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Attn: Local news, weather, health and assignment editors

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Wildfire smoke continues to threaten public health in the Valley *Air officials extend health caution through weekend*

Smoke from the Rough Fire burning in Fresno and Tulare Counties and the Butte Fire burning in Amador and Calaveras Counties is affecting air quality in locations throughout **San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the Valley air basin portion of Kern Counties** prompting air officials to extend their air advisory through the weekend.

Some areas are experiencing a cloud of visible ash falling from the sky. Please note that the District's Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN) monitors are designed to detect the fine particulates (called PM 2.5 which are microscopic in size and not visible to the human eye) that exist in wildfire smoke. Ash particles are much larger in size and will not be detected by our monitors. Therefore an area may be covered in ash, while the PM monitor reflects a moderate reading. If you can smell smoke and see ash, that is an indication that you should be treating air quality conditions as "Unhealthy".

While conditions are expected to improve over the weekend, smoke will continue to impact air quality in the foothill and mountain areas and potentially isolated areas of the Valley floor.

Fine-particulate matter (PM2.5) 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 and stay indoors if at all possible.

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 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).