

# On the Air

## Taking a Vacation from the Gas Pump

**A**s gas prices rose in the past year, more Americans took a vacation from the gas pump, driving fewer miles, and making more car-free transportation choices. Cars and trucks are a major source of smog-forming pollution, and of greenhouse gases that contribute to global climate change; reduced vehicle miles and increased alternate-transportation miles help efforts for cleaner air and a healthier planet.

National, state and local numbers reflected the trend towards fewer car trips and more bus, train, and bike trips. The U.S. Department of Transportation announced in August that since last November, Americans have driven 53.2 billion miles less than they did over the same period a year earlier. According to the Federal Highway Administration, Americans drove nearly 10 billion fewer miles in May 2008

compared with May of 2007, a 3.7 percent drop. Caltrans reported a 5 percent drop in vehicle miles traveled in California in June 2008 as compared with June of 2007 (see graph page two). The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments reported that average weekday traffic volumes decreased at the Santa Barbara County-Ventura County line for the first few months of 2008 as compared with 2007 and 2006.

Ridership on Amtrak trains was up 14 percent overall for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007-2008 compared to FY 2006-2007. Ridership increases were high for the three trains that stop in Santa Barbara County: the



*In June, the District's Santa Barbara Car Free Project launched a "Take a Vacation from the Gas Pump" promotion to encourage visitors to arrive in the area car free. The Project, initiated and led by the District, is a cooperative partnership of more than 100 businesses, agencies, organizations and individuals – all encouraging car free travel to and around Santa Barbara for cleaner air and a healthier planet.*

Coast Starlight (+ 28 percent), the San Joaquins (+ 32 percent) and the Pacific Surfliner (+ 12 percent). Brian Hart, Director of Field Marketing-West for Amtrak, noted that ridership on the Surfliner has been increasing significantly every year for the last several years, making a 12 percent increase for this past fiscal year even more impressive. He remarked, "People are discovering—or rediscovering—the pleasures of train travel. They're forming new transportation habits." Amtrak is a partner in the District's Santa Barbara Car Free Program, and a special discount on the Pacific Surfliner and San Joaquins services is offered through the Car Free program's website.

Commuter bus services in the county saw more riders during this period as well. In the first

*(continued on page two)*

## Gap and Basin Fires Affect County's Air

**S**moke and ash from two wildfires affected the county's air in June and July, and the District issued several air quality advisories with the County Public Health Department urging residents to stay indoors and avoid outdoor exercise when air quality was poor. Smoke and ash from the Basin Complex Fire in Monterey County were impacting air quality in the county even before the Gap Fire started July 1, as shown by higher readings for particle pollution at the

Santa Maria and Santa Barbara monitoring stations in late June.

During the Gap Fire, air quality was poor on several days due to smoke and ash. While the Goleta area was the most directly impacted, other areas of Southern Santa Barbara County were also affected, as were areas in the Santa Ynez Valley and in Northern Santa Barbara County. Even after the most critical period, ash that had been deposited on the ground continued to

be stirred back up into the air, causing localized areas of poor air quality. The District received calls from county residents complaining about dust and ash in the air caused by use of leaf blowers by gardening services.

Last year, several weeks after the Zaca Fire was out, high winds brought dust and ash into Southern Santa Barbara County, resulting in extremely poor air quality on days in October and

*(continued on page two)*

## Inside...

-  **New MarBorg CNG Truck**
-  **Permit Updates**
-  **Green Business Program**
-  **New Division Manager**
-  **New Staff**
-  **CEQA and Climate Change**

## Vacation from the Gas Pump (cont'd)

three months of 2008, ridership on the Coastal Express from Ventura to Santa Barbara was up 20 percent over the same period in 2007, and ridership on the Clean Air Express from Santa Maria and Lompoc to Santa Barbara was up 19 percent for June of 2008 compared with June of 2007. In fact, for each of the last three months the Clean Air Express service has set new ridership records. The San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority reported a ridership increase of 29 percent for the service between San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria for FY 2007-2008 over the previous fiscal year.

