SJV Has the Worst Air Pollution in the Nation

The San Joaquin Valley is the most polluted air basin in the United States for fine particles. 1 Fine particle pollution, also known as PM 2.5, is so small that it can get into our hearts and lungs. It can lead to health problems like asthma, heart and lung diseases, and even early death. The San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District (Valley Air) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB), as the agencies in charge of regulating and cleaning our air, are dragging their feet. They keep turning in plans that focus on what is best for polluters and moving the goalpost. We have never turned in a clean air plan on time and we have never met a federal clean air standard on time. We need real solutions now! Solutions that prioritize people over profits and protect public health.

Almost all our pollution is created locally.

Development: Transportation Hubs, Industrial Warehouses, and Trains contribute significantly to our pollution, with people living near these highways and facilities suffering the greatest impacts from toxins like diesel pollution.

- **SOLUTION:** No polluting facilities shall be added to already disadvantaged communities.

Oil and Gas: 75% of California’s oil and gas production is produced in the San Joaquin Valley, emitting toxic stews and streams of chemicals, sludge and produced water contributing to smog and pollution in our communities.

- **SOLUTION:** We must phase out oil and gas and increase emissions reductions requirements for existing developments.

Industrial Agriculture: Farming operations make use of tractors, agricultural burning, pesticides, crop dusters, feedlots, and large corporate dairies. These all release dangerous pollutants into the air.

- **SOLUTION:** No more exceptions for agriculture, they must be regulated.

The San Joaquin Valley Air District is a “captured agency.”

The agency protects polluters and their profits, rather than protecting public health by using the strongest rules and enforcement available. The elected officials who make our air quality decisions are “captured” because they have ties to Development, Oil and Industrial Agriculture, the three main sources of our air pollution.

Industries have been allowed to pay to pollute instead of actually reducing emissions.

- In 2020 the state found that the Valley Air District’s “pay to pollute program” let industries use fake credits rather than reducing their emissions.

People are paying in health costs, while industry continues to make billions. Costs include early deaths, medical expenses, and lost productivity such as missed school and work days from related illnesses. Illnesses include immediate breathing problems, such as wheezing, coughing, asthma attacks, and increased susceptibility to respiratory infection, and potential heart and lung problems.

- $498,014,124 in Emergency Department Visits
- $223,552,720 in Hospital Admissions
- Agencies must include these health costs and outcomes in all decisions analysis.

CARB and Valley Air continue to drag their feet on our clean air plans and regulations.

- CARB and Valley Air must act NOW! No more delays, the health and well being of San Joaquin Valley residents depends on fast action!

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