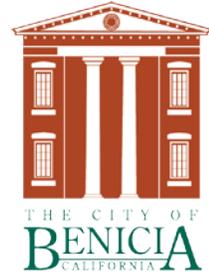


PRESS RELEASE
CITY OF BENICIA
Benicia Fire Department
250 East L Street
Benicia, California 94510



Contact: Josh Chadwick
Fire Chief
(707) 746-4275
jchadwick@ci.benicia.ca.us

Valero Benicia Refinery Operational Issues

Benicia, CA (March 14, 2019) – Benicia Fire Department staff received notification of a release from the Valero Benicia Refinery on Monday, March 11th. The Benicia Fire Department, Solano County Environmental Health, and Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) have been working together to monitor this release.

Valero provided notification that coke fines were being released out of the facility's stack. Coke fines are a byproduct of oil refining process which is made of pure carbon, small particles. Normally, the stack has water vapors that come out and dissipate in air. Due to a maintenance issue, coke fines got into the process system, and are being released from the stack making the release look opaque. Solano County Hazardous materials staff along with the US EPA and Bay Area Air Quality Management District staff conducted a joint inspection of the site yesterday and provided a direct report to the Fire Chief. The maintenance issue has been resolved, however, the coke fines in the system will continue to be released through the stack until the system clears all the fines. Petroleum coke is made of pure carbon. According to Solano County Environmental Health, it is not a hazardous material, however, there is a potential for heavy metals to be present. In the meantime, the release out of the stack will continue to look opaque on occasion.

Staff from the Benicia Fire Department will continue to communicate with our partner agencies to monitor this release. We will keep the community updated as more information is available.

For more information, contact Josh Chadwick, Fire Chief at jchadwick@ci.benicia.ca.us or 707-746-4275.

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