



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 14, 2017

Contact: Rubi Rajbanshi, 805-781-5912
SLO County Air Pollution Control District

Lyz Hoffman, 805-364-2247
Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District

Mike Villegas, 805-645-1440
Ventura County Air Pollution Control District

Smoke Continues to Impact SLO, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties
Tri-Agency Advisory Regarding Wildfire Smoke

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA, – The San Luis Obispo (SLO) County, Santa Barbara County and Ventura County Air Pollution Control Districts are working in partnership to continue to assess the air quality across the northern and southern central coast regions.

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:

- Avoid strenuous outdoor activity
- Remain indoors as much as possible
- Close all windows and doors that lead outside to prevent bringing additional smoke inside
- Set any heating/air conditioning/ventilation systems to recirculate

These precautions are especially important for 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.

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 yourself or anything else that stirs the particles back up into the air. In addition, do not allow children to play in the ash.

For updates:

All Air District officials will continue to closely monitor smoke impacts and air quality throughout the three counties.

- Follow the air quality index (AQI) to monitor real-time air quality. The current and forecasted AQI is available at the websites listed by region below.



Air Pollution Control District
San Luis Obispo County



Ventura County
Air Pollution
Control District

SLO County Update

Smoke and haze may be visible in some areas. Changing winds make it difficult to predict which areas of the county may be most affected by smoke. However, until the fires are put out, smoke may be intermittently present in our region. Current air quality in SLO County ranges from good to moderate (with some intermittent unhealthy for sensitive groups). The SLO County APCD has also issued a voluntary “Don’t Light Tonight” advisory for December 12 through 18, 2017, asking residents to refrain from burning wood or using their wood stoves or fireplaces unless they are being used as a primary source of heat. Weather conditions and elevated use of fireplaces and wood stoves will only further exacerbate the levels of fine particulate matter in the air. More information can be found at SLOCleanAir.org/air-quality/air-forecasting-map or by following us on Twitter at @SLOCleanAir.

Santa Barbara County Update

Monitoring stations are expected to continue to record unhealthy (and sometimes very unhealthy) air in Santa Barbara County, with levels of fine particles (PM 2.5) still high. Larger particles (PM 10) and smoke aloft in the air will make air quality conditions appear worse and lead to poor visibility in some areas of the county. Those larger particles are less harmful to health than the smaller, fine particles, which are invisible. The larger particles can break down into smaller particles over time, so everyone should continue to take precautions. An Air Quality Warning will remain in effect until conditions improve. To see forecasts in English and Spanish, and to view forecast maps and information on current conditions for cities throughout the three counties, visit www.OurAir.org/todays-air-quality/ and follow us on Twitter at @OurAirSBC.

Ventura County Update

Smoke impacts from these devastating fires are widespread. Air quality should be considered unhealthy in areas directly impacted by smoke. Currently, smoke has made its way inland along the coastal plains and should be considered unhealthy in these areas. The Ojai Valley is also currently experiencing very unhealthy air quality, even reaching hazardous levels at times. “Hazardous” is defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as “Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.” If you are in an area directly impacted by smoke, please exercise extreme caution. Wildfire smoke concentrations can vary by hour and change frequently. More information can be found at VCAPCD.org or by following on Twitter at @VCAPCD.