

Valley air district warns folks to 'Check Before You Burn'

Modesto Bee, Thursday, Nov. 8, 2012

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District started its annual "Check Before You Burn" season Nov. 1, and within a week issued its first prohibition in Stanislaus County.

Officials call for daylong "no burn" days because of poor air quality. According to the Air Resources Board, Stanislaus County went into the dangerous zone for particulate matter Monday and Tuesday.

Air district spokeswoman Janelle Schneider said Wednesday was clearer.

Rain and cooler temperatures — as are forecast in the Modesto area today through the weekend — generally help reduce particulate matter, though she said, "the factor that is most significant is movement in the atmosphere."

Residential wood burning is the single largest source of harmful particulate matter during winter, pumping up to 17 tons into the valley sky each day, the district said in a news release.

The pollution is known to exacerbate respiratory illness, such as asthma, and can cause lung infections and bronchitis.

"Check Before You Burn" runs though February. The district makes exceptions to the wood-burning prohibitions for homes that do not have access to natural gas service or any other source of heat.

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

Wood burning curtailed in Stanislaus, Fresno counties

Central Valley Business Times, Wednesday, Nov. 7, 2012

The season's first wood-burning prohibitions in Stanislaus and Fresno counties have been declared for Wed., Nov. 7 while prohibitions continue in Kings and the Valley portion of Kern counties, according to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.

The daylong mandatory curtailment because of poor air quality will be in place through midnight Wednesday. The curtailment applies to burning wood, pellets and manufactured fire logs in residential fireplaces, stoves and outdoor burning devices such as fire pits and chimineas.

The prohibitions help reduce wintertime particulate matter pollution (PM) caused by use of wood-burning devices when air quality is poor.

Residential wood burning is the single largest source of harmful PM during winter and can pump 17 tons of PM into Valley skies daily. Fine-particulate matter (PM2.5) exacerbates respiratory illness, such as asthma; causes lung infections and bronchitis; and has been correlated with increased risk of heart attacks and stroke.