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Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors

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Health Caution: Gusty winds causing blowing dust in Kern and Kings Counties

Elevated PM10 poses health concern

Strong southeasterly winds are creating blowing dust and elevated concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller (PM10) in Kern and Kings Counties. As a result, local air pollution officials are issuing a health caution for Kern and Kings Counties due to PM10 from wind-blown dust for today, Wednesday, Jan. 27 through tomorrow morning, Thursday, Jan. 28, 2021. The District recommends that residents in those areas use caution and avoid exposure to blowing dust caused by windy conditions.

In addition, smoke from residential wood burning devices can add additional pollutants to the air, further compounding the unhealthy air quality produced during these high wind events. The District urges Valley residents to refrain from using wood burning devices.

Windy conditions in areas where soil is exceptionally dry often creates unhealthy concentrations of 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).