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Air officials ask Valley residents to consider negative health effects of fireworks

Fireworks elevate PM levels and threaten public health

This Independence Day, Air District officials remind Valley residents that July 4th fireworks can increase levels of dangerous particulate matter (PM), including soot, ash and metals, which cause serious health impacts. Individuals most at risk are small children, the elderly and people with existing respiratory conditions.

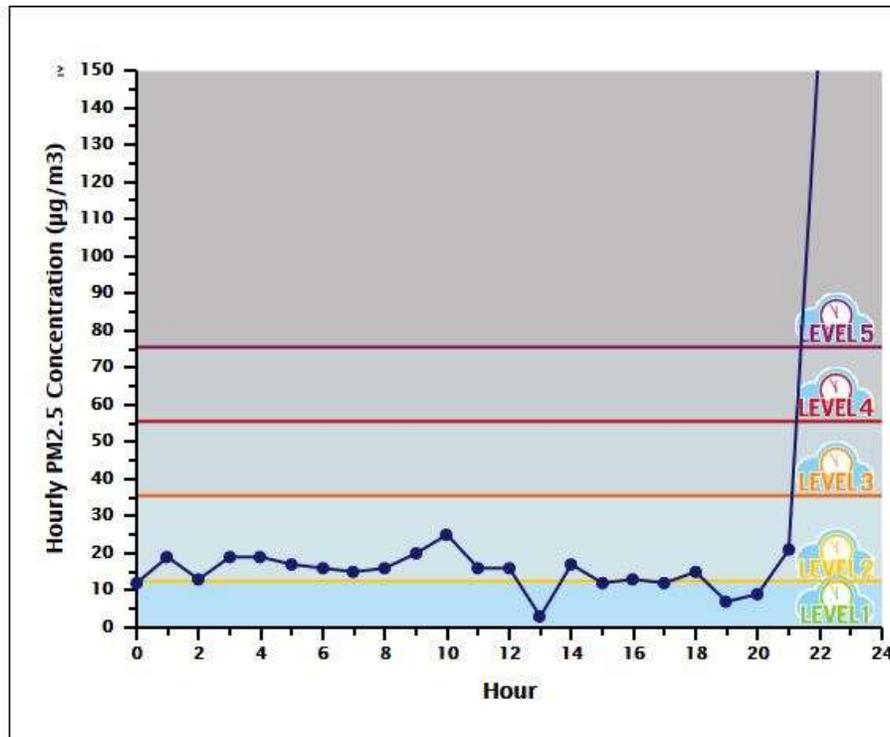
“If Valley residents feel the need to enjoy fireworks, we urge them to exhibit their patriotism by attending a professional Independence Day event in their area instead of using personal fireworks,” said Samir Sheikh, the District’s Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer. “Each year, people suffer serious health consequences from direct exposure in the neighborhoods where they live and breathe... from firework activities that are entirely preventable.”

Fine particulate matter can invade the bloodstream, get deep into the lungs and has been linked to heart attacks and stroke. Each year on the Fourth of July, air monitors across the Valley reflect spikes in PM concentrations, often four to five times higher than the health-based federal standards, and typically occur between the hours of 9 and 10 pm. These spikes are due in part to personal fireworks used throughout Valley neighborhoods and the high levels of PM threaten the Valley’s progress in meeting air-quality standards that protect public health. (An attached graph illustrates a typical increase in PM following fireworks).

The District’s Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) provides localized air quality data from an extensive air-monitoring network which allows Valley residents to track PM at any Valley address by visiting myraan.org.

For more information about the Air District, call a regional office in Fresno (559) 230-6000, Modesto (209) 557-6400 or Bakersfield (661) 392-5500.

PM 2.5 pattern on July 4, 2017



This graph illustrates a spike in particulate levels on July 4, 2017 in the City of Visalia, which reached 436 µg/m3 as a result of fireworks use. Similar impacts are seen throughout the Valley each Fourth of July.