

**EXIDE - Vernon Facility Updates and Analysis:**  
***Continuing Violations, Spewing Toxics, and Holding our Communities Hostage***

Exide Technologies Inc. (Exide) has a long history of violating health protective emissions standards; polluting the air, soil and groundwater through its operations at a number of facilities throughout the country. The South East Los Angeles communities living with the reality of Exide's heavy pollution and its consistent threat of job losses at its Vernon plant have had enough.

**The community surrounding Exide's Vernon plant is comprised of families, children and youth, teachers, industrial workers, retail shop owners and employees, garment workers, restaurant and other service industry employees and business owners, among many others. Many of us are employed in the city Vernon and the cities immediately adjacent to it, and some are employed at the Exide facility or other neighboring industrial facilities. **We are all living, breathing, learning, working and playing in and around the contamination caused by this facility, and we demand accountability from the corporation in charge of its operations!****

**Exide's Pattern of Behavior Must End!**

- Exide has consistently refused to come into compliance with minimal health protective standards, and has failed to clean its existing contamination.
- We know that **Exide's corporate leaders have abandoned other recycling facilities owned and operated by Exide in other states like Texas**, after causing serious contamination, similar to what it has caused in Vernon.
- **In Vernon, Exide is now threatening its workers with job loss, and holding our Communities hostage.**
- Exide is currently involved in Chapter 11 Bankruptcy proceedings, which Exide representatives themselves have described as being aimed at corporate restructuring, to allow Exide to pay off existing debts and comply with existing obligations.
- **WE DEMAND that with the closure of the Vernon facility, Exide provide us with sufficient funds to clean up its existing contamination, and to remedy the harms it has caused in the communities surrounding its Vernon facility!** This includes financial assurance that its workers are provided with adequate compensation, job training and support.
- **We will not be held hostage by this corporation, and we will stand together to ensure that what Exide did in places like Frisco, Texas, is not what it will do here, in Vernon!**

**Exide Still Poses a Real Threat to our Communities!**

- When the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) approved and released Exide's notorious 2013 Health Risk Assessment (HRA),<sup>1</sup> CBE and others pushed for the Vernon facility to implement the best available pollution control technology to deal with the facility's arsenic emissions, and to clean up existing contamination.
- ***To this day, Exide has refused to add any new pollution control that both the community and the SCAQMD have said will help some of the Vernon facility's emissions issues!*** Instead, Exide corporate leaders continue to fight the agencies attempting to enforce environmental standards and health protective regulations, while continuing to emit high levels of toxic contamination into the community.

**BACKGROUND AND UPDATES from Exide's Vernon Facility:**

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<sup>1</sup> The Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Information and Assessment Act (AB2588) requires public notice when facilities emit pollution causing cancer risk, or other health risks above certain levels.



- Since 2000, Exide has been cited for over a dozen violations of various environmental laws, rules and regulations at its Vernon facility, including serious lead and arsenic air emission violations, violations of storm-water regulations, consistently exceeding air emissions standards imposed by the SCAQMD for lead and other contaminants, and for failing to maintain a properly functioning storm-water pipe system.
- Last year, the state Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) attempted to shut down Exide's Vernon facility because it found that Exide's operations posed an *imminent and substantial danger to public health and the environment*. This was due in part to the air pollution health risks identified in the 2013 HRA, and because Exide's pipes were leaking contaminated sludge into the soil and ground water around the Vernon facility. **Exide challenged the suspension order in court, and continued operations.**
- **The findings made in the HRA showed that the air emissions at Exide's Vernon facility were causing unusually high, extremely serious health risks that required reduction.** The study specifically found that the **widespread health risks to the public were caused primarily by Exide's lead and arsenic emissions.**
- **Recent soil tests conducted by DTSC in the past few months, have found that there are still highly dangerous levels of lead present at nearby residences and schoolyards, including a preschool.<sup>2</sup> In the past 6 months, Exide has also continued to exceed the ambient air standard for lead several times.**
- In January, the SCAQMD adopted a regulation that would require Exide to reduce its air pollution by capturing emissions inside the facility, specifically by maintaining negative pressure in its air pollution control devices. But, rather than comply with SCAQMD's new requirement, Exide has fought that requirement too, deciding to pay its attorneys to fight the rule in court, instead of investing in its pollution controls.
  - Exide sued the SCAQMD, and lost on its request for a preliminary injunction to stop the enforcement of SCAQMD's regulation. Exide continues to seek a change to the regulation in the long run.
  - While it filed its case against SCAQMD in court, Exide also sought a variance through the SCAQMD hearing board. There too, the Hearing Board denied Exide's request on April 8, 2014. Now, Exide has been ordered to stop operations or face fines every day that they continue to operate in violation of the regulation – but Exide will likely continue to request a variance from SCAQMD.

**Exide has filed for and been granted Chapter 11 Bankruptcy status twice since 1999. Both times, it did so almost directly after a targeted enforcement effort from environmental oversight agencies.**

**WE MUST pressure the environmental oversight agencies including DTSC, SCAQMD and Cal EPA, to ensure that Exide does NOT evade its clean-up responsibilities at the Vernon plant! If Exide should close, our community MUST be protected! This means that EXIDE MUST SET ASIDE SUFFICIENT FUNDS FOR MONITORING, CLEAN UP, AND HEALTH PROTECTIVE MEASURES to be taken during the clean up process, and to ensure A JUST TRANSITION for all workers at the Vernon plant, into clean, green jobs and industries.**

**IF you are interested in getting a free blood test, contact the LA County Department of Public Health (844) 888-2290.**

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<sup>2</sup> Lead is a powerful neurotoxin very harmful to children's brain development and is harmful to many other body functions for both children and adults including kidneys and the central nervous system.

