



South Coast Air Quality Management District

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Sent by E-Mail

Hon. Kathryn Barger, Chair, Supervisor – District 5 (kathryn@bos.lacounty.gov)
Hon. Hilda Solis, Supervisor – District 1 (firstdistrict@bos.lacounty.gov)
Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas, Supervisor – District 2 (markridley-thomas@bos.lacounty.gov)
Hon. Sheila Kuehl, Supervisor – District 3 (sheila@bos.lacounty.gov)
Hon. Janice Hahn, Supervisor – District 4 (FourthDistrict@bos.lacounty.gov)

Dear Members of the Board:

Thank you for forwarding the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Resolution regarding Quemetco. I am responding to the Resolution because our Executive Officer recuses himself from matters relating to this facility, which was a former client of his. South Coast AQMD staff appreciate and understand the concerns that the Board of Supervisors and members of the community have expressed about Quemetco. We take our responsibility to protect public health very seriously and are working diligently to make sure that Quemetco complies and can continue to comply with all existing air quality requirements.

Staff is updating our website and will include information about Quemetco, South Coast AQMD processes and how community members can stay informed and participate in future comment periods and meetings. We believe this will help address many of the questions from both the Resolution and public comments at a recent South Coast AQMD Governing Board meeting. The website, which will be up in a couple weeks, will include background information about the facility, current and pending permitting actions and the CEQA process, emissions, health risk and monitoring data, compliance history, factors that are considered in determining penalties, and how to sign up for future notices and updates.

The Resolution included three specific items, which are listed below with staff's response.

- 1) South Coast AQMD should hold a public meeting to explain the settlement to the public, including how the violations were resolved and how the funds will be used, and to take public comment.

The information that will be provided on our website will explain what factors are considered in determining settlement amounts, how the violations were resolved and how penalty and settlement funds are handled. We do not believe a public meeting on the settlement is necessary or appropriate, in part because the details of internal processes by which the District arrives at a settlement position could compromise the District's ability to conduct investigations and handle enforcement matters, and thus will impede the agency in performing our duties. There will be a public meeting when the proposed permit modification for a throughput increase is out for public review, and other opportunities for public input,

including the opportunity to comment on the draft CEQA document when it is prepared. The website will include the opportunity for people to sign up for email notifications so they will be informed and can participate in the public process.

- 2) South Coast AQMD consider using a portion of the settlement to benefit the community impacted by Quemetco's operations.
The South Coast AQMD Governing Board makes such decisions. We have forwarded your Resolution to our Governing Board Members for their information.

- 3) South Coast AQMD halt consideration of Quemetco's permit to expand its throughput until after DTSC decides on Quemetco's request to renew its operating permit.
There are no provisions in our rules for halting permit processing by South Coast AQMD pending DTSC's evaluation of Quemetco's request to renew its DTSC operating permit, which is a separate process. However, the South Coast AQMD staff is coordinating with DTSC and other agencies to make sure the best technical information is available to all agencies and the CEQA analysis will consider any overlapping environmental concerns. Ultimately, Quemetco will not be able to increase throughput unless both South Coast AQMD and DTSC approve permit modifications that would allow such a change.

We are closely working with other government agencies to share information and are keeping each other and staff from several elected officials' offices informed as the permitting process moves forward. South Coast AQMD staff are being very careful and deliberative to ensure the best scientific information is available for making decisions. We remain committed to protecting public health and ensuring the opportunity for public input.

Sincerely,



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