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## County Hospitals Nearly Full: Possibly Weather-Related

Stanislaus County - The Mountain Valley EMS Agency reports that hospitals in Stanislaus County have been nearly at capacity during the past week. "This is not an issue that is limited to Stanislaus County", says Douglass Sisk, Deputy Director EMS Agency. Counties from Sacramento to Kern are reporting a significant increase in hospitalization.

"I'm very concerned that this is related to our period of severe air pollution during the past several weeks," says Dr. John Walker, Stanislaus County Public Health Officer. The hospitals report that they have an increase in hospital admissions of patients with asthma, chronic lung disease, and cardiac disease. We are hopeful that the rain will help to clear the air. In the interim, we recommend that at-risk persons minimize their time outdoors, especially doing strenuous activity.

Although this does not appear to be caused by seasonal influenza, there are scattered reports within the valley. "It's not too late to vaccinate," says Walker. The flu season in California lasts until March and there is a generous supply of vaccine available. In addition, those over 50 and others with chronic disease should also receive the pneumonia vaccine, which is available at Public Health and through other health providers in the community.

### ***Public Information***

When air quality is deteriorating, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District urges people to take into account their personal health issues when planning outdoor activity.

When air quality is forecast to be unhealthy for sensitive groups (AQI of 101-150), people with heart or lung disease, older adults and children should reduce their outdoor exertion.

When air quality is forecast to be unhealthy for the general public, people with heart or lung disease, older adults and children should avoid outdoor exertion. Everyone else should reduce their outdoor exertion.

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*Spanish version*

Cuándo la calidad del aire empeora, el Distrito para el Control de la Contaminación del Aire del Valle de San Joaquín insta a personas a tomar en cuenta su salud personal al planear actividades al aire libre.

Cuándo la calidad del aire se pronostica ser insalubre para personas propensas (AQI de 101-150), las personas con enfermedades respiratorias y cardíacas, adultos de mayor edad y los niños deben reducir sus esfuerzos al aire libre.

Cuándo la calidad del aire se pronostica ser insalubre para el público en general, las personas con enfermedades respiratorias y cardíacas, adultos de mayor edad y los niños deben evitar el esfuerzo al aire libre. Todos los demás deben reducir sus esfuerzos al aire libre.

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