

# Tips for Reporting an Air Quality Complaint

Are you witnessing air pollution in your neighborhood?

*Follow these tips to report an air quality complaint. The information you provide will help the Air District Inspector locate and identify the potential source of emissions to resolve air pollution concerns efficiently.*

## Tip #1

Report air quality concerns to the Air District as soon as possible.

- General air quality complaints, call 1-800-334-ODOR (1-800-334-6367)
- Wood smoke complaints, call 1-877-4NO-BURN (1-877-466-2876)
- Smoking vehicles complaints, call 1-800-EXHAUST (1-800-394-2878)
- Report complaints online at [www.baaqmd.gov/complaints](http://www.baaqmd.gov/complaints)

## Tip #2

When reporting an air quality complaint, provide your contact information. This allows the Inspector to contact you to gather additional information and follow up regarding the investigation findings. The Air District also accepts anonymous air quality complaints if you prefer not to provide contact information. All complaints are investigated to ensure compliance with applicable air quality regulations.

## Tip #3

Be descriptive about what you are witnessing when reporting a complaint.

### For Odors:

- Describe the odor by associating it with a commonly known odorous substance. Avoid using generic descriptions, such as “bad” or “terrible” when describing odors. Reference the images at the end of this document for terms to describe different types of odors.
- Describe the odor intensity on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = mild, 3 = moderate, 5 = strong).
- Note weather conditions such as wind direction, if possible.

### For Visible Emissions (e.g., smoke, dust):

- Describe the magnitude of the observed emissions, such as the size and intensity of the plume.
- Note the color of the dust or smoke plume (e.g., white, brown, black or other).
- Note weather conditions such as wind direction, if possible.

## Tip #4

Provide photos or video documenting visible emissions and share the information with the Inspector. Note any activities or operating equipment that may be causing the emissions and try to identify the specific site or facility name, address or the nearest cross-street or landmark where the emissions may be generated.

## Tip #5

Provide the location(s) of the emissions. The Inspector will conduct an investigation at the specific area(s) where the emissions were observed to help determine the extent of the impact and potential air quality violations.

## Tip #6

Meeting with the Inspector can help pinpoint and identify the source of emissions quickly. If the emissions are still ongoing, the Inspector will ask if you are available to meet to observe the emissions together. If you are unable to meet, the Inspector will proceed with investigating the complaint based on the information you have provided.

## Tip #7

The Air District offers language interpretation services available in over 150 languages. A list of languages can be found here, [www.baaqmd.gov/language-list](http://www.baaqmd.gov/language-list). Request interpretation services by calling 1-800-334-ODOR.

## Tip #8

Document your observations with the specific dates and times the emissions occurred. An example of the important information to document can be found here, [www.baaqmd.gov/emission-log](http://www.baaqmd.gov/emission-log). This information will help identify patterns and/or frequencies of observed emissions.

## Tip #9

Let the Inspector know how the emissions impact you. This information is helpful when trying to document potential air quality violations and the extent of the impacts.

## Tip #10

Interested in learning more about the air quality complaint investigation process? Visit [www.baaqmd.gov/complaints](http://www.baaqmd.gov/complaints) for the Air Quality Complaint Policy & Procedures or call 415-749-4999 with air quality questions or concerns.

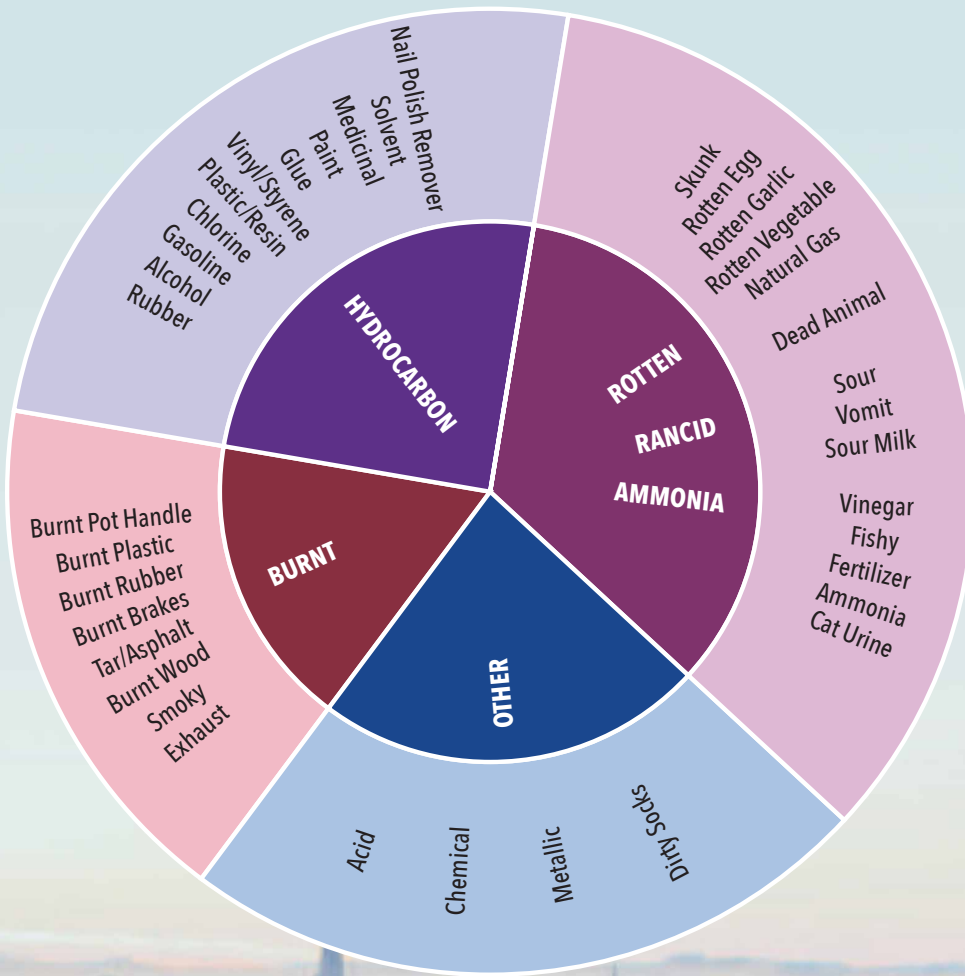
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[www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org)



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## Examples of Odor Descriptions for Refinery and Industrial Operations



## Examples of Odor Descriptions for Waste Processing Facilities



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[www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org)



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