

News Release

For immediate release

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Attn: Local news, weather and assignment editors

Northern region contact – Modesto

Anthony Presto (209) 557-6472

Central/southern region contact – Fresno

Maricela Velasquez (559) 230-5849

Spanish-language contact

Ana Reyes (559)230-5851

Gusty winds prompt health caution

Blowing dust poses potential health concern on Valley's west side

Gusty winds over the western San Joaquin Valley have prompted local air-pollution officials to issue a health cautionary statement through late afternoon.

As rain moves through the Valley, health concerns related to particulate pollution will subside. Rain, already beginning in the north Valley, is expected to reach Kern County by late afternoon.

Winds may produce areas of localized blowing dust, which can result in unhealthy concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller (PM10). Exposure to particulate pollution can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, trigger asthma attacks and bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections.

Where conditions warrant, people with heart or lung disease should follow their doctors' advice for dealing with episodes of particulate exposure. Additionally, older adults and children should avoid prolonged exposure or heavy exertion, depending on their local conditions.

Residents can check the nearest air monitor to their location to determine localized conditions. Visit the Real-time Air Advisory Network page on the District's website to subscribe for free:

http://www.valleyair.org/Programs/RAAN/raan_landing.htm.

For more information, visit www.valleyair.org or call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-392-5500).