

For immediate release 08-13-15

Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors

Northern region – Modesto

Anthony Presto (209) 557-6472

Central/Southern regions – Fresno

Heather Heinks (559) 230-5898

Spanish-language contact

Maricela Velasquez (559) 230-5849

Two fires prompt health caution

Wildfire smoke is impacting foothill communities, has potential to reach Valley floor

Two wildfires, Rough Fire in Fresno County and Cabin Fire in Tulare County, have prompted local air officials to issue a health cautionary statement for smoke impacts in **Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare and the Valley portion of Kern counties** foothills and mountainous areas. Currently smoke impacts are concentrated in the mountainous and foothill areas of the air basin, but impacts on the Valley floor are possible until the fires are extinguished.

Smoke from fires produces fine-particulate matter (PM2.5), which 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. Additionally, older adults and children should avoid prolonged exposure or heavy exertion, depending on their local conditions.

People with existing respiratory conditions, young children and elderly people are especially susceptible to health effects from these pollutants. Air District officials urge residents to follow their doctors' orders when exposed to fire emissions.

Residents 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. 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.

For more information, visit www.valleyair.org or call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-381-1809).