

Wildfire season prompts air quality warning, suggestions

The Bakersfield Californian, Thursday, July 7, 2022

The arrival of wildfire season threatens to bring smoke into the San Joaquin Valley, according to a Valley Air District news release Wednesday, which also mentioned how residents can prepare for threats to air quality from air pollution.

Residents should change out air filters in their home and set up a clean air room when smoke impacts become severe, according to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, which also offered several suggestions on how to do just that. To create a clean air room in your home where residents can escape the most significant impacts of wildfire smoke, take the following steps, according to district officials:

1. Choose a room where your entire family can relax and spend the majority of their time.
2. Prevent smoke from entering the room by tightly closing doors and windows.
3. Stay cool. Run fans, window air conditioners or central air conditioning.
4. Filter the air in the room with a store-bought air purifier or create a DIY air purifier.
5. Avoid creating smoke or other particles indoors (no candles, no open-flame cooking, no smoking).
6. Spend as much time as possible in the clean air room to get the most benefits.
7. Remember cloth masks don't work for wildfire smoke; chose N95 masks instead.

The city of Bakersfield announced two drop-off locations for large trash available next week, when residents can offload unwanted furniture, mattresses, major appliances and other "bulky items" for free disposal.

The city will be accepting drop-offs from 8 a.m. to noon July 16 at the parking lot of the Bakersfield Municipal Airport at 2000 S. Union Ave. and at 15050 Stockdale Highway.

Wildfire update: Electra Fire slows as crews hold acreage, containment overnight

By Amelia Davidson

Sacramento Bee, Modesto Bee, Thursday, July 07, 2022

The Electra Fire maintained its acreage and containment overnight Thursday, as crews took advantage of cool weather to tamp down hot spots at the blaze near Jackson.

The fire, which is burning along the Amador-Calaveras county line, is 4,112 acres and 40% contained as of Thursday morning, Cal Fire said. After roaring to life Monday, prompting widespread evacuation orders — and temporarily trapping around 100 people in a PG&E powerhouse — the blaze burned steadily through Wednesday. Crews increased containment Wednesday from 10% to 40% and a number of evacuation orders and warnings were lifted.

Cal Fire expects full containment by July 18, according to the Thursday morning incident report.

In a morning briefing at the blaze, Cal Fire night operations manager Jeff Loveless called Wednesday a "very successful day." Fire behavior specialist Brian Newman warned temperatures are supposed to rise and humidity is supposed to drop Thursday, but winds levels are also supposed to drop, allowing for "very similar fire behavior" Thursday compared to Wednesday.

The fire is burning in a canyon next to the north fork of the Mokelumne River. Crews have so far been able to stop the fire from spreading to populated areas outside of the canyon, but 1,217 structures remain threatened by the blaze, Cal Fire said Thursday.

Evacuation orders remain in place in both Amador and Calaveras counties. In Amador, the evacuation zone spans from south of Butte Mountain Road to Highway 88 and Mt. Zion, west of Highway 88 and Highway 26, north of Highway 26 and east of Highway 49. Evacuation orders are in place in Calaveras County for zones 100, 103, 104, 351, 352, 358 and 359.

Both counties are running online maps to indicate the latest evacuation order and warning information. Amador County's maps is available [here](#), and Calaveras' [here](#).

On Wednesday, officials lifted some evacuation orders and warnings in Amador County as the containment grew. A road closure moved up Butte Mountain Road from the Lower Clinton Road Intersection to the Upper Clinton Road Intersection, reducing the evacuation order for the previously-closed stretch. The warning zone running east from Jackson, along Highway 88 to Previtali Road, was also removed Wednesday afternoon, allowing residents to return to their homes.

Evacuation centers are open at the at the Italian Picnic Grounds, 581 Highway 49 in Sutter Creek and at Calaveras County Mountain Oak School, 150 Old Oak Road.

