

News Release

For immediate release
6-17-13



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



Attn: Local news, weather and assignment editors

Northern region - Modesto
Anthony Presto (209) 557-6472
Central region – Fresno
Heather Heinks (559) 230-5898
Southern region – Bakersfield
Jaime Holt (661) 381-1809
Spanish-language contact
Ana Reyes (559) 230-5851

Air officials issue smoke health caution *Mountain wildfires emissions impact east side of air basin*

Two wildfires in the Sierra Nevada are sending smoke emissions to the air basin, prompting local air officials to issue a health cautionary statement.

Wildfires are burning in Madera and Mariposa counties and smoke may impact the eastern parts of **Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare and Kern counties**, including the foothill and mountain areas. In addition, eastern portions of the Valley floor may be affected during overnight hours.

The health caution is in place until the fires are extinguished.

“Our standard is, if you can see smoke and smell smoke, you are being affected,” 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.

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