



South Coast Air Quality Management District

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NEWS

For Immediate Release
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SCAQMD Issues Violation to SoCalGas for Gas Leak at Aliso Canyon

The South Coast Air Quality Management District today issued a violation notice to SoCalGas for a gas leak at its Aliso Canyon facility on Monday that exposed Porter Ranch residents to foul odors.

“We take all nuisance odor incidents seriously,” said Wayne Nastri, SCAQMD’s executive officer. “SoCalGas and all facilities in our region have an obligation to protect residents from foul odors can that impact their communities.”

SCAQMD issued a Notice of Violation alleging that SoCalGas caused a public nuisance in violation of the agency’s Rule 402. The agency received 15 complaints from residents on Dec. 18 complaining of foul odors following the leak. Natural gas contains odorants including mercaptans with strong and objectionable odors as a safety precaution to aid in leak detection.

SoCalGas reported a gas leak that started at 4:55 p.m. Monday and lasted for 50 minutes due to failure of a flange gasket in a pressure vessel at its Aliso Canyon facility. SoCalGas did not notify SCAQMD or the community of the leak until more than two hours after it began.

During the leak, one of SoCalGas’ continuous methane monitors at the facility fenceline measured a peak concentration of 66 parts per million (ppm), more than 30 times the typical background methane concentration of 2 ppm.

SCAQMD yesterday issued a Notice to Comply requiring SoCalGas to provide to the agency by Dec. 26 all fenceline monitoring data from the day of the leak. While SoCalGas maintains a website showing real-time methane levels from its fenceline monitors, the display was down at the time of the leak.

Since January, SCAQMD has issued nine Notices of Violation to SoCalGas facilities across the Southland including at Playa del Rey, Pico Rivera, Monterey Park and Los Angeles. Two of those violations were for causing a public nuisance and the remaining seven were for violating various SCAQMD rules and regulations.

On Oct. 23, 2015, SoCalGas discovered a massive leak in well SS-25, one of 115 wells in the company's Aliso Canyon underground natural gas storage facility. The well was not sealed until Feb. 18, 2016.

As a result of the leak, SCAQMD issued a Notice of Violation to SoCalGas and in January 2016 the agency obtained an administrative order requiring SoCalGas to conduct leak detection, and to notify the public in the event of future leaks and other measures.

Also in January 2016, SCAQMD filed a lawsuit in Los Angeles Superior Court seeking damages related to the gas leak. In February, SCAQMD settled the lawsuit with SoCalGas for \$8.5 million.

The SCAQMD is the air pollution control agency for Orange County and major portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

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