

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*On the eve of a landmark decision...*

## **Black and Brown Bay Area communities polluted by refineries call for adoption of new rule to protect public health and sustain and grow jobs**

*Residents call on their regional air district to reject misinformation from oil industry lobbyists and vote YES on the “cat cracker rule”*

SAN FRANCISCO — On the heels of [yet ANOTHER flaring with smoke and flames at the Richmond Chevron refinery](#) (footage of the flaring can be accessed [here](#)), Bay Area communities rallied outside the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) headquarters to call for the approval of a new rule to reign in pollution from local refineries. The BAAQMD is set to vote on Rule 6-5, the “cat cracker rule,” on Wednesday, June 2nd.

- **Recorded video of the action can be found on CBE’s Facebook page at:** [https://fb.watch/5S92\\_G60-k/](https://fb.watch/5S92_G60-k/)
- **Photos of the action can be found (Credit: Courtesy of CBE) here:** [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/16Hhd9CyflkWJ\\_VdhWEpH3t8Oj7Kdl?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/16Hhd9CyflkWJ_VdhWEpH3t8Oj7Kdl?usp=sharing)

“The “cat cracker rule” is a win-win policy for workers and the community, and it’s good for public health and good for the economy,” **said Dan Sakaguchi, Researcher for Communities for a Better Environment (CBE)**. “According to [an analysis by the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation and Inclusive Economics](#), this policy would result in significant economic benefits, including creating up to 4,600 community supporting jobs, through the installation of new technology to reduce pollution.”

“The drafting of this new refinery rule, the cat cracker rule, represents a practical approach that was driven by the realities of our local communities who are the ones that live and breathe the polluted air around these refineries,” **said Miguel Diaz, Richmond resident**. “But instead of listening to our concerns, refineries are pushing a misinformation campaign to sink this new rule — all to continue poisoning our air with very little accountability.”

“It needs to be mended, Richmond needs to be defended,” **said Halimah Houston, CBE environmental justice youth member**.

BAAQMD's own consultant's analysis shows that the refineries have multiple viable ways to comply with the rule without requiring any job loss or refinery shut-down. Instead, BAAQMD staff have shown the rule will result in tens of millions of dollars in economic and public health

benefits each year by way of saving people's lives and preventing adverse health impacts, especially among vulnerable communities.

“The refineries are running a misinformation campaign, using cost estimates of the project that BAAQMD staff analysis has clearly and thoroughly refuted,” **continued Sakaguchi**. “For example, based on false information and scare tactics, PBF Refinery is exaggerating the cost of the upgrade by more than 200% to threaten the workers with a shut down. The local communities that breathe the pollution from these refineries day in and day out deserve this protection, and workers deserve to know the truth about this project.”

### **Economic Benefits Analysis**

The capital upgrades required in the rule would result in thousands of additional regional community-supportive jobs, which have been completely ignored by BAAQMD staff analysis. However, CBE, in collaboration with the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation and Inclusive Economics, have performed this analysis to show the economic benefits of this policy as shown in [this summary fact-sheet](#). The refineries could likely absorb the costs of the rule without requiring any job loss or shut-down.

### **About the Cat Cracker Rule**

The cat cracker rule is a practical air quality protection standard proposed for refinery catalytic cracker units, or “cat crackers,” at Bay Area oil refineries, which are the largest industrial source of PM2.5 in the city of Richmond and among some of the largest refineries in the world. This rule would slash PM2.5 particulate pollution from the cat crackers at Chevron and PBF oil refineries by 70 percent and improve air quality for upwards of [one million Bay Area residents](#).

Tiny particles of PM2.5 [senselessly kill 2,000 to 3,000 Bay Area residents each year](#). The Chevron Richmond Refinery alone causes health impacts of upwards of \$100 million each year. If adopted by BAAQMD, the cat cracker rule would tap existing technology already used at the majority of refinery cat cracker units nationwide. For the Chevron refinery alone, this would generate [\\$12 to \\$27 million](#) in annual community health benefits. Capital upgrades required in the rule would also result [in thousands of jobs installing new cleanup technology](#).

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