

Incident Report

Chevron Refinery (A0010)
Richmond, California
December 18, 2014

On December 18, 2014 at approximately 6:35 pm, there was a plant upset at the Solvent Deasphalting Unit (SDA) at Chevron Refinery, located in Richmond, California. The Solvent Deasphalting Plant (SDA) processes crude oil residuum to produce deasphalted oil and tar. Feed was pulled from the SDA unit and flaring resulted from the depressuring of the unit. Flares are used by refineries as safety devices to abate emissions that would otherwise be vented directly to the atmosphere.

Flare systems are designed to provide for the safe disposal of hydrocarbons that are either automatically vented or manually drawn from process units at refineries. Hydrocarbons must be controlled in a safe and effective manner in the event of an operational upset. Flare systems gather vented gases and combust them to prevent release directly into the atmosphere.

The flaring began at 6:35 pm and was pulsing initially with periods of visible and non-visible flaring. The flaring subsided at approximately 9:21 pm. This flaring event was reported to the District and staff will continue to investigate this incident to determine if there were any violations of air quality regulations. This report will be updated as new information becomes available.