Transit bus ridership was up all over the county too. Santa Maria Area Transit (SMAT) reported an 8 percent increase in ridership on SMAT buses for May of 2008 over May of 2007, and an 11 percent increase for May of 2008 over May of 2007 for the Breeze Bus service, which connects Santa Maria, Vandenberg Air Force Base, and Lompoc. Guadalupe Transit reported a 15 percent increase in

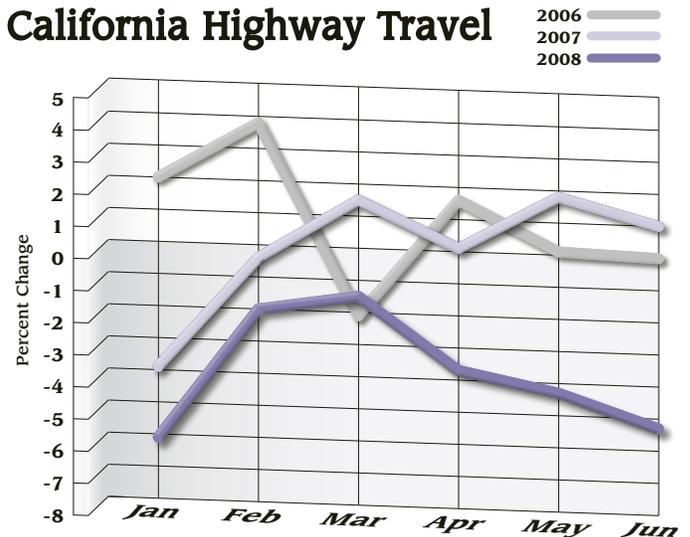
FY 2007-2008 ridership, compared with the previous fiscal year.

The Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) reported for the first time ever, more than 8 million passengers rode MTD in a single fiscal year, FY 2007-2008, a 5 percent ridership increase over FY 2006-2007.

More county residents were biking as well. A bike count in June by the Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition showed a 14 percent increase in the number of bicyclists at the six busiest intersections in Santa Barbara over the averages for those intersections since 2000. Bike counts are done on midweek days, 4:00-6:00 PM, to count bicycle commuters in the numbers.

Coalition President Ralph Fertig noted that some local bike shops were reporting an increase in business, with customers coming in to outfit their bikes for bike commuting, get their kids' bikes ready for riding to school, and

## California Highway Travel



Source: Caltrans Traffic Operations

The graph shows the percent change of vehicle miles traveled in California for the same time periods for 2006, 2007 and 2008. The numbers for 2008 to date show a negative percent change, or a drop in vehicle miles traveled, while the numbers for 2006 and 2007 show some positive increases in vehicle miles traveled.

more. Said Fertig, "It certainly seems clear that the cost of gasoline is affecting behavior, but likely other factors—like concern about fossil-fuel's effect on our climate, and rising obesity rates—are also contributing."

In August, SBCAG Traffic Solutions launched the Commute Challenge program, sponsored by the District and several other agencies. County teams, including three District teams, are logging alternate-transportation miles in August and September, competing for prizes. Just two weeks after the program's launch there were more than 340 teams and more than 1,400 team members. Traffic Solutions Director Kent Epperson also reported that as of August 2008, more than 7,000 commuters have enrolled on Traffic Solutions Online to access commuter programs, a 75 percent increase since January. He attributed much of this to the increase in gas prices, and added, "Employers have also grown increasingly concerned over the

high price of gas, and the effects on valued workers. Many have used the Commute Challenge to launch commuter benefits for employees."

Will riders continue to make alternate-transportation choices as gas prices go down? Remarked Austin O'Dell, Transit Services Manager for the City of Santa Maria, "Of course some of the ridership increase is directly related to the increase in fuel prices. But I think some riders will stay. They are experiencing the benefits of bus transportation, and have already made changes in their commute choices." He added, "Even when gas prices were lower, we could make the case for saving money. We like to say, 'Give yourself a raise by taking the bus!'"

For more information on Commute Challenge, and commute options in the county, see [www.trafficsolutions.info](http://www.trafficsolutions.info). For more information on the Santa Barbara Car Free Project, see [www.SantaBarbaraCarFree.org](http://www.SantaBarbaraCarFree.org).

## Fires Affect County's Air (cont'd)

December. Similar wind patterns could occur this year, although air quality might not be impacted as significantly. The Gap Fire was much smaller than the Zaca Fire, burning 9,400 acres, compared to 240,000 for the Zaca Fire, and the Basin Complex Fire, while it burned 163,000 acres, was much farther away.

Climate scientists project that warmer temperatures, dry conditions, and earlier snowmelt in California will produce longer fire seasons, and more wildfires in the state in coming years. Fire

seasons in the county have lasted into December in recent years, and residents should remain prepared and vigilant.

