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Air officials urge July 4 fireworks restraint *Fireworks elevate PM levels and threaten public health*

As the Fourth of July approaches, Air District officials urge Valley residents to consider the health effects of fireworks for themselves and their neighbors. Air quality in the Valley during summer is already burdened by ozone pollution, and fireworks emissions add to what already may be poor air quality. Fireworks increase levels of dangerous particulate matter (PM) in the atmosphere, including soot, ash and metals, which can cause serious health impacts, especially to individuals with existing respiratory conditions, elderly people and small children.

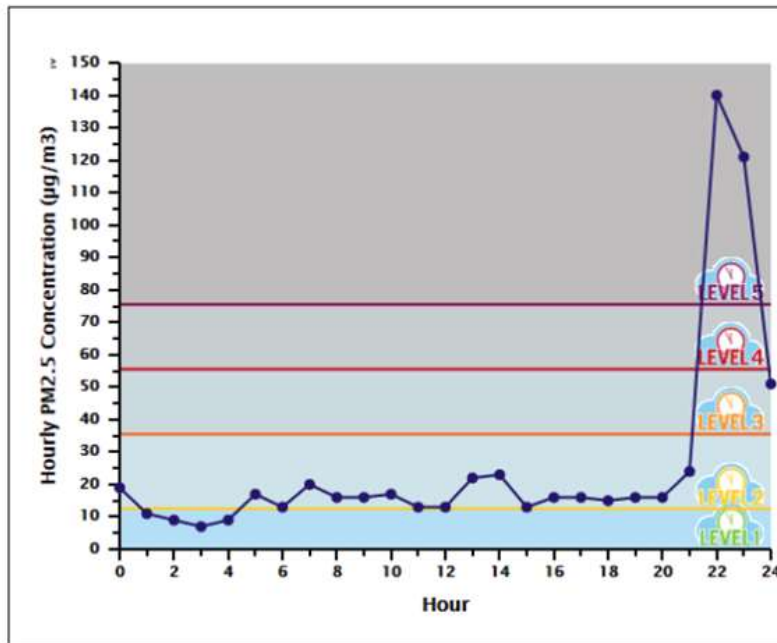
“If Valley residents feel the need to enjoy fireworks, we urge them to exhibit their patriotism by attending a professional Independence Day event in their area instead of using personal fireworks,” said Seyed Sadredin, the District’s Executive Director and Air Pollution Control Officer. “Each year, people suffer serious health consequences from direct exposure in the neighborhoods where they live and breathe... from fireworks activities that are entirely preventable.”

Fine particulate matter can invade the bloodstream, get deep into the lungs and has been linked to heart attacks and stroke. Each year on the Fourth of July, air monitors across the Valley reflect spikes in PM concentrations, often four to five times higher than the health-based federal standards. These spikes are due in part to personal fireworks used throughout Valley neighborhoods and the high levels of PM threaten the Valley’s progress in meeting air-quality standards that protect public health. (An attached graph illustrates a typical increase in PM following fireworks).

The District’s Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) provides localized air quality data from an extensive air-monitoring network which allows Valley residents to track PM in their area by visiting www.valleyair.org/RAAN.

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.

PM 2.5 pattern on July 4, 2016



This graph illustrates a spike in particulate levels on July 4, 2016 in the City of Visalia as a result of fireworks use. Similar impacts are seen throughout the Valley each Fourth of July.