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# A CBE News Release

Contacts:

Greg Karras, CBE (510) 302-0430 x19

Sandy Saeteurn, APEN (510) 439-8512

Roger Lin, CBE (510) 302-0430 x16



## Community groups seek Chevron refinery corrosion repairs for clean, safe jobs

Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) and the Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) petitioned the Richmond Planning Commission today to declare parts of the Chevron Richmond refinery “dangerous building conditions” in order to support land use requirements for the public disclosure and jobs-creating repair of refinery wide corrosion before it causes another pollution incident at the troubled plant.

**“Just one of many severely corroded pipes burst in the fire that sent 15,000 to the hospital last August. We need to find and fix the rest of the corrosion so the refinery can run safely,”** said Greg Karras, a Senior Scientist with CBE.

**“The diagnosis is clear. Workers, community residents, and scientists all agree that the safest possible treatment is needed. Chevron needs to follow the ‘doctor’s orders’ by fixing its unsafe equipment to prevent future spills, explosions and fires,”** said Sandy Saeteurn, a Community Organizer with APEN.

**“Oil companies should be creating more jobs making refineries safer,”** said Roger Lin, Staff Attorney with CBE.

A five-foot pipe section that had lost 80% of its thickness to corrosion by sulfur-laden crude oil burst in the Richmond refinery crude unit fire of August 6, 2012 that nearly killed a dozen workers and sent more than 15,000 people to hospital emergency rooms.

Information made public since that disastrous fire reveals a serious risk that corrosion in other parts of the plant might lead to another incident. Severe corrosion in other parts of the Richmond crude unit was discovered only after fire-damaged equipment was dismantled, based on building permit applications submitted by Chevron. Widespread and accelerating corrosion was found by workers in the Richmond lube processing area and subsequently reported by Cal-OSHA. Separately, Cal-OSHA reported the refinery wide use of temporary corrosion repair “patches” or “clamps” and cited Chevron for relying on nine of these temporary patches long after the corroded equipment should have been replaced. Chevron appealed those citations, and Cal-OSHA cannot require the company to replace that corroded equipment during this appeal process, which is expected to be lengthy.

Worker and community groups have called for corrosion audits of each refinery statewide and plan to participate in a broader county-led safety audit of the Richmond plant. Today’s action could strengthen requirements for safety actions identified by this audit.

CBE and APEN filed the petition after consulting with other community groups and with the United Steelworkers. The groups request a public hearing on the petition at the Richmond Planning Commission’s next meeting, scheduled for Thursday, May 2, 2013.