*Call 961-8802 for recorded information on air quality advisories in English and Spanish.*

*Check [www.OurAir.org](http://www.OurAir.org) for additional information on air quality and our health, and on how to minimize exposure during and after wildfires.*

*Find out more about how to protect your home on the County Fire Department's website at [www.sbcfire.com](http://www.sbcfire.com).*

## New Manager of Engineering and Compliance Division

### APCD Board Roundup

Following are the highlights of the June and August Board meetings.

#### June

- Approved \$660,000 in additional funding for the Lower Emission School Bus Program.
- Adopted the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Budget.
- Adopted revisions to Rule 339, Motor Vehicle and Mobile Equipment Coating Operations, to incorporate the Suggested Control Measures for Automotive Coatings recently adopted by the state.
- Adopted revisions to Rules 102, (Definitions), 201 (Permits Required), 202 (Exemptions to Rule 201) and 333 (Control of Emissions from Reciprocating Internal Combustion Engines). Revisions address concerns raised by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Air Resources Board, incorporate the state requirements for Reasonably Available Control Technology for spark ignition internal combustion engines, and incorporate changes recommended in the District's Clean Air Plans.

Note: there was no APCD Board meeting in July.

#### August

- Reappointed David Van Mullem, Jr. and Robert Saperstein, legal representative, to the District Hearing Board.
- Adopted Memoranda of Understanding and revised classification, salary and benefits documents for several employee and management groups.
- Received an update on the status of marine vessel emission reduction efforts.

Michael Goldman was recently promoted to the position of Manager of the District's Engineering and Compliance Division, replacing Peter Cantle, who left in March.

Before starting at the District twenty-one years ago, Goldman worked for an oilfield service company drilling wells offshore California and in Alaska's North Slope region, and worked for the Naval Civil Engineering Lab in Port Hueneme.

At the District, his experience encompasses permitting every type of business that the agency regulates—from gas stations and dry cleaners to large oil and gas facilities. When the District was successful in achieving local regulation of offshore oil and gas platforms through the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments, Goldman worked on the permits

for the fifteen offshore platforms. He was centrally involved in permit streamlining and automation, and in developing the District's New Source Review rules. He has also led the emissions reduction credits program since 1990, and helped implement programs to address new state requirements for diesel engines. In 2001, he was appointed as the supervisor of the general source permit program.

Goldman expressed pride in the Engineering and Compliance Division's accomplishments, and singled out the complaint response program: "Unlike many other agencies, we spend a lot of time responding to air quality complaints from residents. We go out there and try to solve the problems. That's an important part of our current program, and it will continue to be one of our highest priorities."

Looking ahead, he noted, "Our challenge will be to maintain a high level of customer service while we take on new responsibilities, implementing new rules for boilers and engines, and new state air toxics control measures." He added, smiling, "I like the challenges, and the varied nature of this work. Every ten minutes something new comes up."



## New Faces at the District

Several people (pictured right) recently joined the District to fill vacated positions. From left to right, Leticia Ortiz is an Office Technician (Engineering and Compliance Division), Molly Pearson is an Air Quality Specialist (land use, business assistance and public outreach), Daniela Melkonian is the District's Front Desk Receptionist, David Harris is an Air Quality Engineer (boiler permits, and contaminated soil cleanup and offshore platform permit re-evaluations), and Tom Whitaker is an Air Quality Engineer (source testing and minerals processing permitting).





# APCD Board Calendar

## Board of Directors

- Supervisor Salud Carbajal  
*First District*  
*Santa Barbara County*
- Supervisor Janet Wolf, Vice Chair  
*Second District*  
*Santa Barbara County*
- Supervisor Brooks Firestone  
*Third District*  
*Santa Barbara County*
- Supervisor Joni Gray  
*Fourth District*  
*Santa Barbara County*
- Supervisor Joe Centeno  
*Fifth District*  
*Santa Barbara County*
- Mayor Pro Tem Russ Hicks  
*City of Buellton*
- Councilmember Al Clark  
*City of Carpinteria*
- Mayor Lupe Alvarez, Chair  
*City of Guadalupe*
- Mayor Pro Tem Will Schuyler  
*City of Lompoc*
- Mayor Marty Blum  
*City of Santa Barbara*
- Mayor Larry Lavagnino  
*City of Santa Maria*
- Mayor Pro Tem Edwin Skytt  
*City of Solvang*
- Councilmember Eric Onnen  
*City of Goleta*

All meetings start at 1:30 p.m.  
For final meeting agendas, call the  
APCD Board Clerk, 961-8853.

