

**For immediate release 5-19-15**

**Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors**

**Northern region – Modesto**

Anthony Presto (209) 557-6472

**Central/Southern regions – Fresno**

Heather Heinks (559) 230-5898

**Spanish-language contact**

Maricela Velasquez (559) 230-5849

## **Fire impacts northern region** *Tracy blaze prompts health caution*

A large biomass fire near Tracy has prompted local air officials to issue a health cautionary statement for the northern counties of **San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Merced**, particularly the communities of **Lathrop, Manteca and Modesto**. The caution is in place until the fire is extinguished.

Smoke from fires produces fine-particulate matter (PM2.5), which can cause serious health problems including lung disease, asthma attacks, and increased risk of heart attacks and stroke. Where conditions warrant, people with heart or lung disease should follow their doctors' advice for dealing with episodes of particulate exposure. Additionally, older adults and children should avoid prolonged exposure or heavy exertion, depending on their local conditions.

People with existing respiratory conditions, young children and elderly people are especially susceptible to health effects from these pollutants. Air District officials urge residents to follow their doctors' orders when exposed to fire emissions.

The Air District also provides the Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN), which delivers monitoring data directly to users' computers. It's free and easy to subscribe: [www.valleyair.org/RAAN](http://www.valleyair.org/RAAN). Schools that are seeing or smelling the smoke near their campus should keep students inside per the Real-time Outdoor Activity Risk (ROAR) Guidelines for a Level 5 <http://www.valleyair.org/Programs/RAAN/documents/RAAN-AQ-activity-guidance-chart.pdf>.

For more information, visit [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) or call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-392-5500).