



SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PRESS RELEASE

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South Coast AQMD issues violation to Chevron Refinery for hydrogen sulfide release, causing odors

DIAMOND BAR—The South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) to the Chevron Products Company Refinery in El Segundo, Calif., following a release of hydrogen sulfide that resulted in odors impacting the public.

The NOV alleges that Chevron Refinery caused a public nuisance in violation of the agency's Rule 402 and California Health and Safety Code Section 41700. On January 31, 2021, South Coast AQMD received more than 30 public complaints of rotten egg and sulfur type odors. Inspectors were dispatched and confirmed that the odors were coming from the refinery. Inspectors determined that the odors were caused by the release of hydrogen sulfide during the transfer of petroleum naphtha, a product of refining crude oil, to a storage tank. The odors had dissipated by the late afternoon.

At the time of the odor event, Chevron fenceline monitors showed several instances when hydrogen sulfide levels exceeded the short-term, state standard of 30 parts per billion (ppb), with the highest 1-hour average being 168.7 ppb at 10:20 a.m. on January 31st. However, data from the nearby community monitors located in El Segundo and Manhattan Beach showed that levels remained below 2 ppb during the same time period.

As part of South Coast AQMD's Refinery and Community Air Monitoring Program (Rule 1180), real-time air monitoring is required for a variety of toxic air pollutants at the fenceline and in nearby communities of major refineries.

Hydrogen sulfide is a gas that occurs naturally in crude petroleum and is known to have a rotten egg smell. Short-term exposure to this type of odor can cause people to experience health symptoms such as headaches and nausea. Staying indoors with doors and windows closed during odor events would help reduce these health impacts. Symptoms typically go away soon after the odors are no longer detected.

Once issued, NOVs can result in civil penalties. In some cases, the company can choose to

implement voluntary measures to reduce emissions or otherwise prevent further violations. If no settlement is reached, a civil lawsuit may ultimately be filed in superior court.

Chevron's air monitoring network information can be found at: <https://elsegundo1180.com/data.html>, and the community air monitoring information can be found on the South Coast AQMD website: <https://xappprod.aqmd.gov/Rule1180CommunityAirMonitoring/>.

South Coast AQMD is the air pollution control agency for major portions of Los Angeles, Orange, 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, download our award-winning app, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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