



SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PRESS RELEASE

www.aqmd.gov

@SouthCoastAQMD    

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 29, 2022

MEDIA CONTACT:

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

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

press@aqmd.gov

South Coast AQMD Designates a Second Sterigenics Facility as Potentially High Risk

Sterilization facility required to reduce EtO emissions

DIAMOND BAR – Today, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) designated Sterigenics US, LLC in Ontario, Calif., as a Potentially High Risk Level Facility, requiring the facility to reduce Ethylene Oxide (EtO) emissions from operations as well as provide reports on potential health risks. Sterigenics US, LLC in Vernon was designated as a Potentially High Risk Level Facility in June 2022.

Under South Coast AQMD's [Rule 1402](#), a facility is designated a Potentially High Risk Level Facility when emissions data shows either a potential to exceed or has already exceeded a cancer risk threshold greater than 100 chances in a million. As a designated Facility, Sterigenics Ontario will now be required to provide South Coast AQMD with an Early Action Reduction Plan within 90 days that includes a list of steps that can be taken immediately to reduce health risks. This can include procedure or process changes, equipment modifications and operational cutbacks to reduce emissions. In addition, the facility must fully evaluate its air toxics emissions, conduct a Health Risk Assessment, and submit a Risk Reduction Plan within 180 days.

Sterigenics uses EtO to sterilize medical equipment. The facility is located in an industrial area at 687 Wanamaker Avenue in Ontario. Since June 16, 2022, South Coast AQMD has routinely collected 24-hour air monitoring samples adjacent to and nearby Sterigenics. The levels recorded are substantially higher than the 2021 annual average EtO concentration from the nearest South Coast AQMD regional monitoring station in Rubidoux, which is 0.06 ppbv (with a maximum value of 0.14 ppbv). Over many years, these levels would present a cancer risk to nearby workers higher than the cancer risk threshold of greater than 100 chances in a million.

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 and breast cancer.

South Coast AQMD's full investigation continues. Efforts include air sampling and an evaluation into the facilities' equipment and compliance with agency regulations and permit requirements. The agency is also working towards stricter rules and requirements for EtO emissions from medical sterilization facilities such as Sterigenics.

More information on South Coast AQMD's investigation, as well as sampling data can be found at <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/news-events/community-investigations/sterigenics-ontario>.

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](#).

###