



Air Pollution Control District
San Luis Obispo County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 18, 2015

**Contact: Aeron Arlin Genet, 805-781-5998
SLO County Air Pollution Control District**

**Dr. Penny Borenstein, 805-781-5500
SLO County Public Health Department**

AIR QUALITY ALERT - SMOKE IMPACTING SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA, – The San Luis Obispo (SLO) County Air Pollution Control District and Health Department informs individuals that the air quality throughout San Luis Obispo County is being impacted by smoke from the Cuesta Fire located east of Highway 101 and by smoke from wildfires in Northern California. Skies are hazy and fine particulate (PM_{2.5}) concentrations are higher than normal due to transported smoke from the fire. Changing winds and fire conditions make it difficult to predict which areas of the county may be most affected. However, until the fires are put out, smoke will likely be intermittently present in our region.

If you smell smoke or see ash fall, the County officials recommend that you take precautions to reduce the harmful health effects by limiting outdoor activities. These precautions are especially important for people with respiratory and heart conditions. Residents are encouraged to use common sense and take precautions to reduce the harmful health effects associated with smoke exposure. When it is obvious that there is smoke in the air, County officials recommend that individuals avoid strenuous outdoor activity and remain indoors as much as possible.

Levels of particulates in the smoke may be high enough that the potential exists for even healthy people to be affected. If a cough, shortness of breath, wheezing, exhaustion, light-headedness or chest pain occurs, outdoor activity should be stopped and the affected person should seek medical attention.

To clean ash, please do the following: use a damp cloth and spray areas lightly with water, directing ash-filled water to ground areas, and away from the runoff system; take your vehicle to the car wash; wash off toys that have been outside in the ash; clean ash off pets; due to the corrosive nature of ash, avoid any skin contact with the ash (wear gloves, long-sleeved shirts); and do not use leaf blowers. Please note, if you have heart or lung problems, try not to do any ash cleanup or do anything that stirs the particles back up into the air. In addition, do not allow kids to play in the ash.

The County officials will continue to closely monitor smoke impacts and air quality in San Luis Obispo County. By following the air quality index (AQI) the general public can also monitor real-time air quality throughout SLO County. The AQI focuses on health effects individuals may experience within a few hours or days after breathing polluted air. The AQI is available to the public via the APCD website www.slocleanair.org. Sign up to receive the daily air quality forecast via email by subscribing online at www.enviroflash.info/.

###