

News Release

For immediate release

8-9-12

Attn: Local news, health and weather sections



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Wildfire smoke impacts northern counties *Air officials warn of smoke emissions through weekend*

Smoke from a wildfire near the northern boundaries of the San Joaquin Valley air basin is impacting San Joaquin County, with potential impacts in Stanislaus and Merced counties.

Air officials said the pattern may continue through the weekend, and encourage residents in these areas to monitor their local air quality and take appropriate precautions as needed.

“Our standard is, if you can smell smoke, you are being affected by it,” said Jaime Holt, the District’s chief communications officer.

Smoke produces large quantities of particulate matter, which can exacerbate or cause respiratory disease and lung damage.

The fire in Plumas County is producing smoke that is remaining in the air basin because of a stagnant high-pressure system.

Additionally, other fires around the air basin including the Sierra National Forest in Fresno County and Sequoia National Forest in Kern County may produce smoke impacts in the central and southern regions, officials said. The Air District’s Real-Time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) is a tool residents can use to check their localized air-quality conditions (http://www.valleyair.org/Programs/RAAN/raan_landing.htm). Subscription to this automated data-delivery service is free. Through RAAN, subscribers can link their computers to the monitoring station of their choice, which automatically delivers hourly data as conditions change.

Officials said smoke in the air basin may remain as long as the fires continue.

“The best protection is information, and folks can obtain that through RAAN,” Holt said.

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.