

News Release

For Immediate Release

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For: City and assignment editors



North District Media Contact - Modesto

Anthony Presto (209) 557-6400

Central District Media Contact - Fresno

Jaime Holt (559) 230-5850

South District Media Contact - Bakersfield

Brenda Turner (661) 392-5500

Spanish language Media Contact

Claudia Encinas (559) 230-5851

After Hours Contact– (559) 284-6317

Smoke from Sheep wildfire reaches the Valley floor in Madera, Fresno, Kings Counties

Air officials are issuing a health cautionary statement for smoke impacts from the Sheep wildfire burning in the San Joaquin Valley air basin. On top of previous statements issued regarding this wildfire, this health cautionary statement is in response to smoke emissions being transported to the Valley floor under the current high pressure system.

The Sheep wildfire in Kings Canyon National Park is sending smoke to the Valley floor in the counties of **Madera, Fresno, and Kings**. Impacts are the heaviest in the morning due to strong temperature inversions, as well as an easterly wind flow that is carrying emissions towards the Valley. In addition, smoke impacts are continuing to be experienced in the communities of Cedar Grove and Hume Lake.

Officials said ongoing high pressure over the next few days will cause similar conditions.

The health caution is in effect until the wildfire is extinguished.

Smoke from wildfires contains particulate matter, a form of pollution that is dangerous to human health. High readings of particulate matter – small pieces of airborne material such as soot and ash – can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, trigger asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections.

In the event of exposure to smoke, 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 Air District provides current air quality information as well as forecasts that take fire impacts into account. For air-quality forecasts by county, residents can call toll-free 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463) or visit www.valleyair.org.

For more information about the Valley Air District, call a regional office: in Fresno, 559-230-6000; in Bakersfield, 661-392-5500; and in Modesto, 209-557-6400.

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