

News Release

For immediate release

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>>City and assignment editors<<



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

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Tulare and Fresno County fires impact Valley air quality

Foothill, mountain areas may receive smoke impacts

FRESNO – Smoke from the Hidden fire in Tulare County and Tehipite fire in Fresno County is expected to elevate particulate matter in foothill and mountain communities in four counties in the Valley air basin, District officials said.

They expect no change in these conditions for the next few days. The smoke may impact portions of Madera, Fresno, Tulare and Kern counties at one time or another.

“We are advising people in these areas to monitor their local air quality and take precautions as necessary,” said Shawn Ferreria, senior air quality specialist at the District.

Smoke produces particulate matter, or PM, which can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, cause asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections. In people with heart disease, short-term exposure to particle pollution has been linked to heart attacks and arrhythmias, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

If you can see or smell smoke, your area is being impacted. Residents in affected areas are advised to use caution. 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.

Air-quality forecasts are available by county at 4:30 p.m. each day at www.valleyair.org or by calling 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463).

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley air basin portions of Kern. For more information, visit the website or call the nearest District office: Modesto (209-557-6400); Fresno (559-230-6000); or Bakersfield (661-326-6900).