Valley Air District cautions against outdoor activities in central and southern regions today

Due to forecast air pollution levels in Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley portion of Kern counties, Air Pollution Control Officer David L. Crow advises caution when scheduling outdoor activities in those areas today.

Ozone levels will be unhealthy for everyone today and will come close to very unhealthy conditions (201 AQI) when evaluated for the eight-hour exposure risk. While this is unusually high for this time of year, smog still may not reach the very high one-hour peak necessary to trigger a formal health advisory as set by state regulations.

“Nevertheless, air pollution will be high enough this afternoon to merit caution,” Crow said. “I strongly recommend that schools, youth organizations and sports teams in the central and southern portions of the Valley reduce rigorous outdoor activities this afternoon.”

The elderly and anyone with a respiratory condition in those areas are advised to limit outdoor exercise during peak smog periods between 3 and 7 p.m. today. People who work outside for six or more hours a day should take frequent breaks and drink plenty of fluids to keep lung tissue hydrated.

In addition to smog, parts of the Valley are also experiencing smoke impact from resource management fires. This adds particulate matter, another type of pollutant, to the unhealthy mix.

The Valley Air District will continue to monitor smog levels throughout the day and will notify schools and the media if air pollution reaches the high peaks that necessitate a formal health advisory episode. The District will provide a forecast of tomorrow’s air quality in the daily air quality report issued at 4 p.m. today. The information is available to the public at valleyair.org and 800-SMOG INFO.

Today is a Spare the Air day in the entire San Joaquin Valley and another ozone action day has been declared tomorrow for Fresno, Kings, Madera, Merced,
Tulare and the Valley portion of Kern counties. As much of the Valley’s smog originates from cars, trucks and other internal combustion engines, the District urges the public to reduce all unnecessary driving and postpone yard care with gasoline-powered equipment. Painting, particularly with sprays, and using charcoal lighter fluid also add to smog levels. The Valley Air District asks all residents to do their part to reduce unhealthy emissions.

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