Officials made two separate arrests inside the Amador County evacuation zone Wednesday, the Amador County Sheriff's Office said in a social media post. Deputies arrested one man after he passed a roadblock without a reason, and then was found to possess drugs and be in violation of his parole. Later in the day, deputies arrested a different man who entered the evacuation zone without reason, and then was found to have a loaded gun in his car, as well as drugs and illegal fireworks. The second man fled on foot, but was eventually taken into custody.

Around 8,000 households in Amador and Calaveras counties remain without power, PG&E reported on social media Wednesday, as lines have been de-energized around the blaze.

A total of 1,864 firefighters were at the blaze Thursday morning, including 161 engines and 14 helicopters. One first-responder injury has been reported from the fire.

Electra Fire updates: Crews make significant progress after 'spectacular' day, Cal Fire says

By Jordan Parker

San Francisco Chronicle, Thursday, July 7, 2022

The Electra Fire burning southeast of Jackson in Amador County, just over 40 miles east of Sacramento, grew only slightly overnight, reaching 4,272 acres by Thursday morning thanks in part to favorable weather conditions, according to Cal Fire.

Firefighters gained more control overnight, increasing containment to 40%, up from 17% early Wednesday.

Cal Fire said fire activity was tempered Wednesday night thanks to increased humidity levels, adding that several small spot fires were found and extinguished during the evening.

Temperatures were expected to rise slightly Thursday, and overall conditions were expected to be drier, but Cal Fire Fire Behavior Analyst Brian Newman said Wednesday that winds were likely to remain calm, further aiding the ongoing firefight.

Cal Fire updated evacuation orders Wednesday afternoon to allow residents who live along Clinton Road and Butte Mountain Road to return to their homes.

Evacuation orders and warnings were extended Tuesday afternoon to encompass an area just east of Jackson stretching to an area west of Pine Grove. Cal Fire also issued evacuation orders for all residents within a 2-mile radius around Lake Tabeaud early Tuesday.

Operation sections chiefs Jeremy Pierce said crews made significant inroads Wednesday that allowed firefighters to increase containment and strengthen fire lines.

"All in all yesterday was a spectacular day," Pierce said.

Pierce added that a main priority is returning evacuated residents of the Pine Grove area back to their homes.

A spokesperson for Pacific Gas and Electric Co. said about 2,300 customers were still without power because of the fire as of Thursday morning. As many as 15,000 customers were without power earlier in the week, shortly after the fire started.

The fire still threatens over 1,200 structures and one first responder has been injured fighting the blaze.

Cal Fire says the start of the fire remained under investigation, but the Associated Press Reported that the Amador County Sheriff Gary Redman pointed to a possible fireworks accident or barbecue as the potential cause of the flames.

Here's where the Electra Fire is burning in California

By Noor Adatia and Amelia Davidson
Sacramento Bee, Wednesday, July 06, 2022

The Electra Fire has burned more than 3,000 acres and left thousands without power, according to a Tuesday morning update from Cal Fire.

People were evacuated from the Vox Beach area — also sometimes referred to as “Box” Beach — which is a swimming basin in Amador County. The fire sparked near the intersection of Electra Road and Highway 49 along the Amador-Calaveras county line.

The fire is about 50 miles southeast from Sacramento and 5 miles southeast of Jackson.

Over Monday night, the fire was in a canyon next to the north fork of the Mokelumne River, Amador County Sheriff Gary Redman said.

Redman and other fire officials expect that the fire will remain away from homes if it stays below the ridge on either side of the river.

Thousands still without power as Electra fire grows to 4,112 acres with 40% containment

By Grace Toohey
LA Times, Wednesday, July 6, 2022

The Electra fire in Northern California's Amador and Calaveras counties grew slightly Wednesday, from 3,900 to 4,112 acres, as firefighters increased containment to 40%, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Firefighters were also able to gain control, defined as no longer having smoke activity or hot spots within the fire perimeter, over 17% of the blaze, Cal Fire said late Wednesday afternoon.

