



News Release

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Air District fines Valero \$3.25 million for air quality violations and requires enhanced air monitoring data transparency

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air District [has fined](#) Valero Refining Company \$3.25 million to address 118 air quality violations that stem from multiple incidents and ongoing compliance issues at the Benicia refinery.

“This penalty holds Valero accountable for air quality violations and makes clear that noncompliance has consequences,” said Dr. Philip Fine, executive officer of the Air District. “In addition to the financial penalty, this action strengthens air monitoring and public access to essential data so the Benicia community can see what is happening at the refinery through the idling of operations. Strong enforcement and transparency are essential to protecting public health and ensuring lasting accountability.”

These violations stemmed from a series of operational and equipment-related incidents at the refinery over multiple years, including releases associated with boiler operations, sulfur recovery unit disruptions, valve leaks, and other equipment issues that resulted in excess emissions and community complaints. Additional violations involved particulate matter exceedances and a butane release, as well as the need to revise a monitoring plan to meet the Air District’s Refining Emissions Tracking Rule.

Valero has since made required improvements to equipment and updates to monitoring and operational practices to support ongoing compliance.

The Air District is also requiring Valero to take corrective actions to increase transparency for the Benicia community:

- Implement an approved Fenceline Air Monitoring Plan, including clearer requirements for operating, maintaining and assessing the performance of the monitoring equipment for all pollutants, to improve accountability and transparency

- Provide public access to real-time and historical data that can be easily downloaded
- Provide quarterly reports summarizing measured pollutant concentrations and detailing the results of quality assurance and quality control checks.

The Air District will ensure Valero executes its obligations while continuing to engage with the local community to ensure residents have clear, timely information. For more information about the refinery fence-line air monitoring program, visit <https://bit.ly/3M2ObXN>.

Penalty funds collected through this enforcement action will be allocated in accordance with the Air District's Community Benefits Policy, supporting local and regional projects that improve air quality and public health.

The Air District recognizes recent coordination efforts across state and local agencies and refinery operators to help maintain fuel supply stability, protect consumers from price volatility and help California's energy transition following Valero's announcement to idle its Benicia refinery while continuing gasoline production through April 2026. The refinery in Benicia remains subject to all applicable Air District regulations during its transition.

The Bay Area Air District is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality and the global climate in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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