



# SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** October 17, 2019

## **South Coast AQMD Extends Smoke Advisory Due to a Debris Fire in Coachella Valley**

*Valid: Thursday October 17, 2019 through Friday October 18, 2019*

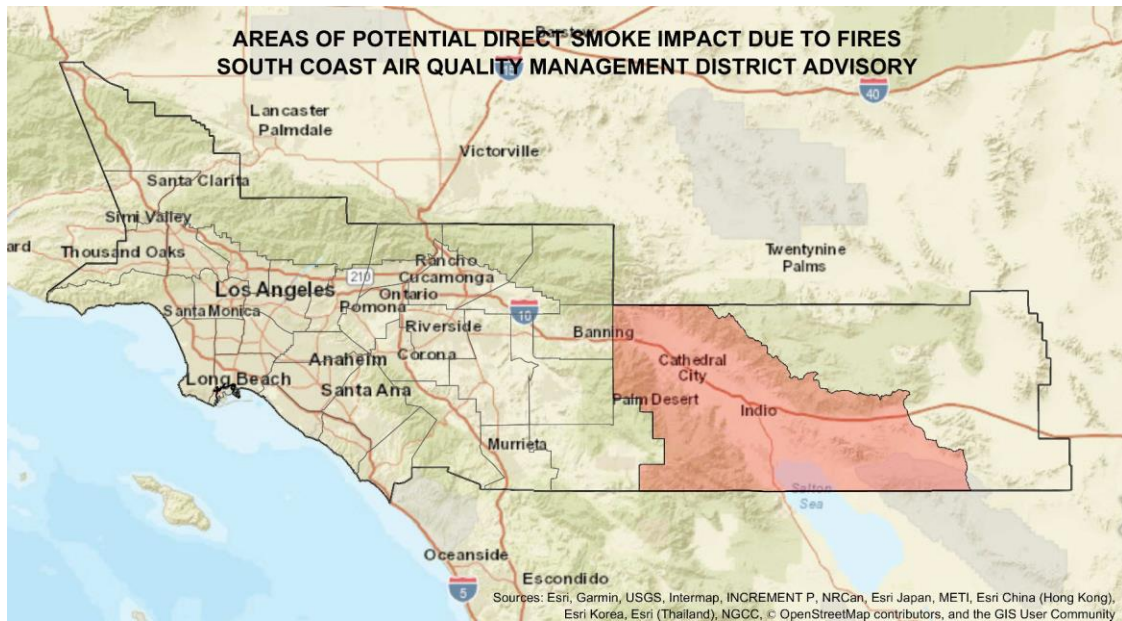
This advisory is in effect through Friday afternoon. South Coast AQMD will issue an update if additional information becomes available.

A large debris fire is burning near the intersection of Avenue 66 and Martinez Road in the city of Thermal in the Coachella Valley. The burn area is approximately 35 acres with no containment and is expected to burn for at least the next several days. Currently the fire is producing heavy smoke and has been impacting Thermal, La Quinta, and Mecca, as well as communities near the Salton Sea. As a result, South Coast AQMD's monitor in Thermal and low-cost sensors in the communities of Thermal and Mecca have been showing elevated PM2.5 concentrations which has led to **Unhealthy** AQI levels at times on Thursday morning. Visit <https://xappprod.aqmd.gov/SMSDataSite/Home/AdminIndex?MonitoringSiteId=13> to view current readings from the South Coast AQMD's monitor in Thermal.

Winds are predicted to be from the west and northwest on Thursday afternoon with gusts up to 15 – 20 mph. This will push the smoke to the east towards Mecca. Winds will shift to be from the north and northwest during Thursday evening and overnight through Friday morning with gusts up to 15 – 20 mph possible. This will push smoke to the southeast toward Oasis and the Salton Sea. Low mixing heights in the atmosphere overnight could lead to lower smoke plume rise and elevated ground level concentrations of PM2.5 in the early morning hours on Friday. Winds will continue to be from the north and northwest on Friday with wind speeds decreasing during the afternoon. If the fire continues to generate smoke, impacts are expected to continue throughout the Coachella Valley.

Overall, meteorological conditions may bring smoke and ash into portions of the Coachella Valley. Air quality may reach **Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups** or higher in areas directly impacted by smoke. Areas of direct impacts and poor air quality may include portions of:

- **Riverside County:** Coachella Valley (Area 30)



***In any area impacted by smoke:*** If you smell smoke or see ash due to a wildfire, limit your exposure by remaining indoors with windows and doors closed or seeking alternate shelter, and avoiding vigorous physical activity. For more tips on protecting yourself during a wildfire, see South Coast AQMD's Wildfire Smoke & Ash Health & Safety Tips page: <http://www.aqmd.gov/wildfire-health-info-smoke-tips>.

- South Coast AQMD Advisory updates can be found at the following link: [www.aqmd.gov/advisory](http://www.aqmd.gov/advisory)
- To subscribe to air quality alerts, advisories and forecasts by email, go to [www.AirAlerts.org](http://www.AirAlerts.org)
- To view current air quality conditions by region in an interactive map, see [www.aqmd.gov/aqimap](http://www.aqmd.gov/aqimap)
- For real-time air quality information, maps, notifications and health alerts in your area, download our award-winning South Coast AQMD app at: [www.aqmd.gov/mobileapp](http://www.aqmd.gov/mobileapp)
- Air quality forecasts are available at <http://www.aqmd.gov/forecast>
- For a map of South Coast AQMD Forecast Areas, see <http://www.aqmd.gov/ForecastAreas>

South Coast AQMD is the air pollution control agency for Orange County and major portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside counties, including the Coachella Valley. For news, air quality alerts, event updates and more, please visit us at [www.aqmd.gov](http://www.aqmd.gov), download our award-winning app, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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