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Gusty winds prompt health caution

Blowing dust poses potential health concern Valley-wide

Strong northwesterly winds are creating blowing dust and elevated concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller (PM10) across the San Joaquin Valley. As a result, local air pollution officials are issuing a health caution valley-wide due to PM10 from wind-blown dust for tonight May 19th through Friday May 21st. The District recommends that Valley residents use caution and avoid exposure to blowing dust caused by windy conditions.

Gusty winds often cause localized blowing dust in areas where soils are exceptionally dry—creating unhealthy concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller (PM10). Exposure to particulate pollution can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, trigger asthma attacks and bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections.

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.

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