

News Release

For immediate release

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For: Local News, Health and
Weather sections



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



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Air officials urge fireworks restraint

Emissions from annual activity pose preventable health threat

As the Fourth of July approaches, Valley Air District officials urge Valley residents to consider the effect of fireworks on their own and their neighbors' health.

Fireworks emit large quantities of dangerous particulate matter (PM), pumping airborne material, including soot, ash and metals, in the Valley's air. This type of pollution causes serious health effects, including lung infections, bronchitis and cardiac illness. People with existing respiratory conditions, elderly people and small children are especially susceptible.

The increase in PM also jeopardizes the Valley's progress in meeting health-based air-quality standards.

"Celebrating our freedom also means recognizing that our actions directly impact the health of our communities," said Jaime Holt, the Air District's Chief Communications Officer. "The sad thing is, the serious health impacts that many people suffer from this activity are entirely preventable."

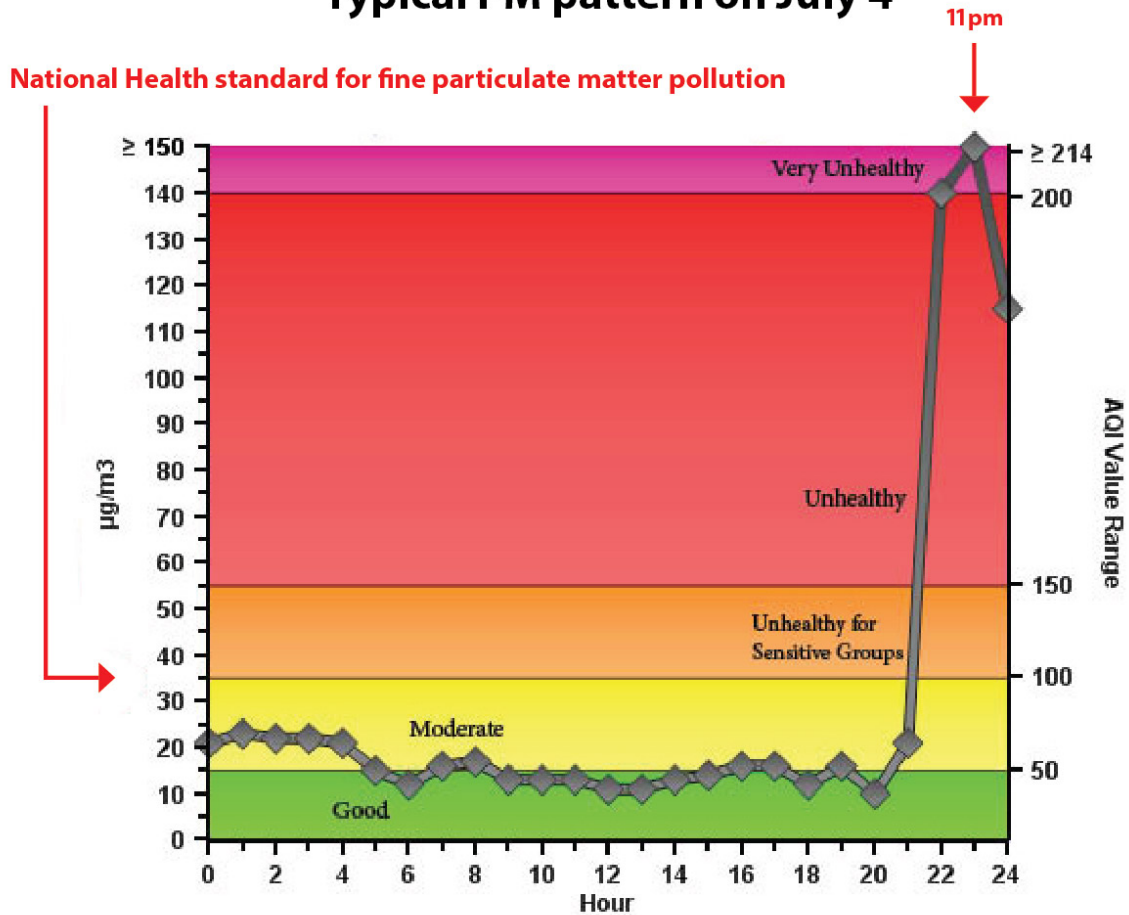
During summer, the Valley's air may already be stressed by pollution, specifically, ozone. Fireworks add another burden to what may be already precarious air quality. In fact, monitors throughout the Air District regularly capture readings of high spikes in PM during and after fireworks displays (see attached graphic).

"We wish a happy and healthy Independence Day for all our Valley neighbors," Holt said.

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

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Typical PM pattern on July 4



The above graphic illustrates a spike in particulate levels last July 4 in Turlock as a result of fireworks use. Similar impacts are seen throughout the Valley on the evening of July 4..