

News Release

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For Immediate Release



TO:

**Local News, Health and
Weather sections**

North District Media Contact - Modesto

Anthony Presto
(209) 557-6400

Central District Media Contact – Fresno
& Spanish-language contact

Claudia Encinas
(559) 230-6000

South District Media Contact - Bakersfield

Brenda Turner
(661) 326-6900

Air officials issue smoke caution

Ongoing wildfires elevate particle pollution

Smoke from continuing wildfires is prompting Valley Air District officials to issue a health cautionary statement, which remains effective until fires are extinguished.

“Due to the erratic nature of the smoke, areas of the eight-county air basin could potentially be affected at any given time,” said Shawn Ferreria, senior air quality specialist.

Exposure to particle pollution, a byproduct of smoke, can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, cause asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections. In people with heart disease, short-term exposure to particle pollution has been linked to heart attacks and arrhythmias, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Residents throughout the San Joaquin Valley are advised to take their local air quality into consideration when planning their outdoor activities. People with heart or lung diseases should follow their doctors’ advice for dealing with episodes of unhealthy air quality. Additionally, older adults and children should avoid prolonged exposure, strenuous activities or heavy exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged exposure, strenuous activities or heavy exertion if smoke can be seen or smelled.

Air-quality forecasts are available by county at www.valleyair.org or by calling 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463). Forecasts are issued at 4:30 p.m. daily for the following day.

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the San Joaquin Valley air basin portion of Kern. For more information, visit www.valleyair.org or call the nearest District office: Modesto (209) 557-6400, Fresno (559) 230-6000 and Bakersfield (661) 326-6900.