

## Protect Yourself from Unhealthy Air

Protect yourself and your family when air quality is poor. The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a tool to help you find out what the day's air quality is expected to be, and how to limit the amount of air pollution you breathe. Think of the AQI as a yardstick with clean air on one side and unhealthy air on the other. The higher on the yardstick you go and the higher the number, the worse the air quality.

### The AQI forecast is issued daily by the Air District and is available:

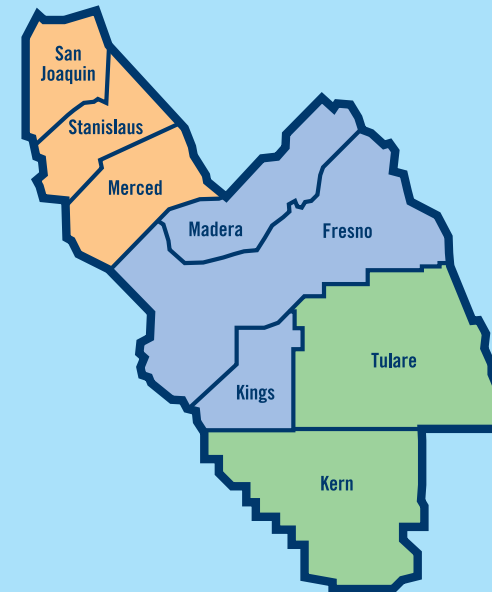
- by phone at 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463);
- online at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org), where you also can sign up for email alerts; and
- from many local news outlets, including newspapers and broadcast weather reports.

Generally, air pollution during summer months gets worse as the day goes on and peaks in the afternoon and evening. During the winter, air quality worsens as the night progresses, usually peaking in the late evening and early morning.

Check the AQI every day, adjust your activities accordingly and reduce your outdoor exposure, especially during peak pollution times.



Index Values	Air Quality Description	Health Cautionary Statement
0-50	<b>GOOD</b> (Green)	No limitations
51-100	<b>MODERATE</b> (Yellow)	Extremely sensitive children and adults, especially those with respiratory diseases such as asthma, should consider limiting outdoor exertion.
101-150	<b>UNHEALTHY</b> for Sensitive Groups (Orange)	Sensitive children and adults, especially those with respiratory diseases such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
151-200	<b>UNHEALTHY</b> (Red)	Sensitive children and adults should avoid outdoor exertion, and everyone else should limit prolonged outdoor exertion during peak ozone periods.
201-300	<b>VERY UNHEALTHY</b> (Purple)	Sensitive children and adults should avoid outdoor activities and remain indoors. Everyone else should avoid outdoor exertion.
Over 300	<b>HAZARDOUS</b> (Deep Purple)	Everyone, especially children, should avoid outdoor activities and remain indoors.



#### Northern Region

*Serving San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Merced counties*  
4800 Enterprise Way, Modesto, CA 95356-8718  
Tel: 209-557-6400 FAX: 209-557-6475

#### Central Region (Main Office)

*Serving Madera, Fresno and Kings counties*  
1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue, Fresno, CA 93726-0244  
Tel: 559-230-6000 FAX: 559-230-6061

