

***** MEDIA ADVISORY FOR FEBRUARY 1st AT 9:00 AM*****

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Local Environmental Justice & National Green Advocates Urge Air District Board to Immediately Require Phaseout of Deadly Chemical in SoCal Refineries

Multiple community and environmental groups to mobilize at Air District meeting urging ban of toxic chemical in the only two refineries in the state that still use it.

Diamond Bar, CA – On Friday, the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (AQMD) board will make a decision that could literally mean life or death for hundreds of thousands of Angelenos (at least 3-4 miles out from two oil refineries, according to U.S. EPA and AQMD, and probably much farther). AQMD will likely direct staff whether to phase out use of a deadly chemical, Modified Hydrofluoric acid (MHF), after 30 years of consideration, and after a 2015 near-miss from a catastrophic chemical release. ([US Chemical Safety Board](#) p. 24) Members of the Torrance and Wilmington communities will be present at the [Board meeting](#) to urge a ban of the chemical. The Torrance Refinery and Wilmington (Los Angeles) Valero Refinery are the only refineries in the state that use MHF. MHF is corrosive and can cause lingering burns, accumulation of lung fluid, permanent lung damage, eye damage, and death during a major release ([Center for Disease Control](#)). Community members and organizations seek a ban on MHF and phase out within 4 years (2023). Thousands have signed petitions.

WHEN: Friday, February 1st, 2019, 9:00 am

WHERE: Auditorium at SCAQMD Headquarters, 21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, California

VISUALS: Community members and environmental justice advocates will fill the room for public comment. They will show up in numbers to advocate for the immediate ban or phase out within 4 years. Community members, organizers, and youth will be present with signage at the meeting.

INTERVIEWS: There will be opportunity for media interviews with community members, organizers, and scientists. *****Interviews in both Spanish and English*****

Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) and a broad coalition recently submitted [this letter](#) to AQMD alerting Governing Board Members of the true dangers of MHF, and urging community and worker safety protections over big oil interests. The Wilmington community faces multiple refinery hazards and sits on the largest U.S. urban oil field. CBE community members face a variety of health issues related to toxic air contaminants. Phaseout of MHF would remove an imminent danger not only for Wilmington and Torrance (ground zero), but also protect a broad swath of Los Angeles, far beyond these communities. Please contact us for additional evidence and maps.

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