Bay Area Air District

News Release

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DATE: February 1, 2025
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Air quality advisory for smoke from fire at MRC Refinery in Martinez

Potential localized smoke impacts & along smoke plume

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air District is issuing an air quality advisory for smoke in Contra Costa and Solano counties due to a fire at MRC's Martinez refinery.

At approximately 1:47 p.m. a fire began at Martinez Refinery. Air District inspectors are on site. Localized impacts near the fire and in downwind neighborhoods are possible, including **the smell of smoke and elevated levels of particulate pollution.** This is based on current meteorological conditions which can change depending on the duration of the fire. The Air District will closely monitor air quality throughout the region for smoke impacts from this incident.

Residents should follow instructions from local health officials.

The Air District is working with first responders to advise them on meteorology and air quality issues relating to the incident. Inspectors are on site, responding to public complaints and documenting any violations of air quality regulations. Once the incident response is complete, an incident report will be posted on this webpage: https://www.baaqmd.gov/about-air-quality/incidents-and-advisories.

Smoke from the fire contains fine particulate matter and other harmful pollutants. Exposure to smoke is unhealthy, even for short periods of time. It is important that Bay Area residents protect their health by avoiding exposure. If possible, stay inside with windows and doors closed until smoke levels subside. Set car vent systems to re-circulate to prevent outside air from moving inside. The use of indoor air filtration can also help reduce smoke exposure.

Smoke can irritate the eyes and airways, causing coughing, a dry scratchy throat and irritated sinuses. Elevated particulate matter in the air can trigger wheezing in those who suffer from asthma, emphysema or COPD. Elderly persons, children and individuals with respiratory illnesses are particularly susceptible to elevated air pollution levels and should take extra precautions to avoid exposure.

Check the U.S. EPA's Fire and Smoke Map to see if smoke is affecting your area at: https://fire.airnow.gov/.

The Bay Area Air District is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via Facebook, X, Instagram and YouTube.

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