

News Release

October 16, 2008

For Immediate Release



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

North District Media Contact – Modesto
Anthony Presto
(209) 557-6400

Central District Media Contact - Fresno
Maricela Velasquez
(559) 230-6000

South District Media Contact - Bakersfield
Brenda Turner
(661) 326-6900

Spanish Media Contact
Claudia Encinas
(559) 230-6000

TO:
Local News, Health and
Weather sections

Smoke prompts health caution Prescribed burn in Yosemite National Park affecting Madera County

Smoke from a prescribed burn in Yosemite National Park has prompted local air-pollution officials to issue a health cautionary statement for Madera County until 11 a.m. tomorrow.

“Smoke from this fire has the potential to affect Madera County, especially areas in or near the foothills,” said Jennifer Ridgway, air quality specialist for the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. “If you can see or smell smoke, you are being affected.”

Exposure to particle pollution, such as smoke, 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.

Residents in affected areas are advised to use caution as long as the fire is burning or when smoke is present. 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.

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the San Joaquin Valley portion of Kern. For more information, visit <http://www.valleyair.org/> or call the nearest District office: Modesto (209) 557-6400, Fresno (559) 230-6000 and Bakersfield (661) 326-6900.