

News Release

For immediate release

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San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



For: local news, weather and assignment editors

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Air officials issue District-wide wood-burning ban *First curtailment this season for San Joaquin County*

The season's first fireplace and wood stove prohibition has been issued in **San Joaquin County** for **Friday, Dec. 3** because of deteriorating air quality. There are also curtailments issued for **Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley air basin portion of Kern counties.**

The daylong mandatory curtailments will be in place from midnight on **Thursday, Dec. 2** until midnight on **Friday, Dec. 3.**

The curtailment applies to burning wood, pellets and manufactured fire logs, and is the first ban of the season. The wood-burning curtailment program, Check Before You Burn, runs each year from November through February, and reduces wintertime particulate pollution by restricting the use of wood-burning devices when air quality is forecast to deteriorate. Forecasts are issued on a county-by-county basis.

Residential wood burning pumps dangerous particulate matter (PM) into Valley skies. PM has been shown to cause lung infections and exacerbate respiratory and cardiac illness.

There are two levels of wood-burning forecast: "Wood Burning Prohibited" or "Please Burn Cleanly," depending on expected air quality.

When a prohibition is declared, burning any solid fuel in a residential fireplace or wood-burning device is not permitted. There are two exceptions, however:

- If the residence does not have access to natural-gas service, even if propane is used; or
- If burning solid fuel is the sole source of heat for the residence.

Prohibition violations are subject to fines.

Daily wood-burning forecasts are available each day at 4:30 p.m. at <http://valleyair.org/aqinfo/WoodBurnPage.htm>, by calling 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463), or by subscribing to the Air District's daily air quality forecast at <http://www.valleyair.org/lists/list.htm>.

For more information about Check Before You Burn, visit www.valleyair.org or call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-326-6900).