THE HIDDEN COST OF OUR NATION’S OIL REFINERIES

Presented by Earthjustice

7 MILLION AMERICANS live near our nation’s oil refineries.

20,000 TONS OF TOXIC POLLUTANTS are released by refineries each year, without proper safeguards.

CANCER AND FERTILITY DISEASE and other health problems are caused by the refinery pollutants.

There are 100 refineries in 32 states, including many metropolitan areas.

Children and people of color are disproportionately exposed.

Refineries report annually over 20,000 TONS OF TOXIC POLLUTANTS.

Actual amounts are on average 3 TIMES HIGHER.

Children and people of color are disproportionately exposed.

**Health Impacts**

- **VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds)**
  - Can also damage the central nervous system, causing dizziness and confusion.

- **Hydrogen Sulfide**
  - Deadly gas that can also cause burns and permanent damage to skin and lungs.

- **Benzene**
  - Deadliest carcinogen that causes leukemia and bone marrow failure.

- **Lead**
  - Highly toxic heavy metal that’s especially dangerous to the development of children.

- **Naphthalene**
  - Used in mothballs, can cause cataracts, anemia, and liver damage.

- **Vinyl Chloride**
  - A known carcinogen, it can also damage the central nervous system, causing dizziness and headaches.

- **Formaldehyde**
  - Major embalming agent that also contributes to smog, causing eye, nose and throat irritation, as well as cancer.

- **Methanol**
  - Potentially deadly if ingested, can cause blindness, and other severe health effects.

- **Asbestos**
  - Causes mesothelioma, a type of cancer that damages lungs, kidneys, and other internal organs.

- **Hydrogen Cyanide**
  - A deadly asphyxiate that is also used in gas chamber executions and chemical warfare.

- **Mercury**
  - Extremely toxic to the nervous system, kidneys, and liver, mercury can also cause brain damage and heart attacks.

- **Arsenic**
  - Causes major gastrointestinal damage resulting in nausea, diarrhea, and abdominal pain, as well as cancer.

**Set strong health and safety standards and close loopholes that allow pollutants to be uncontrolled.**

**End non-emergency flaring to reduce toxic releases into nearby communities.**

**Factor in cumulative, real-world impacts on kids and overburdened communities.**

**Alert fence-line communities of toxic air coming from refineries.**

A problem with a solution

**Four Concrete Steps**

- **Emissions**
  - Not strong health and safety standards
  - More gas flaring
  - False promises of compliance
  - Allow pollutants to be uncontrolled

- **Flaring**
  - False emergency, gas flaring not really necessary
  - Tests designed to confuse communities
  - Only monitors in high and developed communities

- **Health Risk**
  - False emergency
  - Gas flaring at refinery dangerous to the community
  - False promises of compliance

- **Monitoring**
  - Electric fence line
  - Gas flaring not really necessary
  - False promises of compliance

*In To Take Action, Please Visit EARTHHJUSTICE.ORG/REFINERIES*

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