Santa Barbara County
Air Pollution Control District

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Santa Barbara County APCD
Information on Odor Monitoring, South Ellwood Field

General

- APCD's permits for the South Ellwood Field only address the oil and gas operations for Platform Holly, the Ellwood Onshore Facility (EOF), and the Beachfront Lease, not any of the agricultural water wells in western Goleta.

- APCD, City of Goleta, State Lands Commission, and the County are looking into purchasing a mobile monitoring station for all sources of hydrogen sulfide (H_2S) odors in the western Goleta area, as well as for other areas of the county.

- Once the EOF and Platform Holly are fully decommissioned, their associated H_2S odor and meteorological monitoring requirements will go away.

- APCD is not a first-responder agency.

Potential Odors from Platform Holly

- The offsite odor monitoring station is being relocated to West Campus, not removed, to better capture any H_2S odors from Platform Holly.

- The West Campus odor monitoring station measures H_2S, sulfur dioxide, total hydrocarbons, and meteorological data such as wind speed and direction.

- Plugging and abandonment activities at Platform Holly will occur at one well at a time. There are 29 active wells on Platform Holly. The wellheads are under pressure, and are expected to remain at historical levels until each well is plugged. The West Campus odor monitoring station is downwind from Platform Holly, making it best positioned to capture any potential releases of H_2S from Platform Holly.

- Platform Holly has 35 on-platform H_2S monitors operating 24 hours a day. The data is electronically transmitted to APCD's Data Acquisition System.

- State Lands Commission volunteered to take over operation of the West Campus odor monitoring station from the new operator of the Ellwood Marine Terminal. This station otherwise would have been shut down by the new operator, as the requirements to operate this station were tied to the Ellwood Marine Terminal, not to Platform Holly.

- The offsite odor monitoring station is not an "early warning" system. The on-platform H_2S monitors on Platform Holly and the in-plant and fence-line H_2S monitors at the EOF provide facility operators this emergency-level type of notification.

Potential Odors from Ellwood Onshore Facility

- The EOF has 14 in-plant and fence-line H_2S monitors, as well as a meteorological monitoring station, all of which will continue to operate during the plugging and abandonment process. This data is electronically transmitted to the APCD's Data Acquisition System.

- Operations at the EOF will be significantly different. It will no longer operate as an oil and gas plant at historical production levels, and the volumes of oil and gas treated from the plugging and abandonment process occurring at Platform Holly will be low (at levels less than 5 percent of historical operating levels).

- Plugging and abandonment activities at Platform Holly will occur at one well at a time. There are 29 active wells on Platform Holly. This will result in gas and liquid throughputs at the EOF being a small fraction (less than 5 percent) of the historical throughputs of the facility, and will significantly decrease the potential for accidental release from the EOF.

- Should an accidental release of H_2S occur at the EOF during this process, the H_2S monitors at the EOF will trigger an alarm within the facility and send an electronic notification to APCD.

- State Lands Commission staff expressed a willingness to post quality-assured H_2S fence-line monitoring data to their website for the public to view.