



Dear SCAQMD Refinery Committee Board Members,

First, I wanted to express my appreciation for your work on the formulation of rule 1410 and its use at the Torrance and Wilmington Refineries.

I am the co-founder of South Bay Families Lobbying Against Refinery Exposures (FLARE), a 2,500+ grassroots community group comprised largely of parents concerned about safety and air quality issues at the Torrance Refinery. I have two children who will both be at Torrance elementary schools next year. I have been a part of the rule 1410 working group, as well as an active participant in several other SCAQMD working groups and rule amendments.

We are concerned about the use of MHF in the densely populated communities of Torrance and Wilmington. It is not a matter of preparedness and safety precautions. It is what happens if those plans fail, and the answer to that is unacceptable. Any response to an MHF event is dependent on many factors, including that refinery safeguards will not fail, city emergency response will be swift and error-free, notifications to the public will be flawless, and schools and hospitals will be well informed and supplied with resources to treat exposed individuals. While the Chemical Safety Board details that the 2015 explosion resulted in a near miss to the alkylation unit, the aftermath is instructive of what can go wrong with pushing an urgent message out to the public in the wake of an event. In short, the entire notification process collapsed, as refinery alarms could not be heard, reverse 911 calls arrived 12 hours late, and schools had kids out at PE.

Having attempted to work with a representative at the Torrance Unified School District, I can also tell you there is a lack of understanding of the danger of potential refinery exposures, and a lack of willingness to take additional steps to practice shelter in place for chemical releases. Most schools do not practice sheltering for chemical releases (placing wet towels under the doors, closing windows, etc.). Furthermore, my children's schools, as well as many others, have the original 1960s windows which cannot close properly and provide safety in the event of a chemical release.

For the reasons above, **I am writing in support of Staff Presentation Option A - a phase-out of MHF within 4 years of rule adoption.**

On behalf of thousands of concerned community members, including parents, grandparents, teachers, nurses, and pediatricians, who have supported us in our work to increase transparency and safety at the Torrance refinery, we thank you for all of your efforts to protect our dynamic community and the hundreds of thousands of people who live, work, and play in the South Bay.

Sincerely,

Catherine Leys

Co-Founder, South Bay Families Lobbying Against Refinery Exposures (FLARE)

Submitted on April 27, 2018