



SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PRESS RELEASE

www.aqmd.gov

@SouthCoastAQMD    

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 1, 2022

MEDIA CONTACT:

Nahal Mogharabi, (909) 396-3773, Cell: (909) 837-2431

Kim White, (909) 396-3456, Cell: (909) 323-9479

press@aqmd.gov

Violations Issued to Sterilization Facility in Ontario Following Ethylene Oxide Emissions *Part of Ongoing Investigation of Facilities that Use Toxic Pollutant*

DIAMOND BAR – The South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) yesterday issued two Notices of Violation (NOVs) to Sterigenics US, LLC, located in Ontario, Calif., for failure to maintain its equipment in good operating condition and other permit issues. The agency also identified elevated levels of Ethylene Oxide (EtO) from the facility.

Following multiple on-site inspections and equipment breakdowns at the facility, NOVs were issued for failure to maintain equipment in good operating condition. In addition, investigators found that the facility submitted incomplete reports for two equipment breakdowns and failed to report one of these breakdowns in a timely manner—each of which violated agency permit requirements.

South Coast AQMD has an ongoing investigation into emissions of EtO from facilities within its jurisdiction. As part of this investigation, air sampling was conducted around the Ontario Sterigenics facility, and elevated levels of EtO were discovered. Air monitoring efforts are ongoing and South Coast AQMD will continue to evaluate operations at Sterigenics to identify the source(s) of EtO emissions.

Sterigenics uses EtO to sterilize medical equipment, and the company's facility in Ontario is located in an industrial area. The nearest residential area is about 1.4 miles away, and the nearest school is about 1.2 miles. However, based on preliminary monitoring data, the primary concern is off-site worker exposure.

EtO is a flammable, colorless gas used to sterilize medical equipment and make products including antifreeze, textiles, solvents, detergents, and adhesives. Short-term exposure to EtO may cause headaches, weakness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, difficulty breathing, eye and skin burns, and reproductive effects. Long-term exposure to EtO over a number of years increases the risk of certain cancers including lymphoid cancer and breast cancer.

NOVs can result in civil penalties. In some cases, the company can choose to implement voluntary measures to reduce emissions or otherwise prevent further violations. If no settlement is reached, a civil lawsuit may ultimately be filed in superior court. South Coast AQMD's investigation is ongoing.

More information on South Coast AQMD's investigation of EtO emissions can be found at:
www.aqmd.gov/eto.

South Coast AQMD is the regulatory agency responsible for improving air quality for large areas of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties, including the Coachella Valley. For news, air quality alerts, event updates and more, please visit us at www.aqmd.gov, download our award-winning app, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

###