



NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Lisa Fasano, 415.710.3505

Bay Area Air District demands EPA reevaluate PM air standard *COVID-19 impacts potentially higher in areas with elevated particulate matter*

SAN FRANCISCO - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center and Public Health today discussed the urgent need for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reevaluate and update the fine particulate standard known as PM 2.5.

Last month, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced it would not be reevaluating the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for fine particulate matter. This action flies in the face of recent health and scientific studies as well as the World Health Organization air quality guideline values.

“Now more than ever, we need to put public health above partisan politics,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “Particulate matter is the scourge of air pollutants. Despite federal inaction, we will step up and identify strategies to reduce this pollutant in the Bay Area region.”

The EPA’s own Integrated Science Assessment dated December 2019 includes a vast amount of studies that identify PM 2.5 as a significant public health threat indicating the need for further study and lowering the air standard for this air pollutant.

Preliminary studies indicate those recovering from COVID-19 may be more susceptible to health impacts from current PM 2.5 levels in the air.

The Bay Area Air District will submit comments to the requesting the U.S EPA prior to the June 29 deadline recommending the agency re-evaluate the PM 2.5 air quality standard. Comments regarding this important health standard can be sent via email to a-and-r-Docket@epa.gov and reference Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2015-0072.

Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese interviews can be requested by calling Kristina Chu at 415-519-5397.

The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).

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Air District Communications Office
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