

News Release

For immediate release

12-01-11

**Attn: Local News, Health and
Weather sections**



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



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Gusty winds prompt health caution in Kern County

Gusty winds in the central and southern San Joaquin Valley are prompting local air officials to issue a health cautionary statement for Kern County.

Fresno and Madera counties experienced short-term elevated levels of PM10 during today's mid-day hours. While Kern County has not yet seen PM10 levels as high as Fresno and Madera counties, winds and PM10 levels may increase in Kern County this evening, prompting a health caution effective immediately through tomorrow morning. Winds may produce areas of localized blowing dust, which can result in unhealthy concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller (PM10).

"If you are in an area that is experiencing blowing dust, take precautions to protect yourself," said Samir Sheikh, who oversees the District's air quality analysis section.

Wind-blown dust creates high concentrations of PM, which can cause health problems, including aggravating lung disease, triggering asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, and increasing the risk of respiratory infections.

Residents in areas of blowing dust are advised to use caution through this evening. 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 the Air District, contact a regional office: in Fresno, at 559-230-6000, in Modesto, at 209-557-6400, or in Bakersfield, at 661-392-5500.