



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 15, 2011

CONTACT: Aaron Richardson
415.749.4900

Air District settles case with Valero Refinery to pay \$130,500 for air quality violations

SAN FRANCISCO - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District announced a recent agreement with Valero Refining Co. to pay a \$130,500 civil penalty to settle air quality violations at its refinery in Benicia.

The settlement covers certain violations that occurred at its Benicia refining facility in 2008 and 2009.

“Businesses in the Bay Area have a responsibility to protect public health by following air quality regulations,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “When violations are discovered, the Air District will pursue the necessary enforcement actions.”

The settlement resolved 23 Notices of Violation that the Air District issued against Valero for incidents that occurred between 2008 and 2009. All violations were corrected promptly. One violation involved a public nuisance from brief offsite odors, while the remainder involved no offsite impacts to the neighboring community. Of the remaining 22 violations, six were administrative violations and fifteen involved brief violations of emissions limits. Only one violation, involving leakage of gas turbine exhaust, lasted for more than a week. None of the violations posed a significant threat to air quality or public health.

The Air District and the South Coast Air Quality Management District in Los Angeles have the most stringent refinery regulations in the United States.

The Air District issues Notices of Violation to inform facilities that they have violated a specific air quality regulation or rule. Violators are generally required to respond to the notice within ten days and submit a description of the actions they will take to correct the problem. These actions can include shutting down operations immediately, or changing operations or equipment to come into compliance.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

###