

Compliance and Enforcement Division  
INCIDENT REPORT  
May 5, 2025  
Valero Refinery, Site #B2626  
3400 East 2nd Street, Benicia, California

On Monday, May 5, 2025, Valero Refining Company (Valero) in Benicia had a fire at a process unit. The Air District staff arrived at Valero and observed a large black plume of smoke and flames coming from inside the refinery. Visible emissions were observed to be in excess of Air District Regulation 6, Rule 1 standards. The wind at the time was approximately 20 mph from the North.

The Benicia Fire Department issued a [Shelter In Place Warning](#) for residents in Benicia. Valero informed the Air District that the fire occurred from approximately 8:45 am to 10:15 am. Air District staff were on site and confirmed that the black smoke ceased at 10:15 am. The Benicia Fire Department [lifted the Shelter In Place](#) at 10:48 am.

Air District staff received and responded to 10 complaints from the Benicia and Martinez communities which alleged odors and smoke related to the incident.

The Air District is continuing to analyze data from our air monitors as well as other air monitors near the refinery and along the path of the plume. Early analysis shows elevated levels of several pollutants including fine particulate matter, hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide, and alkanes. From available data, it appears that the smoke plume affected ground level areas in a narrow band southwest of the refinery as far south as Alameda.



At this time, the Air District has issued [3 Notices of Violation](#) to Valero refinery for public nuisance and excess visible emissions.. These violations reflect the impact of the fire on air quality and the surrounding communities.

For more information on any Notices of Violation (NOV) that may be issued, please click refer to the [NOV web tool](#) on the Air District website.

The Air District's investigation of this event is ongoing, and we will provide additional updates when we obtain further information.