**October 16**  
Board of Supervisors'  
Hearing Room  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, California 93101

**December 18**  
Board of Supervisors'  
Hearing Room  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, California 93101

*The calendar for 2009 will be  
approved later this year.*

## Community Advisory Council

The APCD Community Advisory Council meets the fourth Wednesday of every month at the Days Motor Inn in Buellton. The public is welcome. For more information, call Linda Beard, 961-8853.

## CEQA and Climate Change

In August, tri-county area planners and leaders attended a workshop in Santa Barbara on including greenhouse gas emissions in reviews of new projects under the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA. CEQA is the state law that requires state and local agencies to identify and reduce, if feasible, the significant negative environmental impacts of land use decisions.

The workshop was hosted by the Local Government Commission and the California Attorney General's Office, which has called on cities to include these emissions in CEQA assessments—filing numerous comment letters and some lawsuits. Greenhouse gases contribute to global climate change, and workshop speakers discussed potential impacts of climate change on the state, reviewed models for quantifying emissions, and highlighted sustainable community designs that can help reduce these emissions.

David Sargent with Moule & Polyzoides, which is preparing a plan for Paso Robles, referred to the need for "compact development," citing this definition: "The term 'compact development' does not imply high-rise, or even uniformly high density, but rather higher average 'blended' densities." (*Growing Cooler: Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change, Urban Land Institute, 2008*). Sargent said the concept was not new, and pointed to more walkable streets in older cities, trolley systems that were later phased out, and older houses designed with eaves and porches that ensured cool air came in when a window was opened—before the era of air conditioning. He noted these designs were more economical and sustainable than more recent sprawling development designs and remarked, "Old houses were built before people had the wherewithal to be stupid."

*For more information, see [www.climatechange.ca.gov](http://www.climatechange.ca.gov) and the "Land Use & CEQA" link at [www.OurAir.org](http://www.OurAir.org).*



**Office**  
260 N. San Antonio Rd. Suite A  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1315

**Business Assistance**  
(805) 961-8868

**Daily Air Quality Report**  
[www.sbcapcd.org](http://www.sbcapcd.org)

**Complaints/Public Information**  
(805) 961-8800

**Air Quality Advisory Information**  
(805) 961-8802

**World Wide Web**  
[www.OurAir.org](http://www.OurAir.org)

**E-Mail**  
[apcd@sbcapcd.org](mailto:apcd@sbcapcd.org)

**On the Air** is a quarterly newsletter written by Mary Byrd, published by the Community Programs Section of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District.

For further information on items in this newsletter, or to be added to our subscription list, please call Bobbie Bratz, 961-8890 or Email [bratzb@sbcapcd.org](mailto:bratzb@sbcapcd.org).



Printed on 100% recycled paper.

## Clean Trash: MarBorg Welcomes New CNG Truck

In July, business and government leaders gathered to welcome MarBorg Industries' new compressed natural gas (CNG) trash truck, purchased with the help of funding from the District. Said MarBorg owner Mario Borgatello, "We are at the forefront of efforts to improve our air quality and protect our environment. ...In collaboration with the Air Pollution Control District, purchase of this truck was another step in our quest to reach zero emissions."



*Mario Borgatello, owner of MarBorg Industries, spoke at the gathering to welcome the new truck that runs on compressed natural gas.*

CNG burns much more cleanly than diesel fuel, and the District's Jim Fredrickson projects that over a five-year period the truck will reduce more than one ton of emissions of nitrogen oxides over a comparable new diesel vehicle, and will run significantly

cleaner than similar older diesel vehicles.

Purchase of the new truck, which meets 2010 emission standards, was part of an expansion of the

MarBorg fleet. Goleta Mayor Michael Bennett emphasized, "MarBorg has not been required or forced to do this. They really are innovative and willing to take risks. This shows their sense of corporate responsibility. Taking initiative to show how in fact it can be done."

Santa Barbara County First District Supervisor Salud Carbajal, a District Board Member, praised MarBorg for leadership in innovative environmental practices and commitment to the community, and remarked, "We need to take these steps to improve air quality—for every individual who breathes the air, but more importantly for all those people with conditions that make them particularly sensitive to the quality of the air."

MarBorg has won the Green Award twice in recognition

of the company's extensive environmental efforts, which include diverting 500 tons of waste daily from landfills and recycling 70 percent of all the waste collected. The company's state-of-the-art recycling center also recycles hundreds of thousands of tons of construction waste every year, retrieving hazardous materials and disposing of them properly, and operations are powered by a \$450,000 solar array that produces enough electricity to power 40 homes daily.

