

Fires burning elsewhere mean grayish skies for Valley on hot summer day

By Larry Valenzuela

Fresno Bee, Sunday, July 9, 2017

As triple-digit heat continues to be forecast for the central San Joaquin Valley, fires in nearby counties produced smoke Sunday that helped make skies gray, the National Weather Service in Hanford said.

The overcast was caused by two factors. First was drifting smoke. Winds from the southeast pushed smoke from the Schaeffer Fire in Tulare County toward Fresno County. Also contributing were the Alamo Fire in San Luis Obispo County and Whitter Fire in Santa Barbara County.

An air quality alert was issued for those most sensitive to pollution. William Peterson, meteorologist engineer at the National Weather Service office in Hanford, said poor air quality will effect those who are sensitive to pollution in Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties, along with Sequoia National Park.

A second reason for the grayish skies was the monsoonal flow of air that is characteristic of July. Humid air flowing north from Mexico brought clouds and the threat of thunderstorms, mainly over the Sierra.

An excessive heat warning was in place for most of the Valley, but as of midafternoon Fresno had not yet gone over 100 degrees for the day. Sunday was forecast to be 107 degrees in Fresno.

The current heat wave that began July 3 shows no sign of letting up. Triple digits are forecast all week and into the weekend.

Peterson recommends that on hot days people try to avoid outdoor activities, stay hydrated and seek out cooling shelters if needed.

Heat advisory issued, Valley Children's nurse says children more susceptible to illness

By Ashleigh Panoo

Fresno Bee, Sat., July 8, 2017

A heat advisory has been issued for the central San Joaquin Valley as temperatures are expected to hover between 103 and 107 for the next few days.

The National Weather Service forecast for Fresno calls for high temperatures of 106 Saturday and Sunday, then a "cool-off" to 103 Monday. The heat advisory extends through 11 p.m. Saturday.

Friday's high in Fresno was 104 degrees.

We aren't expected to escape triple-digit heat anytime before July 16, the weather service said. Nighttime lows will be in the mid-70s.

Since the summer began, Valley Children's Hospital has seen an influx of heat-related illnesses in the emergency room, said Carlos Flores, a registered nurse and trauma coordinator at the hospital. He said it's something that happens every year and younger children are especially susceptible. "They have a higher circulating blood volume," he said. "Their body temperatures rise five times faster than an adult."

Flores said symptoms of heat exhaustion include dizziness, fainting, fatigue, headache, nausea, vomiting and paleness. Heat stroke occurs when the body stops sweating and the skin becomes red hot. Seizures or loss of consciousness can happen. When children arrive at the emergency room, they are usually already on their way to cooling down, Flores said, but treatment can include putting an IV in at the hospital.

Flores said that if there is any delay in medical treatment, douse a person with ice water to help cool the body. Drinking water or a sports drink with electrolytes can also help someone entering heat exhaustion or stroke. "Never soda, never juice," Flores warned, because of the high sugar content.

Flores said although many children visit the hospital for respiratory illnesses, he doesn't necessarily see a spike during days with bad air quality.

Fresno's air quality remains unhealthy for sensitive groups, according to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. Because of the heat, it is expected to stay that way for a while, said district spokeswoman Cassandra Melching. As of Friday, there are no restrictions in place due to the air quality, but those sensitive to air quality should take precaution.