



BAY AREA
AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION **INCIDENT REPORT**

**Tesoro Refinery (Site #B2758)
Martinez, CA
February 20, 2004**

On February 20, 2004 a power outage occurred at the Tesoro Refining and Marketing Martinez Refinery. The outage started at approximately 11:20 AM and lasted 5 to 10 minutes. Although the actual power outage was short in duration, circuit breakers within the refinery tripped out and the refinery depressurized several process units to their flare system. Five refinery flares produced plumes of black smoke visible throughout the area. The refinery emergency flare was the longest in duration with visible emissions lasting approximately 85 minutes. The winds were from the east and south during the incident with the smoke traveling primarily upwards. Visible emissions from flaring were under control at about 12:45 PM.

District staff was on the scene to investigate the incident at approximately 11:30 AM. The District incident response vehicle arrived on scene and took 1 upwind and 1 downwind air samples. Contra Costa Health Services also captured air samples for analysis. District staff observed diesel type odors downwind of the refinery, and along the Waterfront road in Martinez.

The District received three complaints regarding the incident, one for flaring, one for smoke, and one for particulate fallout. The District, Tesoro Refinery operators, and Contra Costa Health Services Dispatch received numerous calls regarding the smoke. The refinery issued a Level 2 Community Alert at approximately 11:32 AM due to the large amount of black smoke in the area. The alert was downgraded to level 1 at 13:46 and was all clear at 15:15. No shelter-in-place warning was sounded.

The preliminary cause for the power outage is still under investigation. No reports of human injuries or equipment damage have been reported.

UPDATE:

Ambient air samples taken by District inspection staff and Contra Costa Health Services staff, during the power outage, revealed no significantly elevated levels of air contaminants.

Following the incident District staff performed an investigation/review of the refinery's power systems, flare operations, and sulfur recovery operations. The District issued five notices of violation as follows:

1. NOV #A45956 – For an alleged violation of Reg 6-301: Excessive Visible Emissions observed from the refinery emergency flare
2. NOV #A45957 – For an alleged violation of Reg 6-301: Excessive Visible Emissions observed from the refinery east air flare
3. NOV #A45958 – For an alleged violation of Reg 6-301: Excessive Visible Emissions observed from the refinery north coker flare

4. NOV #A45967 – For an alleged violation of Reg 9-1-309: Excessive Sulfur Dioxide emissions from the refinery sulfuric acid plant
5. NOV #A45968 – For an alleged violation Reg 9-1-309: Excessive Sulfur Dioxide emissions from the refinery sulfur recovery plant

Notices of Violation issued by the District require immediate corrective action to bring the source into compliance and are subject to penalties pursuant to state law.