

News Release

For immediate release

8-30-13



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors

Weekend media cell phone (559) 284-6317

Rim Fire sends smoke to Valley floor

Health caution through weekend for most of air basin

The Rim Fire in Tuolumne County has prompted local air officials to issue a health cautionary statement for smoke impacts in six Valley air basin counties: **San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno and Tulare, especially the foothill and mountain areas.** The caution is in place through Labor Day weekend, when visitors will be traveling to the Sierra Nevada.

If winds should shift, Kings and the Valley portion of Kern counties may become affected, as well.

“Our rule of thumb is, if you can see and smell smoke, you are probably being affected,” said Samir Sheikh, the Air District’s director of air quality analysis. In that event, air officials advise residents to take whatever health precautions their conditions warrant.

Smoke from fires produces fine-particulate matter (PM2.5), which can cause serious health problems including lung disease, asthma attacks and increased risk of heart attacks and stroke. 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 air-quality 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. They can also receive updated fire information at: <http://www.inciweb.org/incident/3552/>.

For more information, visit www.valleyair.org or call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-381-1809).