

News Release

For immediate release

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Attn: Local news, health, weather
and assignment editors



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New Air Alert begins Tuesday *Episode in effect through Thursday*

The Valley air basin is in an Air Alert episode from **Tuesday, Sept. 20 through Thursday, Sept. 22**, and may be extended to Friday. Conditions such as high temperatures, a high-pressure system and stagnant wind patterns are contributing to a build-up in ozone (smog) over the next several days. This Air Alert includes the counties of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and portions of Kern.

Air Alert episodes are called when conditions may lead to ozone formation that results in exceeding health-based ozone standards of 125 parts per billion (ppb) and triggering substantial federal monetary penalties.

About 80 percent of the Valley's ozone-forming emissions are produced by vehicle use. Residents can reduce smog-forming emissions by refraining from idling when dropping off or picking up students, carpooling or vanpooling, and refraining from using drive-through services.

Businesses and municipalities can reduce emissions by shifting operations to early morning or late evening, as in lawn care; offering flexible work schedules, and encouraging carpools and vanpools for employees. Businesses can also enroll at no cost in the Healthy Air Living Partner program.

In addition, a large composting fire in Lathrop is producing areas of localized smoke which may impact Manteca in San Joaquin County. Smoke contains particulate matter (PM), small pieces of airborne material such as soot and ash, which is dangerous to human health. High levels of PM can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, trigger asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections.

In the event of exposure to smoke, people with heart or lung diseases should follow their doctors' advice for dealing with episodes of unhealthy air quality. Additionally, older adults and children should avoid prolonged exposure, strenuous activities or heavy exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged exposure, strenuous activities or heavy exertion.

For more information about Air Alerts, please visit http://www.valleyair.org/AirAlert/AirAlert_Landing.htm. To sign up for a free subscription to the Air Alert email notification system please visit <http://www.valleyair.org/lists/list.htm>. To receive information about becoming a Healthy Air Living Partner, please visit www.healthyairliving.com.