

News Release

For immediate release

8-19-11

**Attn: Local news, health, weather
and assignment editors**



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Media Advisory

Press conference to announce air basin's first Air Alert

WHO: Valley Air District

WHAT: Press conference to announce air basin's first Air Alert

WHEN: Monday, Aug. 22

WHERE:

4800 Enterprise Way, Modesto (9 a.m.)

1990 E. Gettysburg Ave., Fresno (10 a.m.)

34946 Flyover Court, Bakersfield (10 a.m.)

WHY:

The Valley Air District is expecting to declare the air basin's first Air Alert, a new air-quality notification that the Valley is currently experiencing conditions that may lead to exceeding a health-based ozone (smog) standard. Air Alerts are issued Valley-wide. The starting date and duration for the Air Alert episode will be announced at Monday's press conference once emissions, monitoring and meteorological data from the coming weekend is analyzed. The staff anticipates the first episode beginning on Tuesday, August 23 or Wednesday, August 25 and lasting three to five days.

In addition to the negative effects on our health, ozone exceedances can also result in monetary penalties to the Valley, potentially imposing severe financial burdens on Valley businesses and, ultimately, residents.

Eighty percent of the Valley's ozone problem is caused by vehicle use. When an Air Alert is declared, residents and businesses are urged to put into place measures that reduce vehicle miles traveled, including carpooling, vanpooling, using alternative transportation, avoiding the use of drive-through services and refraining from vehicle idling. All of these actions produce emissions that lead to ozone formation. Additionally, residents and businesses are encouraged to shift ozone creating activities, such as lawn maintenance, to early mornings or after the Air Alert episode is over.

"Ozone is a serious health problem in the Valley, and in addition, has enormous economic

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repercussions,” said Seyed Sadredin, the District’s executive director and air pollution control officer. “Air Alerts provide a critical window of opportunity for residents and businesses to take action that can prevent triggering an ozone episode that carries severe penalties.”

There are several ways to receive notification of an Air Alert: through the District’s 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463) line; on the District’s website at www.valleyair.org; and by free subscription to an automated email list (<http://valleyair.org/lists/list.htm>).

For more information about Air Alerts, visit www.valleyair.org, www.healthyairliving.com or call a District office: in Fresno (559) 230-6000, in Bakersfield (661-392-5500) or in Modesto (209-557-6400).