



NEWS



News Headlines 08/25/2021

- Poor air quality in the Victor Valley caused by smoke from California wildfires

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Staff Writer, Victor Valley News Group

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Photo looking towards Rancho Road and the I-15 freeway in Oak Hills. Hugo C Valdez, VVNG.com

VICTOR VALLEY, Calif. (VVNG.com) — Smoke drifting from the Northern California wildfires burning over the last several weeks is now causing poor air quality in the Victor Valley, officials said.

The Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) said high concentrations of ground-level ozone and smoke are making the air quality unhealthy for sensitive groups and issued an advisory through Wednesday, August 25th.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, “high concentrations of ozone near ground level can be harmful to people, animals, crops, and other materials. Ozone can irritate your respiratory system, causing you to start coughing, feel an irritation in your throat and/or experience an uncomfortable sensation in your chest.”

Regulated air quality monitors on Tuesday morning showed the Air Quality Index in multiple MDAQMD locations in the Unhealthy (red) category for ground-level ozone. Low-cost sensors placed throughout the region also showed increases in PM2.5, the pollutant found in wildfire smoke.

“Levels of PM2.5 may continue to increase depending on fire containment and shifting winds, contributing to ground-level ozone concentrations. Further, much of California is expected to see another heatwave this week, potentially exacerbating ground-level ozone and decreasing air quality,” stated an MDAQMD news release.

Increasing levels of smoke or ground-level ozone can affect everyone, but it’s particularly unhealthy for those with heart and respiratory illnesses, children, seniors and active adults.

In any area impacted by poor air quality including smoke:

- **everyone** should avoid any vigorous outdoor or indoor exertion;
- people with respiratory or heart disease, older adults, and children should **remain indoors**;
- keep windows and doors closed;
- run your air conditioner if you have one – recirculation function is ideal;
- avoid using a swamp cooler or whole-house fan to prevent bringing outdoor pollutants inside

Breathing of fine particulate matter can lead to a wide variety of cardiovascular and respiratory health effects such as heart attacks, asthma aggravation, decreased lung function, coughing, or difficulty breathing and may lead to premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

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