

New app shows time, location of prescribed burns

By Gene Garaygordobil The Record
Bakersfield Californian, Saturday, June 5, 2021

A new, first of its kind app launched recently by the California Air Resources Board shows Californians when and where prescribed fires are being planned so they can prepare for potential smoke impacts.

The California Smoke Spotter app provides a comprehensive overview of the latest information on prescribed fires, projected smoke impacts, current air quality and educational material. This will help them plan their day's activities and determine if smoke is from a local prescribed fire. Key features of the app include:

- Location, size, and burn status
- 24-hour statewide smoke forecasts
- Personalized alerts that notify users when a prescribed fire will be burning nearby (notifications can be set for multiple locations)
- Current Air Quality Index (AQI) data to help users make health-based decisions
- Additional information on prescribed fire, its benefits, and how users can protect themselves from smoke

CARB will update the California Smoke Spotter app as new data and technology become available. Staff are already working on an update to add information and smoke forecasts for wildfires to the app later this year. In 2020, California experienced its worst wildfire season in modern history, and air pollution from smoke reached unprecedented levels. Prescribed fire is an important tool in California's efforts to prevent and mitigate the impacts of wildfires, including smoke.

State forestry policy calls for an increase in fuels reduction efforts including the use of prescribed fire. CARB supports that policy and is releasing California Smoke Spotter during the spring burning season as part of its efforts to help the state balance air quality protection with fire protection and land management goals

You can download the app from the Apple App Store or Google Play. Contact Amy MacPherson, office of communications, at 916-397-3517 for any questions.