But about 8,000 Pacific Gas & Electric customers in Amador and Calaveras counties remained without power Wednesday due to the fire, and many were still under mandatory evacuation orders.

The Electra fire, one of the largest wildfires this season, ignited Monday afternoon near the North Fork of the Mokelumne River and spread quickly amid dry brush and steep terrain, according to Cal Fire officials. The fire remained active for the first half of the night, but humidity in the early morning hours helped limit its activity, officials said.

“The biggest issue right now is the terrain and the topography,” said Electra fire spokesperson Chris Dargan on Wednesday morning. He said much of the fire is burning in a gully that is a challenge for crews to access.

The blaze ignited not far from PG&E's Electra powerhouse, a hydropower facility, but company spokesperson Megan McFarland said it's her understanding that “PG&E was not involved in the ignition.”

The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

PG&E has restored power for about 7,000 customers since the start of the blaze, McFarland said. The company has also de-energized several distribution lines for firefighter safety, and has 11 Safety and Infrastructure Protection Team engines working to treat potential equipment issues from the fire, she said.

On Monday, about 100 people were evacuated from the PG&E hydropower facility, McFarland said.

A mandatory evacuation has not changed since Tuesday afternoon, Dargan said, and many residents in Amador and Calaveras counties are still under evacuation orders and warnings.

Two evacuation centers have been set up at the Italian Picnic Grounds on California State Road 49 in Amador County, and in Calaveras County at the Mountain Oak School on Old Oak Road in San Andreas. A prior evacuation shelter at the San Andreas Town Hall has been closed.

Shelters for large and small animals are also available at the Amador County Fairgrounds.

At least one firefighter was injured in the fire response, but a Cal Fire spokesperson said the injury was minor.

More than 1,300 firefighters continue to battle the blaze, as of Wednesday morning.

The fire is one of the largest Cal Fire has faced this year, exceeded only by the 5,800-acre Lost Lake fire that burned in Riverside County in May and the 4,100-acre Airport fire that burned in Inyo County in February, according to the agency.

Free air purifiers being offered to deal with wildfire smoke risks

By Dennis Wyatt

Westsideconnect.com, Wednesday, July 6, 2022

The Valley Air District will help low income households weather wildfires that are ramping UP due to dry conditions made worse by the continuing drought.

The agency will make 1,500 portable residential air purifying units with one replacement filter available for free to low income households within disadvantaged communities in the San Joaquin Valley.

Dubbed the “Clean Airs Pilot Program”, it involves residential versions of portable air purifiers.

The purifiers — besides reducing the spreading of COVID, flu and even germs that cause colds — are designed to cleanse the air of smoke and other particles.

“Smoke from severe wildfires can inundate the Valley and make its way into homes, causing health impacts to our most vulnerable residents,” noted Samir Sheikh, Executive Director of the Valley Air District. “This program is designed to help families who may not otherwise be able to buy an in-home air purifier to protect their families during wildfires.”

In an indoor environment where windows and doors are closed and sealed tightly, HEPA air filtration devices, such as those that will be offered under this program, can reduce particulate matter indoors by more than 90 percent.

Use of air filtration devices to create “clean air rooms”, such as a bedroom, will ensure that the home has a dedicated space with safe indoor air quality during smoke events.

The 10 worst metro areas in the nation for air quality issues include Central Valley counties such as Bakersfield, Kern, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus, Sacramento, Shasta, and Butte.

Ozone pollution is the result of hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxide emissions from motor vehicles or other sources, mixed in the presence of sunlight. It can lead to increased wheezing, coughing, and chest tightness, especially among susceptible children who play outdoors in polluted environments.

Particle pollution, also known as particulate matter or PM, is a general term for a mixture of solid and liquid droplets suspended in the air. Particle pollution comes in many sizes and shapes.

It can be made up of a number of different components, including acids (such as sulfuric acid), inorganic compounds (such as ammonium sulfate, ammonium nitrate, and sodium chloride), organic chemicals, soot, metals, soil or dust particles, and biological materials (such as pollen and mold spores).

