



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 24, 2019

CONTACT: Lisa Fasano, 415-710-3505

Valero refinery reporting shutdown in process

Intermittent visible emissions expected during facility shutdown

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District has been notified that the Valero Refinery in Benicia is beginning shutdown procedures in order to determine the cause of the upsets at the facility since maintenance began in early March. Air District inspectors will remain on-site to continue the ongoing investigation. Visible emissions may continue during the shutdown process. Flaring will likely occur during the shutdown for safety reasons. Air District inspectors will remain on-site to observe for flaring, other potential emission releases and to determine if there are additional violations. The Air District mobile monitoring van will continue to drive throughout Benicia to gather ground level emissions data. The Air District is committed to conducting a thorough investigation and remains concerned about emissions released from the refinery since maintenance operations began.

Air District inspectors have been on-site since March 11th and have issued seven Notices of Violation for excess visible emissions and public nuisance. These violations do not include any that may be tied to current emissions releases and potential flaring that may likely occur for safety reasons during the shutdown process.

Smoke and particulates can irritate the eyes and airways, causing coughing, a scratchy throat and irritated sinuses. Elevated particulate matter in the air can trigger wheezing in those who suffer from asthma, emphysema or COPD. Elderly persons, children and individuals with respiratory illnesses are particularly susceptible to elevated air pollution levels and should take extra precautions to avoid exposure.

The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

###

Air District Communications Office
375 Beale Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94105
[Air District Homepage](#) | [News Releases](#)