

News Release

For immediate release

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Attn: Local news, weather and assignment editors

After-hours media cell phone:
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Officials issue first fireplace prohibition of season *Deteriorating air quality in San Joaquin County*

The first fireplace and wood-stove use prohibition of the 2012-13 Check Before You Burn season has been issued in San Joaquin County for Tuesday, Nov. 13.

The daylong mandatory curtailment because of poor air quality will be in place from midnight tonight through midnight Tuesday. The curtailment applies to burning wood, pellets and manufactured fire logs in residential fireplaces, stoves and outdoor burning devices such as fire pits and chimineas.

Check Before You Burn runs each winter from November through February and reduces wintertime particulate pollution (PM) by restricting the use of wood-burning devices when air quality is poor. Wood-burning forecasts are issued each day by county.

Residential wood burning is the single largest source of harmful PM during winter and can pump 17 tons of PM into Valley skies daily. Fine-particulate matter (PM2.5) exacerbates respiratory illness, such as asthma; causes lung infections and bronchitis; and has been correlated with increased risk of heart attacks and stroke.

There are two exceptions to wood-burning prohibitions:

- If the residence does not have access to natural-gas service, even if propane is used; or
- If burning solid fuel is the sole source of heat for the residence.

Prohibition violations are subject to fines.

Daily wood-burning forecasts are available each day at 4:30 p.m. at <http://valleyair.org/aqinfo/WoodBurnPage.htm>, by calling 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463), or by subscribing to the Air District's daily air quality forecast at <http://www.valleyair.org/lists/list.htm>.

For more information about Check Before You Burn, visit www.valleyair.org or call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-326-6900).