Air Pollution Control District
San Luis Obispo County

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SLO County Air Pollution Control District

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WILDFIRE SMOKE IMPACTING SLO COUNTY

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA, – The San Luis Obispo (SLO) County Air Pollution Control District and Public Health Department are working in partnership to assess the air quality in order to identify any potential health impacts and to inform the community about safeguarding individual health.

As of Monday morning (8/31) widespread smoke impacts are present across the county this morning, with the North Coast—including Cambria, Cayucos, and Morro Bay—currently experiencing Unhealthy and Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (USG) air quality as smoke from the Timber and Plaskett fires has pooled across portions of the Central Coast. Elsewhere across the county, air quality is generally in the Moderate to USG range.

Some improvement is possible around midday as increasing onshore winds bring cleaner marine air inland and help disperse smoke. However, smoke impacts are expected to increase again during the evening and overnight hours as winds weaken, and smoke becomes more likely to accumulate near the surface.

AQI values are expected to range from Moderate to Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups throughout the day, with localized periods of Unhealthy air quality possible, particularly in the Cambria area. Given the ongoing fire activity and changing meteorological conditions, smoke impacts and air quality may change rapidly.

We anticipate similar conditions for Tuesday and elevated concentrations of fine particulates ($PM_{2.5}$) throughout the rest of the week as firefighters aggressively fight the Timber and Plaskett Fires.

If you smell smoke or see ash fall:
Air District officials recommend that if you smell smoke or see ash, take precautions, and use common sense to reduce your exposure to smoke. All adults and children should:

- Head indoors and remain indoors, if possible
- Avoid strenuous outdoor activity
- Close all windows and doors that lead outside to prevent bringing additional smoke inside
- Visit our website at SLOCleanAir.org for tips on how to develop a Clean Air Room in your home, or how to make an emergency DIY indoor air purifier.

These precautions are especially important for sensitive groups, including children, older adults, and people with existing respiratory illness and heart conditions, as they are particularly vulnerable to the health effects of poor air quality. Families with small children should be aware that even if adults in the household have no symptoms, children may experience symptoms due to their smaller body mass and developing lungs. If smoke increases, healthy people could be affected as well. If you experience a cough, shortness of breath, wheezing, exhaustion, light-headedness or chest pain, stop any outdoor activity immediately and seek medical attention. More information can be found at slocleanair.org/air-quality/wildfire.

If applicable, it is recommended that you avoid ash clean-up on cars and other materials until conditions improve. If you have to clean up ash, the following is recommended:
Use a damp cloth and spray areas lightly with water; 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 existing heart or

lung conditions, avoid doing ash clean-up or anything else that stirs the particles back up into the air. Do not allow children to play in the ash.

For updates:
APCD and 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 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 current and forecasted AQI is available via the APCD website: slocleanair.org and you can also follow the SLO County APCD and Public Health Department Twitter feeds (now X) for the latest updates (@slocleanair and @SLOPublicHealth). You can also sign up for AirAware alerts right on your phone by visiting our website at SLOCleanAir.org.