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Inside this issue:

Cap & Trade Funding for Emission Reductions	1
Be Prepared for Wildfire Smoke	2
CEQA CO Analysis	3
Valley Vision completes Environmental Priorities Poll	3

Sac Metro Air District Secures Millions in Cap-and-Trade Funding for Emission Reductions

July 1, 2019 - The Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (Sac Metro Air District) has successfully obtained millions of dollars through the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Cap-and-Trade program for fiscal year 2018/2019, which will be used to meet the goals of AB617, the Community Air Protection Plan. This plan seeks to reduce emissions in low-income, disadvantaged communities, whose residents are disproportionately affected by air pollution.

The Sac Metro Air District pioneered mobile source incentive programs, which create innovative and creative approaches for deployment of lower-emitting vehicle and equipment technologies and are now duplicated throughout the United States. "With this latest round of funding, the District will use its expertise to build upon its successes identifying and tailoring programs that assist businesses, government agencies, nonprofits, schools and other entities with zero emission incentive projects," said Sacramento County Supervisor and California Air Resources Board member Phil Serna who also serves on the District's Board.

This money will supplement current funding that protects the health of regional residents by reducing air pollution emissions and greenhouse gases through incentive programs. "With the help of our regional partners, and under the leadership of Supervisor Serna who represents us on the CARB Board, the District has been successful in advocating for Cap-and-Trade funds for the Sacramento region," said District Board Chair and City of Sacramento Vice-Mayor Eric Guerra. "Projects that were implemented with Cap-and-Trade money such as electric school buses and Our Community CarShare reduce emissions, protect public health and expand the growing number of clean mobility options in the region, particularly for underserved communities."

The over \$14 million dollars that will be administered by the Sac Metro Air District will result in hundreds of projects, which will protect public health and improve regional air quality by reducing emissions in the Sacramento region. The District has also asked CARB to add flexibility to its existing program guidelines in an effort to expand funding opportunities to those that do not currently qualify.

"It is important to me that we put these funds to good use," said District Board Vice-Chair and Sacramento County Supervisor Sue Frost. "By working with CARB to expand the guidelines, we can aid businesses in taking on the costly burden of upgrading equipment that is less harmful to our air quality."

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Be Prepared for Wildfire Smoke

There are a variety of Federal, State and local government websites with information on how to respond to smoke from wildfires.

The U.S. EPA has published new Wildfire Smoke related webpages. The [Wildfires and Indoor Air Quality](#) webpage answers the following questions*:

- How Does Wildfire Smoke Affect Indoor Air Quality?
- What Can I Do **Now** to Protect My Family from Wildfire Smoke?
- What Can I Do **During** a Wildfire Smoke Event to Reduce My Family's Exposure to Smoke Indoors?

What Can I Do **After** a Wildfire Smoke Event to Protect My Family from Ash Indoors?

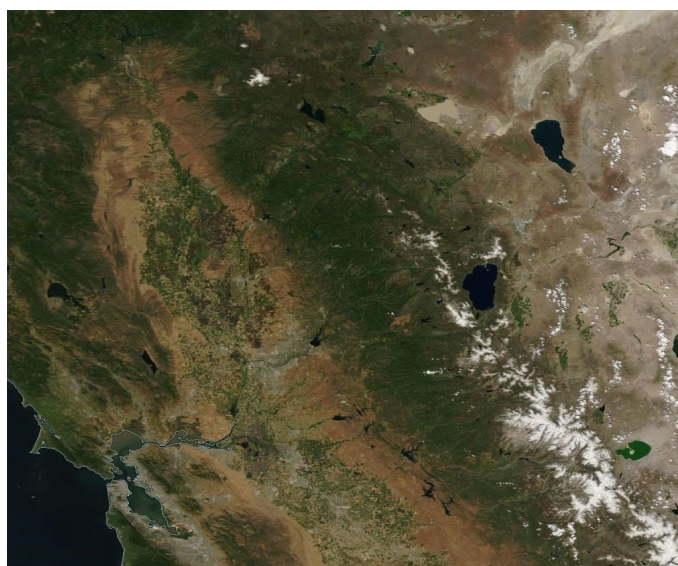
- The EPA also has a page with information on how to [Create a Clean Room to Protect Indoor Air Quality During a Wildfire](#)
- Also, [Protect Your Pets from Wildfire Smoke](#): if you are feeling the effects of wildfire smoke, your pets probably are too!

