

## **ANALYSIS OF PM2.5 DATA (Tables 1 – 4, 16)**

PM2.5 is Particulate Matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less. It is the newest pollutant added to the current list of pollutants in the NAAQS. PM2.5 particles are highly respirable and are considered by EPA to play a role in the premature deaths of thousands of individuals each year in the U.S. The sources of PM2.5 are as varied as those for PM10, but are believed to be primarily from combustion sources. There is some discussion at EPA of retiring the NAAQS for PM10, and allowing PM2.5 to be the primary particulate pollutant of concern. If that happens, the Air District will convert all of its PM10 samplers to PM2.5 samplers.

As one can see from Tables 1 - 4, when the wildfire values are excluded only Portola comes close to having the potential to exceed one of the PM2.5 standards. But this is just seven years of data, and somewhat incomplete at that. Another three years of sampling should allow us to draw some solid conclusions about the status of PM2.5 pollution within the District. There was minimal impact from wildfires at all of the PM2.5 sites during 2005. However, there was a significant smoke event in Portola during early December that was the result of a U.S. Forest Service control burn. We continue to watch Portola closely and we have already disbursed tens of thousands of dollars to local Portola residents for woodstove changeouts as part of an ongoing effort to reduce ambient PM2.5 levels.