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Gusty winds prompt health caution

Potential elevated PM10 poses health concern valley-wide

Gusty winds will cause localized blowing dust, which can result in unhealthy concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller (PM10). Local air pollution officials are issuing a health cautionary statement effective Wednesday afternoon through late Thursday night throughout the entire San Joaquin Valley. Exposure to particulate pollution can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, trigger asthma attacks and bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections.

A strong, dry, cold front will move through the Valley this afternoon bringing west to northwesterly wind gusts across the entire air basin. Winds will be especially strong through the passes (Pacheco Pass, Sunflower Valley, Twisselman, and Taft), along Interstate 5 and the Foothills. Overnight, the winds will subside and once again become strong and gusty tomorrow afternoon into the evening.

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.

For more information, visit www.valleyair.org or call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-392-5500).