

News Release

4-29-2008

For Immediate Release



San Joaquin Valley
Air Pollution
Control District

TO:

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sections**

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Blowing dust prompts health warning

Air District cautions that air pollution levels are climbing today

Gusty winds in the San Joaquin Valley have prompted local air-pollution officials to issue a health cautionary statement from Tuesday through Wednesday evening.

Winds in the San Joaquin Valley may produce areas of blowing dust in the San Joaquin Valley through Wednesday evening. Blowing dust can result in unhealthy concentrations of particulate matter ten microns and smaller, or PM10.

"Winds are creating areas of blowing dust today", said Gary Arcemont, Senior Air Quality Specialist with the Air District. "Take precautions to protect your health if you are in an area experiencing blowing dust."

Exposure to particle pollution 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 use caution through Wednesday evening. 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.

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the valley 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.