



NEWS

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Air District settles case with Martinez facility ***Plains Products Terminals to pay \$159,000 for air quality violations***

SAN FRANCISCO - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District announced a recent agreement with Plains Products Terminals to pay a \$159,000 civil penalty to settle air quality violations at its petroleum storage terminal in Martinez.

The company provides petroleum product storage services to the Bay Area refinery industry.

“Air quality regulations provide strict oversight of industrial emissions in order to safeguard air quality,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “When violations are discovered, the Air District will take the appropriate enforcement action to protect public health and ensure that facilities are in compliance with our rules.”

The settlement covers five notices of violation that the Air District issued to Plains Products Terminals for incidents that occurred in 2012. The infractions were operational violations involving the facility’s vapor recovery system, which keeps gas vapors from being emitted into the atmosphere from bulk storage containers. Petroleum vapors react with other chemicals to form ozone in the presence of sunlight.

Four violations involved a failure to operate its thermal oxidizer to abate hydrocarbon emissions while storing petroleum products. In the fifth incident, Plains loaded petroleum product into a storage tank for approximately 4 hours without required hydrocarbon emissions abatement. None of the violations posed a significant threat to air quality or public health.

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.

All settlement funds will be used to fund Air District activities such as the inspection and enforcement activities that led to this settlement.

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.

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