

News Release

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For Immediate Release



San Joaquin Valley
Air Pollution
Control District

TO:

Local News, Health and Weather
sections

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Southern Cal wildfire prompts local health warning

Air pollution levels may climb in coming days in south Valley

A large wildfire burning in Ventura County is expected to bring smoke to the southernmost regions of Kern County over the course of the next few days and possibly longer. Valley Air District meteorologists indicate the smoke could present health risks for residents of Frazier Park, Lake of the Woods, Lebec and Grapevine.

“The winds have shifted and now are carrying smoke towards the Valley, instead of away from us,” said meteorologist Gary Arcemont. He added that the smoke may travel into other parts of Kern County, as well as Valley counties north of Kern.

The Day Fire, which started on Monday, had grown to nearly 12,000 acres as of Friday morning. None of the fire had been controlled by Friday morning.

Exposure to smoke and other particle pollution can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, cause asthma attacks and acute bronchitis, and increase risk of respiratory infections. In people with heart disease, short-term exposure to particle pollution has been linked to heart attacks and arrhythmias, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Residents in affected areas are advised to use caution Friday through at least Monday morning, and possibly longer if the smoke impacts continue.

People with heart or lung diseases should follow their doctors' advice for dealing with episodes of unhealthy air quality when smoke is present. Additionally, older adults and children should avoid prolonged exposure, strenuous activities or heavy exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged exposure, strenuous activities or heavy exertion.

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the valley portion of Kern. For more information, visit www.valleyair.org or call the nearest District office: Modesto (209) 557-6400, Fresno (559) 230-6000 and Bakersfield (661) 326-6900.

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