



NEWS

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Air District settles case with Shell Oil Refinery

Refinery to pay \$208,000 for air quality violations

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District announced a recent settlement with Shell Oil Products U.S. to pay a \$208,000 civil penalty for air quality violations at its refinery in Martinez.

The settlement covers 12 notices of violation that the Air District issued for incidents that occurred in 2013.

“Bay Area refineries are subject to some of the most stringent regulations in the nation,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “These facilities are monitored 24/7 and any emission exceedances discovered by the Air District result in a thorough follow-up investigation to determine if further violations have occurred.”

The violations included discharges of nitrogen oxides for more than 20 hours, a hydrogen sulfide discharge following the start-up of an aerator at a biotreatment pond, and carbon monoxide releases and opacity exceedances from furnace operations. Violations also included hydrocarbon emissions from storage tanks and from Shell’s failure to maintain minimum coke moisture content at its coke handling facility, as well as administrative failures, including late reporting and mislabeled components. Shell has corrected all of the violations.

Shell had reported each of the incidents to the Air District; the Air District issued the notices of violation following its investigations into these incidents.

Currently the Air District is proposing four new rules that will require even tougher emissions limits, more monitoring and quicker equipment repairs and upgrades to help meet the Air District’s ambitious 20 percent refinery emissions reduction goal by 2020.

All settlement funds will be used to fund Air District activities, such as the inspections 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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