

## **San Joaquin Valley air quality district issues health caution, citing wildfire smoke**

By Elaine Chen

Sacramento Bee, Saturday, Aug. 24, 2019

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District has issued a Valley-wide health caution throughout the weekend due to poor air quality caused by smoke from local wildfires.

Sacramento is not included in the zone affected, but areas south of Sacramento, including Stockton, will likely be impacted.

The local wildfires include one in Medford Island, northwest of Stockton, and fires in the Inyo National Forest and Sierra National Forest bordering the San Joaquin Valley on the east.

The advisory recommends people in areas with poor air quality to stay indoors and keep windows closed, warning that inhaling smoke can aggravate conditions for people who have asthma or chronic heart and lung diseases, as well as increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

People can go to the website [www.myraan.org](http://www.myraan.org) to check the air quality at their specific address, the advisory said. The website rates the air quality with a score from Level 1 to Level 5. The greater number, the poorer the air quality. The website advises that at Level 3, people particularly vulnerable to the effects of poor air quality — such as young children, elderly people and people with existing respiratory conditions — should stay indoors. At Level 5, everyone should stay indoors.

Information about the ongoing fires can be accessed at [www.valleyair.org/wildfires](http://www.valleyair.org/wildfires).

### **Where is that smoke coming from?**

Stockton Record, Friday, Aug. 23, 2019

Smoke from a fire in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta area and the surrounding mountains has fouled the air in our area and led air officials to issue a health cautionary statement for the San Joaquin Valley.

The fire on an unincorporated island in the Delta reportedly started Thursday night.

The smoke from several wildfires last summer prompted Public Health Services of San Joaquin County to offer a number of precautions residents should follow to protect their health and that of their loved ones, especially older and younger family members:

- If you see or smell smoke in your immediate area, stay indoors, if possible, with windows and doors closed and turn on the air conditioning to recirculate to avoid drawing outside air inside. Also in your vehicle, use the “recirculating” air function.
- If your home is too hot, consider leaving and visiting an indoor mall, library or someone else’s home equipped with air conditioning.
- Those with heart or lung disease, older adults, pregnant women and children should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion outside. Outdoor activities should be moved or rescheduled for when the air quality improves. If that’s not possible, at least take several breaks during the outdoor activity.
- Ensure family members with heart disease or lung problems such as asthma, bronchitis or emphysema are following their doctor’s advice about medicine and their respiratory management plan. Seek help if their symptoms worsen.

For people who have not been previously diagnosed with a chronic lung or heart disease, health officials note that smoke can “unmask” or produce symptoms of those conditions such as chest pain or tightness, shortness of breath or fatigue. If they appear, contact a doctor.

It also is advised to keep airways moist by drinking lots of water. You also can breathe through a warm, wet washcloth to help relieve dryness.

Information on wildfire smoke and dealing with hot weather is available online from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov).

Other resources include:

- San Joaquin County Public Health Services at [sjcphs.org](http://sjcphs.org).
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District at [valleyair.org](http://valleyair.org).
- Healthy Air Living at [healthyairliving.com](http://healthyairliving.com).
- Follow air quality conditions with the Valley Air app, available from Google Play or the App Store.

## **Wildfires elsewhere may bring smoke into the Valley this weekend: SJVAPCD**

Tracy Press Friday, August 23, 2019

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District has released a health caution.

Heat and high pressure will remain through the weekend, affecting air quality conditions

Smoke from a fire in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta area and smoke from wildfires in the surrounding mountains have the potential to affect air quality throughout the entire San Joaquin Valley, prompting Air District officials to issue a health cautionary statement Valley-wide. Smoke impacts are likely to continue until the fires are extinguished, and may be more noticeable during the night and early morning hours.

Smoke from wildfires produces particulate matter which can trigger asthma attacks, aggravate chronic heart and lung diseases, and increase the risk of heart attack and stroke. Where conditions warrant, people with heart or lung disease should follow their doctors' advice for dealing with episodes of particulate exposure. People with existing respiratory conditions, young children and elderly people are especially susceptible to the health effects from these pollutants. Anyone being exposed to poor air quality or wildfire smoke should move inside to an air-conditioned or heated environment with their windows closed.

Residents can use the District's Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) to track air quality at any Valley address by visiting [myraan.com](http://myraan.com). The RAAN monitors are designed to detect the microscopic PM2.5 particles that exist in smoke. Ash pieces, however, are much larger in size and will not be detected. If an area is covered in ash, air quality should be considered "unhealthy" (RAAN Level 4 or higher) even if the monitor reflects a lower reading.

The public can check the District's wildfire page at [www.valleyair.org/wildfires](http://www.valleyair.org/wildfires) for information about any current wildfires and whether they are impacting the Valley. In addition, anyone can follow air quality conditions by downloading the free "Valley Air" app, available in the Apple store or Google Play.

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