

For immediate release 10/26/2019

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Gusty winds prompt health caution

The potential for blowing dust as a result of gusty winds has prompted local air pollution officials to issue a health cautionary statement for Saturday night through Sunday for the entire San Joaquin Valley.

The northern and western parts of the Valley are likely to see the most impacts and the strong winds have will likely cause localized areas of blowing dust where soils are exceptionally dry—creating unhealthy concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller (PM10). Exposure to particulate pollution can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, trigger asthma attacks and bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections.

Where conditions warrant, people with heart or lung disease should follow their doctors' advice for dealing with episodes of particulate exposure. Additionally, older adults and children should avoid prolonged exposure or heavy exertion, depending on their local conditions.

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).