

# VALLEY AIR NEWS

June 2019



## Fireworks cause spikes in PM levels during July 4th

Sparklers, party poppers and other residential fireworks do more than just brighten up the night skies around communities during the Fourth of July. They also contribute to the dramatic increase of Particulate Matter (PM) in neighborhoods.

Smoke, soot, ash and metals from fireworks release large quantities of harmful PM, making the air particularly unhealthy for people with existing respiratory conditions, elderly people and small children. Fireworks also can trigger serious health issues, such as asthma or bronchitis.

The District's air monitoring stations regularly capture high PM readings, reaching into the "Very Unhealthy" range, on July 4th. Some stations will see air quality readings spike to the "Hazardous" level, often around late evening, before dropping a few hours later.

To help lessen the impact fireworks have on the Valley's air quality, the District encourages residents to celebrate Independence Day by attending public fireworks displays instead of lighting neighborhood fireworks.

Visit [myRAAN.com](http://myRAAN.com) or get the free "Valley Air" app to keep an eye on air quality in your neighborhood.

## New state template provides guidance to schools

The triple-digit temperatures of summer are finally here. With the sizzling hot weather comes the increased potential for wildfires. State Senator Mike McGuire held a press event early this month in Sacramento to kick off the availability of a new [Air Quality Guidance Template for Schools](#) to help schools and school districts make informed, health-protective decisions about outdoor physical activities during episodes of smoke impacts due to wildfires.

Created by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, the template will be distributed to schools and school districts statewide during the summer to encourage them to discuss it with their local air districts and modify as needed. The Valley Air District contributed to the development of the template which closely resembles the District's [Real-Time Outdoor Activity Risk \(ROAR\) Guidelines](#) that many schools already use in the San Joaquin Valley.

During wildfire outbreaks, schools, as well as the public, can find a host of useful information on the Valley Air District's Wildfire Information website at [www.valleyair.org/wildfires](http://www.valleyair.org/wildfires). The site lists any current wildfires that may be impacting air quality in the Valley, provides links to Cal Fire and a multi-agency incident website and lists several resources for useful health protection information.

## Kings County councilmember joins the District's Board

The Valley Air District welcomes Avenal Councilmember Alvaro Preciado to the Governing Board. Preciado, who has served previously as mayor and mayor pro tem of Avenal, works as a chief wastewater treatment operator in Fresno County.

The District is excited to have Preciado on board and looks forward to benefiting from his participation.

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