



# DESERT BREEZE

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## ANTELOPE VALLEY DUSTBUSTERS

Residence in the high elevation Mojave Desert and Antelope Valley have encountered extended droughts, high winds, and soil erosion. These circumstances and others such as vehicle traffic, construction activities and farming can result in blowing dust. Blowing dust is harmful to people, wildlife and plants. Wind speeds in this area can exceed 50 mph. As a result, high winds can pick up loose sand particles from the desert soil surface and bounce them along the ground. The bouncing or saltation of sand particles sandblast the soil surface and cause fine dust to be lofted into the air. Blowing sand and dust can damage property, cause respiratory health problems, and lower real estate values.

The Dustbusters Research Group formed a task force in 1991 to develop best management practices for mitigating wind erosion, reducing blowing dust, and improving the air quality. The Dustbusters Research Group developed land treatment guides designed to minimize wind erosion through vegetative and mechanical procedures.

The Dustbusters "Homeowner's Guide" provides a two-step approach for selecting and implementing cost-effective measures for controlling sand flow that generates coarse dust. Fine dust lofted above a height of 3 feet from the ground cannot be captured effectively. However, con-

trolling sand flow prevents the generation of most fine dust.

Step 1: Stop the flow of sand from upwind to prevent blowing sand from entering your property. Blowing sand from areas outside your property can be limited by placing wind barrier or wind breaks along the upwind

property boundaries. The wind barrier/break should face the direction of high winds. Wind breaks include: berms made from wood chips or soil, walls of concrete blocks or other structural materials, stacks of hay bales, and solid fences. Wind breaks include: Porous fences (lattice design) and rows of large vegetation (trees and shrubs).

Step 2: Stabilize loose soil on your property by covering areas of loose soil or accumulated sand with a thin layer (3-4 inches) of wind-resistant material, such as wood chips or gravel. Planting small vegetation such as indigenous grasses, shrubs, and plants can also stabilize the soil.

Complete copies of the Dustbusters Homeowner's Guide, Agricultural Guide, and Large Area Land Manager's Guide are available for free download on the District's website: [www.kernair.org](http://www.kernair.org).



### Air Quality Health Advisories, Fire Weather Watches & Red Flag Warnings

Fire Season in Kern County usually runs from April 15 to November 15. There are several ways to keep informed during Fire Season: your local News Station, the National Weather Service, and the Eastern Kern Air Pollution Control District (District). All of these resources can help protect you during extreme conditions, such as smoke from nearby fires, extreme heat conditions, and emergency conditions (e.g. an accidental spill).

The National Weather Service (NOAA) <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/hnx/> issues Weather Watches and Red Flag Warnings for weather events which may result in extreme fire behavior that could exist within the next 12 - 72 hours. These conditions may exist because of low relative humidity, strong winds, dry fuels, the possibility of dry lightning strikes or any combination of the above.

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## Air Quality Health Advisories, ...

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To help keep up-to-date on the latest ongoing fires you can visit [www.calfire.ca.gov](http://www.calfire.ca.gov). Another useful website is [www.sierranevadacams.com](http://www.sierranevadacams.com); this website allows you to look through web-cams at what's going on all along the Sierra Nevada's in real time.

Also, the District may issue an Air Quality Advisory for ongoing fire, smoke or dust events that can effect residences of Eastern Kern County.

During extreme events, it is important to take it easy, drink lots of water and check on elderly neighbors, friends and relatives to make sure they are safe. If necessary, seek alternative shelter. During the summertime and under certain conditions the County will open one or more of their Cooling Centers from 1pm to 8pm in the Kern River Valley, California City, Rosamond and Inyokern areas. Also, County Libraries are open during their scheduled business hours. Go to [www.co.kern.ca.us](http://www.co.kern.ca.us) for more info.

## Some HISTORY of Fire Season 2012

Last year there were significant fires in several Eastern Kern County areas. The following is a wrap-up of some information about the more notable fires from last year. The Canyon Fire near Tehachapi, caused by a plane crash, burned over 14,000 acres, destroyed 32 residences, 30 outbuildings, 19 vehicles, 19 recreational vehicles, injured 7 people, and cost over \$10 million.

The Piute Complex fire and the George Fire (both located in the Sequoia National Forest) burned 1800 acres and 1707 acres respectively. The fires inundated residences of Kern River Valley with high concentrations of smoke for a couple of weeks.

Over 150 firefighters responded to the Twin Oaks vegetation fire that burned over 135 acres, caused by an individual mowing dry grass. Fortunately, because many residences practiced of Hazardous Reduction efforts, the fire burned near and around several structures. However, reports show there was no damage to any structures. It is great to see control measures that saved homes.



A Few Wildfire Safety tips: Any mowing and related activities should be done before 10am or after 6pm; extinguish all campfires; and **BE SURE TO PROPERLY EXTINGUISH ALL CIGARETTE BUTTS**. Also, be sure to have an evacuation plan ready, because you may have to leave your home in extreme conditions. It is advised, you evacuate the elderly, handicapped, and household pets early (check your neighborhood). The Fire Department advises, you to leave on interior house lights. Visibility is difficult in a dark and smoky home. **BE SAFE.**

## RULE DEVELOPMENT

The District is drafting new rules for Aerospace Coating Operations (Rule 410.8), Polyester Resin Operations (Rule 432), and Wood Products Surface Coating Operations (Rule 410.9). In addition to the proposed new rules, the District is revising the following current rules: Metal Parts and Products Surface Coating Operations (Rule 410.4), Motor Vehicle and Mobile Equipment Surface Coating Operations (Rule 410.4A), and Organic Solvents (Rule 410).