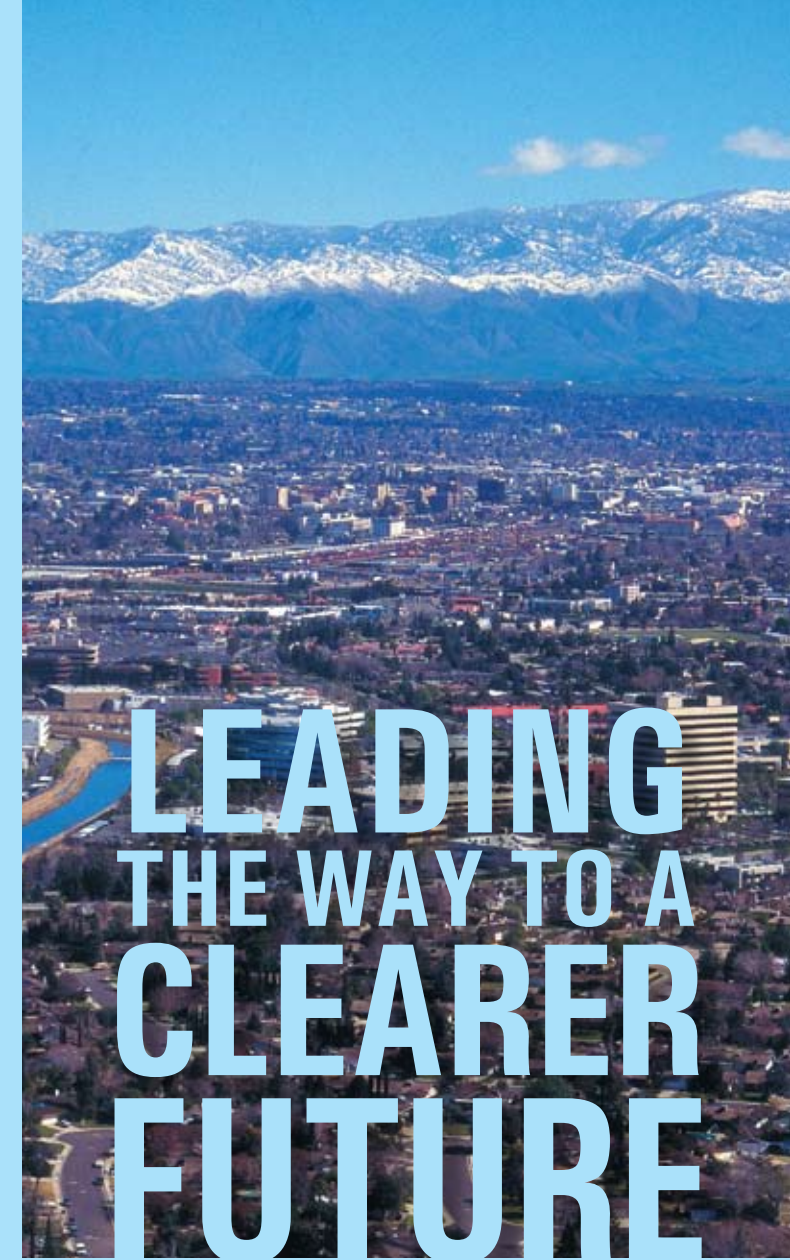
#### Southern Region

*Serving Tulare and the Valley portion of Kern counties*  
34946 Flyover Court, Bakersfield, CA 93308-9725  
Tel: 661-392-5500 FAX: 661-392-5585

For more information  
and to hear daily air quality reports, please call  
1-800 SMOG INFO / 1-800-766-4463  
[www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org)



Please visit our web site at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org)



Learn how the San Joaquin Valley is working to improve air quality.

# AIR QUALITY IN THE SAN JOAQUIN

Air quality in the San Joaquin Valley has improved tremendously in recent years. Despite the progress, the Valley air basin does not meet health-based standards for two pollutants: ozone and particulate matter (PM).

Ozone is the main ingredient of smog and is a problem mostly during summer months. Ground-level ozone forms when sunlight and heat cook chemicals from various sources, such as cars and trucks, industrial sources, power plants, agricultural operations and consumer products.

Particulate matter is a mixture of pollutants such as acids, metals, dust, organic chemicals and soot. These airborne particles come from many sources, including industrial processes, fireplaces, cars and trucks, the burning of fuels and windblown dust.

Health studies show that ozone and particulate matter can cause serious health problems when they're trapped at ground level where people live and breathe. Ozone can damage and inflame lung tissue, make asthma worse, and cause other permanent lung damage. Particulates can cause asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, increase risk of lung infections, and trigger heart attacks in people with heart disease.



The Valley's air quality is better today than it was in previous years, but many challenges remain. New health-based air-quality standards are even tougher than earlier standards. Meeting the new, stricter standards will not only require the local Air District to pursue creative solutions, but also will require the state and federal governments to adopt rigorous controls.

## What Is Being Done About Air Pollution

Several government agencies, as well as the general public, share the responsibility for controlling air pollution and improving air quality. Each group has a different area of responsibility.

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District regulates mostly stationary sources of pollution such as smokestack industries, manufacturers, gas stations, agricultural operations, auto-body shops, and others. The Valley Air District covers the eight counties of the San Joaquin Valley air basin. Since forming in 1992, the Air District has adopted rules to reduce emissions from stationary sources by more than 50 percent, which has led to improved air quality. However, up to 80% of the pollution we breathe comes from mobile sources.

The California Air Resources Board controls emissions from mobile sources such as cars, trucks and tractors, and from consumer products such as spray paint, cleaners and hairspray. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency controls fuel ingredients and emissions from interstate trucking, planes, trains and ships.

Cities and counties also make decisions that affect air pollution levels. For example, reducing urban sprawl and increasing street connectivity reduce emissions and help improve air quality.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, residents of the Valley play an important role in helping improve the air we all breathe.

## Everyone Can Help

Not only can you help improve air quality by reducing emissions yourself, but you also can be involved in other efforts to control air pollution.

## Get Involved

Educate yourself about air-quality issues. Reading this brochure is a good first step. But you can go further – let your elected officials know what you'd like them to do about air quality.

Also, attend Air District workshops and meetings to learn more about air pollution and voice your opinion.

## The District's Governing Board

meets every third Thursday of the month.

## The Citizens Advisory Committee

meets every first Tuesday of the month.

## The Community Groups

meeting times vary. Call 559-230-6000 for details.

The meetings are video-conferenced or teleconferenced so that people in all three regional offices in Modesto, Fresno and Bakersfield can participate. See the back cover for locations. Meeting agendas, dates and times are posted online at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).



## Reduce the Amount You Pollute

- Drive less and link trips.
- Keep lids on paints and solvents.
- Switch to an electric lawn mower.
- Barbecue with propane instead of charcoal.
- Don't top off the gas tank.
- Carpool, walk or ride a bike instead of driving.
- Choose water-based or low-VOC products.
- Don't use lighter fluid to start charcoal barbecues.
- Bring lunch to the office.
- Replace wood-burning fireplaces with gas.
- Purchase a cleaner vehicle.
- Shop by phone, mail or Internet.
- Avoid aerosol spray products. Choose pumps or solids.
- Maintain proper vehicle tire pressure.

For more information call:  
**1-800 SMOG INFO**  
(1-800-766-4463)