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.

Residents 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.

For outdoor workers and other individuals that may not be able to remain indoors, state health authorities recommend the use of N95 facemasks as feasible.

Free air purifiers will be made available soon to low-income households. For more information, email: grants@valleyair.org, or speak to Air District staff, call (559) 230-5800.

Air pollution control officials urge preparedness for wildfire season

By Jason Kotowski

KGET.com, Wednesday, July 6, 2022

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (KGET) — Wildfire season has arrived and residents should prepare for potential poor air quality by changing air filters and designating a room to stay when smoke impacts become severe, say San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District officials.

Wildfire smoke contains particulates that can trigger asthma attacks and increase the risk of heart attack and stroke, officials said in a release. They recommend those experiencing poor air quality move indoors to an air-conditioned room with windows closed.

Information on wildfires affecting the valley can be **found here**.

San Joaquin Valley Air District - News Release - Wildfire season is here District encourages Valley residents ...

U.S. Local Government News Via PUBT, Wednesday, July 6, 2022

News Release - Wildfire season is here District encourages Valley residents to prepare for smoke impacts from wildfires For immediate release 07-6-2022

Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors

Media Contact:

Jaime Holt (559) 309-3336

Juan Luis Carranza (559) 230-6547

Wildfire season is here

District encourages Valley residents to prepare for smoke impacts from wildfires

The 2022 Wildfire season has arrived to central California with isolated grass and wildland fires threatening to bring smoke into the San Joaquin Valley. The Valley Air District is encouraging residents to be prepared and plan now for potential poor air quality due to wildfire smoke that might reach the Valley as we head into the hotter, drier time of the year.

The District reminds residents to change out air filters in their home and set up a Clean Air Room for when smoke impacts become severe. A Clean Air Room is a room in your home or apartment where you and your family can escape the worst of the smoke impacts from wildfires. Follow these easy steps to create a Clean Air Room:

- * Choose a room where your entire family can relax and spend the majority of their time
- * Prevent smoke from entering the room by tightly closing doors and windows
- * Stay cool. Run fans, window air conditioners or central air conditioning
- * Filter the air in the room with a store-bought air purifier or create a DIY air purifier
- * Avoid creating smoke or other particles indoors (no candles, no open flame cooking, no smoking)
- * Spend as much time as possible in the clean air room to get the most benefits
- * Remember cloths mask don't work for wildfire smoke, chose N95 masks instead

The recent hot and dry conditions throughout the San Joaquin Valley create the potential for wildfires and lead to smoke impacts in our region. A build-up of dry vegetation during the summer months presents a high risk for hotter, faster-moving fires in mountain communities surrounding the Valley, often sending smoke into the San Joaquin Valley.

Wildfire smoke contains particulate matter (PM), which can trigger asthma attacks, aggravate chronic bronchitis, and increase the risk of heart attack and stroke. Those with existing respiratory conditions are especially susceptible to the adverse health effects of this form of pollution. Anyone experiencing poor air quality due to wildfire smoke should move indoors to a filtered, air-conditioned environment with windows closed and contact their primary care provider for more information.

The public can check the District's wildfire page at www.valleyair.org/wildfiresfor information about any current wildfires affecting the Valley. In addition, anyone can follow air quality conditions by downloading the free "Valley Air" app on their mobile device. Those residents in foothill or mountain communities should also listen to emergency alerts and be prepared to evacuate if needed.

For more information, visit www.valleyair.org call a District office, Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209- 557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-392-5500). District Outreach and Communications personnel are also available for media interviews.

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and San Joaquin Valley air basin portions of Kern. For additional information about the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, visit www.valleyair.org call 559-230-6000.

* Original Link

Disclaimer

San Joaquin Valley Air District published this content on 06 July 2022 and is solely responsible for the information contained therein. Distributed by Public, unedited and unaltered, on 06 July 2022 18:22:17 UTC.