

News Release

For immediate release

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San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



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Thanksgiving no-burn day in San Joaquin, Stanislaus counties ***Air officials urge remainder of Valley to consider health impact of burning***

As the holiday season begins, deteriorating air quality in San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties has prompted air officials to declare wood-burning curtailments there. The curtailments begin at midnight tonight (Wednesday) and continue until midnight Thursday.

For the remaining six counties of the air basin, the Valley Air District urges Valley residents to consider the effects of ambient fires on the health of themselves and their neighbors, and Check Before You Burn.

“High levels of particulate pollution can make the holidays tough,” said Samir Sheikh, the District’s director of air quality analysis. “Taking health into account will make the upcoming few weeks more enjoyable for everyone.”

Check Before You Burn runs each winter from November through February and reduces wintertime particulates (PM) by restricting the use of wood-burning devices when air quality is poor. This curtailment is in place because of elevated levels of coarse particulate matter (PM10). Wood-burning forecasts are issued each day by county.

Residential wood burning is the single largest source of PM during winter and can pump 17 tons of PM into Valley skies daily. PM exacerbates respiratory illness, such as asthma, and causes lung infections and bronchitis.

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/CBYB>, 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>. A free iPhone app, Valleyair, is at iTunes and the App Store.

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).