



Compliance and Enforcement Division

INCIDENT REPORT

Tesoro Refining Company (Site #B2758)
Martinez, CA
March 24, 2006

On March 24, 2006 at about 3:38 pm the Tesoro Refinery located in Avon, east of Martinez, had a fire occur at their #2 Hydro Desulphurization (HDS) Unit. The #2 HDS Unit is used to treat low-sulfur diesel. The fire was located on the outside of one of the HDS Unit furnaces. The exact cause of the fire, and material that burned, is still under investigation. The fire lasted for approximately 20 minutes. A Level-2 (potential off site release, may cause health impact) emergency notification was issued on the Contra Costa County's Warning System at 3:53 pm. This notification was downgraded to Level-1 (spill or release that meets reportable quantities (RQ, not a Level 2 or 3) at 3:58 pm, because there was no off-site impact.

District Inspectors and Contra Costa County Hazardous Materials Division responded to this incident. The winds during the incident were from the south-west at 7 mph. The ground level monitors around the refinery did not detect any sulfur compounds, during the time of the fire.

The District did not receive any air pollution complaints regarding this incident. Tesoro reported no injuries. The fire was reported under control at 4:09 pm. Emergency crews at the refinery isolated the furnace, before calling the county all-clear notification at 5:22 pm. An emergency clean-up of debris will be initiated. District staff are inspecting this clean up work to ensure compliance with asbestos removal/handling regulations.

The preliminary cause for the fire and additional damage assessments to the #2 HDS Unit is still under investigation. District staff is continuing to investigate this incident to determine if there were any violations of Air Quality Regulations.

Update:

The cause of this fire was due to a failed flange gasket on the outlet piping from the # 2 HDS furnace F-20. The material that leaked out of this flange was diesel fuel, which ignited causing a plume of smoke. There was no documented off-site impact. Tesoro estimated that approximately 5,125 gallons of diesel fuel were consumed by the fire.

District staff determined that the clean up at the unit was conducted properly, and there were no violations of Air Quality Regulations. There was no enforcement action taken against Tesoro, as a result of this incident.