For local information, visit the Sac Metro Air District's [Wildfire Smoke Information](#) page.

Finally, the [California Smoke Blog](#) has a wealth of information. It is a voluntary effort by city, county, state, tribal and/or federal agencies to coordinate and aggregate information for California communities affected by wildfire smoke.

**Source: https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/wildfires-and-indoor-air-quality-iaqutm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=qovdelivery&utm_term=*

Satellite photos of the Sacramento Valley comparing clean air and smoky conditions:



Clean Air Conditions

Source: NASA



Smoky Conditions during the Carr, Mendocino Complex, Ferguson and Donnell Fires,

August 6, 2018

Source: NASA

Proposed: Removing CEQA CO Analysis from CEQA Guide

Sac Metro Air District staff is planning to update its *Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County* (aka CEQA guidance) regarding the analysis of carbon monoxide (CO) emissions from the operational phase of proposed projects.

Currently the CEQA thresholds of significance for CO are the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), 20 parts per million averaged over 1 hour and 9 parts per million averaged over 8 hours. These are concentration-based thresholds, not mass emissions-based thresholds, which are noted in pounds/day and tons/year. Sac Metro Air District has mass emissions-based thresholds for particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NOx), and reactive organic gases (ROG). Mass emissions-based thresholds are more user friendly to compare to project emissions estimates than concentration-based thresholds.

The current recommendation for operational CO analysis is available in chapter 4 of the CEQA guidance: <http://www.airquality.org/LandUseTransportation/Documents/Ch4OperationalFINAL8-2016.pdf>. To avoid requiring concentration modeling for every proposed project, the CEQA guidance includes two tiers of operational CO screening. If a proponent demonstrates the project can either meet the tier 1 or tier 2 screening components, then CO emissions from the project can be considered less than significant. If neither screening tier can be utilized, CO dispersion modeling is required. Sac Metro Air District provides guidance for a proponent to compare project emissions (including background CO emissions levels) to the CAAQS using the CALINE4 model. If the results of the modeling demonstrate the CAAQS will be exceeded due to project emissions, the project is significant and all feasible mitigation measures must be applied to the project to reduce the significant impact.

Modeling efforts reviewed by Sac Metro Air District staff always demonstrate project CO emissions are significantly below the CAAQS. Additionally, Sac Metro Air District has maintained attainment of the CO CAAQS for the past 20 years through its required maintenance plan implementation. In June 2018, this recognized maintenance led to the U.S. EPA informing Caltrans that transportation conformity requirements no longer apply to CO in Sacramento County. Therefore, CO is no longer considered a pollutant of concern in reviewing transportation projects.

Due to Sacramento's attainment and maintenance of the CO standards for over 20 years and the recent removal of CO as a pollutant of concern for transportation conformity, Sac Metro Air District staff is considering removing the recommendation to analyze operational CO emissions from its CEQA guidance. Staff recently requested feedback from local lead agencies and CEQA practitioners on updating the CO CEQA guidance. Feedback received will be considered as preparations get underway for the updates.

Valley Vision releases results of regional poll on environmental priorities:

Valley Vision released the results of their latest scientific public opinion survey about environmental and climate priorities in the Sacramento region. The Environmental Poll, which was funded by the Sac Metro Air District, highlights resident's opinions regarding air quality, climate change and other issues challenging our region. Among many other things, the survey validates that the community recognizes air pollution and climate change are human caused and are affecting the environment now. It shows the public wants government agencies like ours to continue their efforts and to do more in our fight for a sustainable future, which we are committed to do. Our agency is happy to be instrumental in bringing the public's concerns to the forefront to spark needed conversations. We are hopeful our regional leaders will use these survey results to help make informed decisions that reflect the communities' attitudes regarding these important topics.

Visit <https://environment.valleyvision.org/> to view the survey.