

News Release

09-19-07

For Immediate Release



San Joaquin Valley
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

TO:

**Local News, Health and
Weather sections**

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High winds prompt health warning

Air District cautions that air pollution levels climbing

High winds occurring in the western and southern parts of the San Joaquin Valley, have prompted local air-pollution officials to issue a health cautionary statement through Wednesday evening.

The winds are expected to cause blowing dust in central and western Fresno, Kings, and the Valley portion of Kern counties.

“Strong northwesterly winds, with localized areas of blowing dust, can create unhealthy concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller, commonly referred to as PM10,” said Shawn Ferreria, a meteorologist for the District.

The District’s air-monitoring stations in Bakersfield and Corcoran have recorded elevated PM10 measurements since early this afternoon.

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

Residents of the counties impacted are advised to use caution through this evening. 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.

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the valley portion of Kern. For more information, visit <http://www.valleyair.org/> or call the nearest District office: Modesto (209) 557-6400, Fresno (559) 230-6000 and Bakersfield (661) 326-6900.