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Wildfires continue to bring smoke into the Valley

Take action to protect your health

Smoke from the Ferguson Fire in Mariposa County and other fires is affecting air quality in locations throughout the entire San Joaquin Valley with especially severe conditions in the foothill and mountain communities. Local air pollution officials want to remind Valley residents that a health caution is in place and smoke impacts will continue until the fires are extinguished.

Wildfire smoke is a mixture of gases and fine, microscopic particles that can cause health problems including triggering asthma attacks, aggravating chronic heart and lung diseases, and increasing the risk of heart attack 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 use the District's Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) to track air quality at any Valley address by visiting myraan.com. The RAAN monitors are designed to detect the microscopic PM2.5 particles that exist in smoke. Ash pieces, however, are much larger in size and will not be detected. If an area is covered in ash, air quality should be considered "unhealthy" (RAAN Level 4 or higher) even if the monitor reflects a lower reading.

The public can check the District's wildfire page at www.valleyair.org/wildfires for information about any current wildfires and whether they are impacting the Valley. In addition, anyone can follow air quality conditions by downloading the free "Valley Air" app, available in the Apple store or Google Play.

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).