

**Compliance and Enforcement Division**  
**INCIDENT REPORT**  
**December 17, 2023**  
**MRC Refinery, Site # A0011**  
**3485 Pacheco Boulevard**  
**Martinez, California**

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**December 17, 2023**

At 4:26 PM the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) received a Contra Costa County Community Warning System (CWS) Level 1 alert filed by Martinez Refining Company (MRC) regarding a grass fire. The alert specifically stated that the smoke was from a grass fire. The alert did not mention flaring directly, but when Air District staff contacted MRC to discuss the CWS Level 1 alert, they said the grass fire was caused by “the heat of the flare.”

Air District Incident Response staff contacted MRC at 5:21 PM and were told that the grass fire had started at about 4:20 PM and was extinguished at approximately 5:10 PM. Two Air District staff were called out to the Martinez area to investigate. Five complaints alleging smoke and/or odor were filed between 4:30 PM and 5:07 PM. The adjacent photo of the grass fire was provided to the Air District by a complainant. The wind during the event was Northeast at 8-15 miles per hour. Based on the smoke plume observed, the Air District staff questioned MRC staff on a grass fire being the sole cause. At that time, an MRC representative told Air District staff that it was a grass fire.



**December 18, 2023**

Air District staff, with Contra Costa County HazMat and Contra Costa County Fire personnel returned to MRC Refinery in the morning to jointly investigate the previous day’s event. The Air District investigation is ongoing and we will update this report as new information becomes available.

At this time, the Air District has issued the following Notice of Violations (NOV) to MRC for this event:

- Regulation 1, Section 301 - Public Nuisance
- Regulation 6, Rule 1, Section 301 - Visible emission standard exceeded
- Regulation 40 CFR 63.670(c) – Federal visible emissions standard exceeded
- Regulation 5, Section 301 - Illegal fire on a no burn day

For more information on the NOVs, click the link to the [NOV web tool](#).