The District was recently re-designated "nonattainment/marginal" for the 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) (previously the District was designated "attainment"). The 1997 8-hour ozone NAAQS of 0.080-parts per million (ppm) was revoked and replaced with the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS of 0.075-ppm. The change in designation caused a change in the District's designation. To meet the NAAQS, the federal Clean Air Act (CAA) requires certain emission sources in ozone nonattainment areas to implement control methods called Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT). The Rules under development are in a class of rules called RACT.

RACT is an air pollution control device, system, or technique that is reasonably available, considering economical and technological feasibility. RACT requirements are included in the CAA to assure that significant emission sources of the ozone precursors Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) are controlled to a reasonable extent.

The District's is required to attain and maintain state and federal ambient air quality standards and to insure air pollutants do not pose a significant public health threat. The District currently utilizes a rulebook with 128 rules accomplish our air quality goals. As technology and ambient air quality standards change, new rules and current are drafted, revised and adopted.

Under the CAA, federal non-attainment areas such as the District must submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) to the California Air Resources Board that details methods the District will use to meet attainment. Adoption and revision of RACT rules is a crucial component of an approvable SIP. Adoption and implementation of these RACT rules are key to the District successfully attaining the NAAQS.

## GERALD BARRETT, SENIOR AIR QUALITY SPECIALIST, RETIRING

Gerald Barrett is scheduled to retire in November 2013. He will be missed by friends, co-workers, and acquaintances whose lives he has touched.

He moved to the Tehachapi Valley in Eastern Kern in 1968 where he began his sophomore year in high school. During this time, he took college preparation courses, with an emphasis in science. During his junior and senior years, he served as president of the Tehachapi High School Future Farmers, and was very active in showing animals in the Kern County Fair. He also served as captain of the Poultry Judging Team. Although Gerald was captain of Parliamentary Procedure Team, he gave up politics when Calvin Duly (US House of Representative 1991-2005) beat him in the election for San Joaquin Regional president of the Future Farmers of America.

He served two years in the United States Air Force after graduating from Tehachapi High School in 1971. He served six more years in the Air National Guard. Gerald attended Bakersfield Junior College and graduated from California State University, Bakersfield in 1980 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology, with an emphasis in environmental sciences.

He started his career with Kern County as an Animal Control Officer in the fall of 1984. He says, "I thought I would not be with the County long since I had a Biology degree. I really wanted to go in to a fisheries department with California or one of the northern states." However, days turned into months, and months into years and before he knew it, he had 14 years invested with the County as an Animal Control Officer. While working as an Animal Control Officer, Gerald's wife said, his job gave him a bad attitude. Therefore, with the help of his wife, eight months later Thomas Paxson (Air Pollution Control Officer {APCO} at that time) hired Gerald with the Kern County Air Pollution Control District (District).

Gerald started with the District as an Air Quality Specialist I in the fall of 1998. Some of his first duties were installing, operating, and maintaining the air monitors (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> monitors) in the Mojave and Ridgecrest areas and performing inspections of the District's minor sources. Gerald received a promotion to an Air Quality Specialist II in the fall of the year 2000. With the promotion, Gerald acquired several Title V sources, more minor sources, and the lead in asbestos compliance. Gerald said, "What an attitude adjustment his wife gave him by finding this job." In 2005, Dave Jones (APCO at that time) promoted Gerald to the Senior Air Quality Specialist position; Gerald readily accepted the challenge. This may have placed him at his desk more than he wanted to be;



however, Gerald has always continued to do useful and great work. Gerald says, "I hope I have made a difference in the East Kern as I performed the duties of an Air Quality Specialist, and that most of all, I have done it in a way that has brought respect to the District by treating people with respect and dignity."



He has made a lot of friends both inside and outside of the District. He said that at his retirement he is opening up a new chapter to his life. He will be spending more time with his wonderful wife and family by his side doing more church work (the love of his life), ranching, hunting and fishing (with his good buddy Glen Stephens current APCO) with the hope of moving to Missouri.

## CURRENT EVENTS

- ◆ The District welcomes Cherita Young. Our new Air Quality Engineer with the Eastern Kern Air Pollution Control District. She is a Los Angeles native and a recent graduate of San Jose State University where she obtained a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemical Engineering, with a minor in Green Engineering. Cherita looks forward to utilizing her educational background and leadership skills to tackle the air quality challenges and to improve the quality of life for those residing in Eastern Kern County.
- ◆ The 2014 Motor Vehicle Emissions Reduction Grant Funds Program Request for Proposals (RFP) will be available in early October 2013. There will be some changes this year; therefore, be sure you read the RFP on our website [www.kernair.org](http://www.kernair.org) before you submit your project proposals during open season, from October to the second week of January.
- ◆ Just a reminder,

# SCHOOL STARTED!!!

SLOW DOWN! LOOK AROUND!!  
STOP AT RED TRAFFIC LIGHTS !!!

**Board of Directors**

- Ed Grimes, Chair (Councilman, Tehachapi)
- Zach Scrivner, Vice Chair (KC 2nd District Supervisor)
- Chip Holloway (Vice Mayor, Ridgecrest)
- Patrick Bohannon (Mayor, California City)
- Mick Gleason (KC 1st District Supervisor)

Board of Directors usually meet once every two months starting in January at various locations.

**Air Pollution Control Officer**

Glen E. Stephens, P.E.

**Hearing Board**

- Bill Deaver
- Herb Roraback
- Doris Lora
- Dr. Wallace Kleck
- James Bell



For news updates and other information, please visit the Eastern Kern APCD website at [www.kernair.org](http://www.kernair.org)

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