

**For immediate release 10/09/2017**

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

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## **Gusty winds and wildfire smoke prompt health caution**

*Potential elevated PM10 and PM2.5 pose health concern*

Gusty winds are causing localized blowing dust, which can result in elevated concentrations of particulate matter 10 microns and smaller (PM10). Local air pollution officials are issuing a health cautionary statement effective today through this evening for Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley air basin portion of Kern Counties.

In addition, wildfire smoke from the Lion Fire in Tulare County may also affect these same areas as high winds may transport these emissions across the Valley, which may result in elevated concentrations of particulate matter 2.5 microns and smaller (PM2.5). Smoke impacts will continue until the fire is extinguished.

Exposure to particulate pollution can cause serious health problems, aggravate lung disease, trigger asthma attacks and bronchitis, increase risk of valley fever 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.

Smoke from fires can cause serious health problems including lung disease, asthma attacks and increased risk of heart attacks and stroke. Where conditions warrant, people with heart or lung disease should follow their doctors' advice for dealing with episodes of particulate exposure. People with existing respiratory conditions, young children and elderly people are especially susceptible to the health effects from these pollutants. Anyone being exposed to poor air quality or wildfire smoke should move inside to an air-conditioned environment.

Residents can check the District's wildfire page at [www.valleyair.org/wildfires](http://www.valleyair.org/wildfires) for information about any current wildfires and whether they are impacting the Valley. Residents can also check the nearest air monitor to their location to determine localized air-quality conditions. Visit the Real-time Air Advisory Network page on the District's website to subscribe for free: [www.valleyair.org/RAAN](http://www.valleyair.org/RAAN).

For more information, visit [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) or call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-392-5500).