

# Air Pollution in San Joaquin Valley: Bigger Killer than Homicide

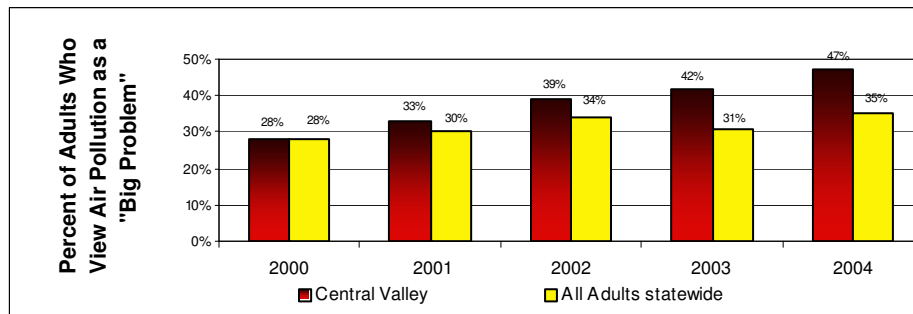
- Over 2,200 people in the San Joaquin Valley (SJV) have died prematurely in the past two years because of dirty air.<sup>1</sup>
- Diesel pollution caused more than 250 premature deaths and more than 230 cases of chronic bronchitis in the SJV in 2004.<sup>2</sup>
- Asthma in the San Joaquin Valley has reached epidemic proportions. Fresno and King counties have the highest rates of childhood asthma in the state (over 20%, compared to a state average of 13.6%).<sup>3</sup>
- One-third of children with asthma in the SJV miss 1 or 2 days of school every month, leading to more than 800,000 absences a year and a loss of at least \$26 million/year for Valley schools.<sup>4</sup>
- The San Joaquin Valley has higher rates of uninsurance (16%) and child poverty (31%) than California as a whole.<sup>5</sup>
- More people die prematurely in the SJV as a result of diesel pollution than homicide<sup>6</sup>.

Health Endpoint	Estimated Number of Incidences
Premature Death	260
Chronic Bronchitis	234
Hospital Admissions	
Cardiovascular Illness	153
Asthma Admissions	27
Asthma ER Visits	151
<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>\$1.9 Billion</b>

## San Joaquin Valley Health and Economic Impacts of Diesel Particulate Matter 2004

Source: *Sick of Soot: Reducing the Health Impacts of Diesel Pollution in California*

## Central Valley Residents Want Change!



Source: *PPIC Statewide Survey (Baldassare, 2000-2004)*

In 2000, just over a quarter of Central Valley residents viewed air quality as a big problem.

Since then, the level of concern has grown to nearly 50%, well above the statewide level of 35%.

<sup>1</sup> Grossi, Mark, "Catching Our Breath," *Fresno Bee*, December 19, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Anair, D. and P. Monahan. 2004. *Sick of Soot: Reducing the Health Impacts of Diesel Pollution in California*. Cambridge, MA: Union of Concerned Scientists. June.

<sup>3</sup> Hernandez, V.R., et al. 2004. *Struggling to Breathe: The Epidemic of Air Pollution Among Children and Adolescents in the San Joaquin Valley*. Fresno: Central California Children's Institute.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Porter, P.G. et al, *The State of the Great Central Valley of California*, Modesto, CA: Greater Valley Center, January 2003, and Meng, Y.-Y., et al, *Asthma in California*, Los Angeles: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> According to *Vital Statistics of California*, 2001 California Department of Health Services, there were 241 homicides in the eight counties comprising the San Joaquin Valley.



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