



NEWS

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Freeway air monitoring data now available online

SAN FRANCISCO – The data from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's first of three permanent air monitoring sites located along major Bay Area freeways is now available online.

The new air monitors were set up in an effort to better understand the health effects of traffic-related air pollution. The siting of the Bay Area locations were based on EPA guidelines, traffic counts and input from the EPA Region 9 office as well as local community groups. This effort is an outgrowth of amended regulations issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to require air districts in higher population areas to monitor pollutants near heavily traveled roadways.

"The arrival of new monitoring instruments on Bay Area freeways adds a dynamic new component to the Air District's regional monitoring network, already one of the most robust in the country," said Jack Broadbent, Air District executive officer. "Bay Area residents can use this data to make more informed decisions about how to protect their health and the health of their family."

The first site to become fully operational is located in Oakland near Interstate 880 at Laney College. Live streaming data is now available on the Air District website <http://gate1.baaqmd.gov/aqmet/aq.aspx>.

Two other sites are under development in Berkeley and San Jose. The Berkeley monitor will be located near Interstate 80 at Aquatic Park. The San Jose monitor will be on Knox Avenue, just south of the convergence of three freeways, Interstates 280, 680 and Highway 101. All three are expected to be fully operational by 2015.

The Air District currently operates an air monitoring network of 34 stations in the nine-county region. These stations were sited according to federal guidelines to be representative of general air quality conditions in the region. The Air District also conducts temporary, short-term special purpose monitoring projects, more recently in locations such as West Oakland, Berkeley and Cupertino.

The new freeway monitoring sites will measure oxides of nitrogen, fine particulate matter, carbon monoxide, toxic air contaminants and other pollutants.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

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