The truck will refuel at the Southern California Gas Company's CNG station in downtown Santa Barbara, the only public CNG refueling station in the county.

*For more information on the District's programs for cleaner engines, see "Funding Programs" on our website at [www.OurAir.org](http://www.OurAir.org).*

## State Issues Draft Scoping Plan for Climate Change Bill

In late June, the California Air Resources Board issued the Draft Scoping Plan for AB 32, the state's Global Warming Solutions Act, signed into law in September of 2006. The Plan outlines actions the state needs to take in order to meet the law's requirement to reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions down to 1990 levels by 2020.

The Air Resources Board is the lead agency for implementation of AB 32, and as required by the law, in 2007 adopted a list of early action measures, assembled

an inventory of historic emissions, and established the 2020 emissions limit.

The Draft Scoping Plan will be revised to address comments, and taken back to the Board in November of this year for consideration. Measures in the Plan will be developed over the next three years and must be in place by 2012.

*For more information, see the Air Resources Board's website at [www.arb.ca.gov](http://www.arb.ca.gov).*



*The new CNG truck makes its maiden voyage.*

## New County Green Business Program



September will mark the launch of a new Green Business Program for Santa Barbara County. Businesses that meet certain requirements will be certified as Green Businesses using criteria developed for particular industry groups. In the first phase of the Program office/retail and restaurant businesses can apply to be certified. In the coming months, hotels and automotive shops will be eligible, and new industries

will be added on an ongoing basis. The Green Awards Program, which has recognized more than 70 county businesses with Green Awards since 1994, is being phased out with the development of the Green Business Program. The new Program, modeled after similar successful programs throughout California, is sponsored by more than twenty governmental agencies and organizations around the county, including the District.

### To be certified as a Green Business, businesses must:

- ❖ Observe all environmental laws and regulations.
- ❖ Adopt resource conservation and pollution prevention measures.
- ❖ Allow the Program to verify the measures adopted.
- ❖ Pledge to continue these efforts.
- ❖ Encourage management and employee participation in the program.

- ❖ Inform customers and other businesses about environmental efforts.

Green Businesses will be certified for three years, and can be recertified after that. There is no charge to the business for the certification process.

For more information, see [www.greenbizsbc.org](http://www.greenbizsbc.org), or contact Frances Gilliland, the Green Business Program Coordinator, at [coordinator@greenbizsbc.org](mailto:coordinator@greenbizsbc.org).

## Permit and Regulation Updates

Portable construction engines rated 50 brake horsepower (bhp) and above that are operated in the county must be either registered in the statewide portable equipment registration program (PERP) or included in a permit application submitted to the District **by September 18, 2008**.

Also required to be included in permit applications to the District by September 18: spark-ignited engines (natural gas, gasoline, propane) rated at 50 bhp and greater; and unpermitted or unregistered engines that have been derated under 50 bhp.

Compliance deadlines for operators of internal combustion engines are identified in

Section K of revised District Rule 333. Internal combustion engine Inspection and Maintenance Plans will need to be updated by December, 2008.

All new boiler and large water heater units (including burner replacements) rated over 2.0 MMBtu/hr are required to have a District permit. Multiple units used in the same process with a combined rating over 2.0 MMBtu/hr may also need a permit. All existing boiler units rated between 2.0 MMBtu/hr and 5.0 MMBtu/hr were required to be included in permit applications submitted to the District as of April of this year. Note: Units of any size require permits if not fired on natural gas or propane.

Owners and operators of new and existing agricultural diesel engines rated at 50 bhp or greater that are not permitted with the District are required to register their engines with the District.

District rules also apply to many types of equipment and processes used by wineries in the county. See "Winery" link on District home page for details.

New limits for the allowable amount of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in coatings for motor vehicles and mobile equipment will take effect in the county January 1, 2009.

For more information on these and other requirements, see the District website at [www.OurAir.org](http://www.OurAir.org).



### District Grants for Local Businesses

#### Funds for Cleaner Engines

Equipment that may be eligible for grants to repower or retrofit includes:

**On-Road and Off-Road Vehicles/ Equipment, Agricultural Water Pumps, School Buses, Marine Engines, and Other.**

For applications & more info visit: [www.sbcapcd.org/itg/itg.htm](http://www.sbcapcd.org/itg/itg.htm).

Contact Information:  
Al Ronyecz at 961-8877