

News Release

For immediate release

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



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



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Blowing dust prompts health warning

Strong, gusty winds causing increases in particulate matter throughout the San Joaquin Valley have prompted local air-pollution officials to issue a health cautionary statement through Tuesday evening.

Winds in the eight-county air basin – San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley portion of Kern counties -- may produce areas of localized blowing dust and unhealthy concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller in size (PM10) throughout the Valley.

"Take precautions to protect your health if you are in an area of blowing dust," said Scott Nester, Planning Director for the Air District.

Exposure to particle pollution can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, trigger asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections. For people with heart disease, short-term exposure to particle pollution has been linked to heart attacks and arrhythmia, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Residents in affected areas are advised to use caution through midnight Tuesday. 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 Valley Air District, call a regional office: in Fresno, 559-230-6000; in Bakersfield, 661-392-5500; and in Modesto, 209-557-6400.

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