FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Unhealthy Air in Santa Barbara County; Air Quality Warning Continues
Forecast Shows Valley and North County to See More Smoke Impacts

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. —Monitoring stations continue to record unhealthy air in Santa Barbara County, with levels of fine particles high and levels of larger particles, including ash particles, rising. Forecasts show that smoke and ash will continue to affect the southern part of Santa Barbara County for the next several days, and the Santa Ynez Valley and the northern parts of the County will see increasing impacts. The Air Quality Warning will remain in effect until conditions improve, which will depend on winds, and the control of the Thomas Fire. To view the smoke forecast and current conditions, see https://www.ourair.org/todays-air-quality/. Updated forecasts will be posted there. Please assume the Santa Barbara air quality index applies to Carpinteria as well. Air quality conditions may be worse close to the fire.

We recommend that everyone:

- Stay indoors, with windows closed and indoor circulation only. Air conditioning is also an option if the outside intake is closed. Avoid going outdoors. Particles can build up indoors, so if you are feeling symptoms where you are, be prepared to relocate to an indoor location with better ventilation, or to leave the area.
- Avoid driving when possible and use “recycle” or re-circulate mode to avoid drawing smoky air into the car.
- Drink plenty of fluids to keep respiratory membranes moist.
- For people who have to be outdoors for short periods of time, N95 masks, when fitted properly, offer some protection from fine particles in smoke. For updated lists of distribution sites, visit http://countyofsb.org/thomasfire.sbc#update.

If you have symptoms that may be related to exposure to smoke and soot, contact your doctor. Symptoms include repeated coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, wheezing, chest tightness or pain, palpitations, head aches, and nausea or unusual fatigue or lightheadedness. It is especially important for children, and for people with lung and heart conditions to stay indoors. Consider leaving the area while the air quality is poor. If able, relocate to an area not impacted by smoke. We do not advise ash clean-up at this time as ash is still falling and the situation is unpredictable.

If cleaning up ash, remember the following.

- Avoid cleaning up ash until conditions improve and it’s safe to be outdoors. No one with heart or lung conditions should handle ash clean-up. Avoid any skin contact with ash.
- Avoid doing any activities that will stir up ash, such as using leafblowers.
- If you need to clean up ash, use damp cloths and spray areas lightly with water.
- Use vacuums with HEPA filters, and sweep gently with a broom.
- Take your car to the car wash
- Wash off toys that have been outside in the ash; clean ash off pets
- Use a high-quality shop/industrial vacuum outfitted with a high-efficiency particulate filter and a disposable collection filter bag. Ash can be bagged and put into trash cans, so it will not be stirred up again into the air. Special attachments can be used to clean ash from gutters, so that it will not blow back over outdoor spaces. Attachments and disposable bags are available from most hardware stores.

See https://www.ourair.org/smoke-health/ for ways to protect yourself from wildfire smoke.