

For immediate release 07-28-2021

Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors

Media Contact:

Cassandra Melching (559) 230-5901

Spanish Media Contact:

Maricela Velasquez (559) 230-5849

Dixie Fire prompts District to issue Health Caution *Smoke impacting San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced Counties*

The District is issuing a health caution to northern San Joaquin Valley residents as the Dixie Fire burning in Butte and Plumas Counties north of Sacramento has the potential to cause smoke impacts in the counties of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced. North to Northwesterly winds are forecast to last through Friday, which will increase the potential of smoke impacts in the San Joaquin Valley. The health caution will remain in place until the fire is extinguished, or until smoke is no longer impacting the Valley. The District warns residents being impacted by smoke to stay indoors to reduce their exposure to particulate matter (PM) emissions.

Particulate matter can trigger asthma attacks, aggravate chronic bronchitis, and increase the risk of heart attack and stroke. Individuals with heart or lung disease should follow their doctors' advice for dealing with episodes of PM exposure. Those with existing respiratory conditions, including COVID-19, young children and the elderly, are especially susceptible to the health effects from this form of pollution. Anyone experiencing poor air quality due to wildfire smoke should move to a filtered, air-conditioned environment with windows closed. Common cloth and paper masks being used as protection from COVID-19 may not be sufficient protection from wildfire smoke inhalation.

The public is advised to visit the District's Wildfire Information Page at www.valleyair.org/wildfires for details on current and recently past wildfires affecting the Valley. The site includes resources on how to protect yourself from exposure to wildfire smoke, including instructions on how to make a DIY air filter for your home, links to foothill air monitors and the District's Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN), allowing residents to track air quality at any Valley location. You can visit RAAN directly at myRAAN.com or use the "Valley Air" app, free to download on any mobile device. In addition, see the EPA's recommendations on ["What Can I Do Now to Protect My Family from Wildfire Smoke?"](#)

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).