

News Release

For immediate release

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San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors

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Smoke from Bakersfield fire impacts urban area *Residents should take precautions as needed, officials urge*

A wildfire burning in the city of Bakersfield is sending smoke to surrounding neighborhoods and local air officials urge the public to take precautionary measures as needed.

Officials are concerned about potential smoke impacts and resulting effects on residents' health.

"If you can see or smell smoke, you're probably breathing it," said Samir Sheikh, the Air District's director of air quality analysis.

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.

Air District officials are working with personnel in Bakersfield and Kern County to obtain ongoing status of the fire. 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.

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).