



Compliance and Enforcement Division

INCIDENT REPORT

Sims Metal Management (A5152)

Redwood City, CA

December 17, 2013

On December 17, 2013, at approximately 12:30 AM, an explosion and fire broke out at the Sims Metal Management facility, located at 699 Seaport Blvd., Redwood City. This facility is a scrap metal processing facility that shreds cars and other metal products, including appliances, for recycle. The fire occurred in the pile of non-automobile scrap materials that were awaiting shredding. Two cement trucks at a neighboring site were also found to be on fire. Redwood City Fire Department responded to the fire at approximately 1:00 AM. The fire was contained at 7:00 AM and extinguished around 7:30 AM. The cause of the fire is unknown at this time and is being investigated by Redwood City Fire Investigators and the facility. Similar fires occurred at this facility November 10, 2013 and April 7, 2007.

The fire generated a dark grey smoke plume that initially traveled southeastward impacting Menlo Park, Sunnyvale, Los Altos, Cupertino, and San Jose. Odors from the smoke eventually impacted many areas within the Santa Clara Valley and parts of Fremont. Winds were light at the time and a District Spare the Air Advisory was in effect for the tenth straight day. Redwood City Fire Department Incident Command advised residents to avoid the smoke, stay indoors and close air intake systems to their homes. A Shelter-in-Place was not ordered. The District received a total of 36 air pollution complaints from the public from the smoke impacted areas.

The Air District ambient air monitoring network in Redwood City, Cupertino, San Jose and Gilroy showed elevated levels of fine particulates consistent with the smoke plume. District 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.

UPDATE: January 21, 2014

On January 17, 2014 District staff issued Notice of Violation (NOV) #A53145 to Sims Metal Management for violation of Regulation 1, Section 301: Public Nuisance