



South Coast Air Quality Management District

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NEWS

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SCAQMD Adopts Rule to Reduce Odors from Rendering Plants

The South Coast Air Quality Management District today adopted a new regulation aimed at reducing odors from the region's five rendering plants in the Vernon area.

“For years, if not decades, periodic strong odors from these rendering facilities have impacted the quality of life for residents of environmental justice communities in Boyle Heights, Maywood, Commerce, Bell and other communities,” said Wayne Nastri, SCAQMD’s executive officer. “This new rule will require sensible measures already employed in other parts of the state and the country to minimize these odors.”

Rendering plants take animal parts and carcasses from livestock slaughter, poultry and meat packing operations, butcher shops and grocery stores and turn them into a host of beneficial products from soap to fertilizer to cosmetics and pet food.

SCAQMD already requires control of high-intensity odors from cookers at the plants. However, animal parts and carcasses that are handled and processed outdoors and wastewater treatment systems cause a distinct unpleasant odor that can drift for miles and cause headaches, nausea and respiratory irritation, impacting surrounding communities.

Following today’s rule adoption, within 90 days rendering facilities will be required to conduct housekeeping practices including covering incoming trucks, washing out trucks before they leave the plant, limiting the time animal materials are allowed to remain outdoors, repairing cracks and holes in outdoor asphalt and concrete areas that can accumulate liquid materials, and other measures.

Within no more than 3½ years, the rendering plants will have to install either a total enclosure or a closed system for certain processes to keep odors from drifting out of their buildings and into the community.

The affected facilities are Baker Commodities, Farmer John/Smithfield Foods, D & D Disposal/West Coast Rendering and Coast Packing located in Vernon; and Darling Ingredients, located in the City of Los Angeles on the border of Vernon. Darling Ingredients is much more modernized and is currently constructing a new enclosed building ventilated to odor control equipment that is expected to meet the requirements of Rule 415 and be completed in January 2018.

As an added safeguard to the community, if SCAQMD issues a Notice of Violation to a facility for odors, or confirms three or more odor events within 180 days, the facility will have to submit an odor mitigation plan and take steps above and beyond rule requirements to minimize odors.

Each facility also will have to post visible signs with SCAQMD's 24-hour air pollution complaint hotline, 1-800-CUT-SMOG.

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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