also known as smog. Smog is the region's primary pollutant this time of year and is mainly caused when vehicle emissions are "cooked" in the hot summer sun.

When the AQI for ground-level ozone pollution is forecast to reach 126 or above, a Spare The Air alert in the Sacramento region will be issued informing residents of the poor air quality and encouraging them to help reduce pollution by carpooling, riding transit, telecommuting, trip-linking, bicycling, walking and more. There is too much smog in our air so we must all do our part to reduce it!

For more information, visit [SpareTheAir.com](#) or download the Sacramento Region Air Quality App for alerts, forecasts, and real-time readings.

