

For immediate release 9-9-15

Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors

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Officials issue an Air Alert to extend through Friday

Public asked to reduce vehicle emissions during period of poor air quality

The Valley air basin is in an Air Alert episode beginning today, **Wednesday September 9, 2015** through **Friday September 11, 2015**. This includes the counties of **San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley air basin portion of Kern Counties**.

The annual Air Alert program seeks to minimize ozone levels when conditions materialize that are conducive to ozone formation: high temperatures, sunny skies, stagnant air flow and increased emissions. Smoke from the Rough Wildfire burning in Tulare and Fresno Counties, high temperatures and an increase in vehicle traffic now that school is back in session are all contributing to very unhealthy air quality conditions in areas throughout the Valley. The Valley Air District is asking residents and businesses to reduce the emissions they are potentially contributing to these already unhealthy conditions, and stay indoors if in an area impacted by poor air quality.

“With smoke from the Rough fire pouring into the Valley, it is important that we limit any additional emissions wherever we can in addition to staying inside to protect our health.” said Jaime Holt, the Air District’s chief communications officer.

Air Alert episodes are called when conditions may lead to ozone formation that can result in exceeding health-based ozone standards and there are several steps residents and businesses can take to help.

Residents are asked to reduce their vehicle use to minimize smog-forming emissions by:

- Carpooling or vanpooling
- Using alternative transportation such as mass transit
- Linking trips (doing all your errands at once)
- Eliminating vehicle idling
- Reducing your vehicle trips

Refraining from using drive-through services

Businesses are asked to reduce workplace-centered emissions by:

- Ordering lunch in to eliminate the need for employees to drive during lunch.
- Offering scheduling flexibility to reduce commute-time traffic.
- Making telecommuting available to employees.

Additionally, residents can check their current, localized air quality by subscribing to the free Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN), which links a computer or smart phone to any monitor in the District’s Valley-wide network. Hourly, automated emails are delivered when air quality is changing. For more information or to subscribe, visit www.valleyair.org/RAAN.

To receive notification of an actual Air Alert, please call 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463), visit the Air District’s website at www.valleyair.org, or subscribe to the free automated Air Alert email list at <http://www.valleyair.org/lists/list.htm>. Also, visit the District on Facebook at “Valley Air District” and follow us on Twitter (@Valleyair).