

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Very smoggy conditions throughout San Joaquin Valley Air District issues fourth health advisory since Friday

With no changes expected for the heat and stagnant wind conditions, the San Joaquin Valley will continue to experience smoggy conditions today. Air pollution levels in the central and south Valley are forecast to climb as high as 200 on the Air Quality Index. Especially high peaks of ozone are expected between 3 and 7:30 p.m. in Arvin, Edison and the surrounding Kern County foothill communities as well as the Fresno/Clovis metro area. Air Pollution Control Officer David L. Crow has issued a health advisory for those locations urging residents there to be careful with outdoor activities today.

In the interest of student and faculty safety, schools in the advisory areas should discontinue all outdoor activities for the duration of the episode. Anyone scheduled to participate in such activities should make alternate plans to minimize exposure to ground-level ozone by staying indoors during the advisory period.

Ground-level ozone is an odorless, colorless gas produced when oxides of nitrogen and volatile organic compounds are exposed to heat and sunlight. It is a lung irritant that can cause or aggravate heart or respiratory problems, and cause fatigue, headache, nausea, throat irritation, coughing, and chest pain. Ozone levels are considered unhealthy for sensitive groups such as asthmatics, very young children and the elderly when they reach 101 on the Air Quality Index. At

151, smog is unhealthy for even robust adults and it is deemed very unhealthy at 201.

In an effort to reduce pollution levels immediately, Crow is also calling on everyone in the Valley to immediately reduce emissions. Since vehicle exhaust contributes significantly to the formation of ozone, the public can help by eliminating unnecessary vehicle use or combining essential car use into a single trip. Postponing the use of all gasoline-powered engines such as lawnmowers, leafblowers, chainsaws and recreational vehicles today and tomorrow can also make an immediate impact on air quality.

Additionally, the District requests that Valley residents reduce the use of charcoal lighter fluids, oil-based paints and other products high in volatile organic compounds.

For the daily air quality status, the public may call 1-800-SMOG INFO (766-4463). The information is updated daily after 4 p.m.