



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

News Release

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Deborah O. Raphael, Director

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Contact: Contact: Sanford (Sandy) Nax

916-708-4303

Sandy.Nax@dtsc.ca.gov

DTSC announces additional requirements on Exide plant

The Department of Toxic Substances Control today took aggressive steps to ensure that the Exide battery recycling facility in Vernon, CA operates safely and in a manner that protects the health of the community.

The Department announced that it reached agreement with Exide Technologies Inc. (“Exide”) for the issuance of a Stipulation and Order (“Order”) that addresses the two central concerns identified in its April 2013 order to suspend Exide’s operations. Those are the risks to health posed by the facility’s arsenic emissions to air, and the use of deteriorated pipes that leaked water potentially contaminated with hazardous wastes into soil below the facility.

Importantly, the Order includes requirements that go beyond DTSC’s initial concerns. These requirements are designed to identify potential impacts the facility may have had on surrounding communities.

“The Order requires critical and expedited improvements in the plant that will reduce emissions from their operation. It also provides an opportunity for Exide to demonstrate its commitment to investigating, in a very transparent process, potential impacts on the community,” said Brian Johnson, Deputy Director of DTSC’s Hazardous Waste Program.

The Order contains enforceable timelines and sets aside \$7.7 million to pay for the following additional requirements:

- Installation of improvements to bring down arsenic emissions
- Replacement of an antiquated piping system
- Blood lead level testing for nearby residents that will be conducted by the Los Angeles County of Public Health using LACDPH’s protocols
- Dust and soil sampling around the facility and into the surrounding community.

The blood lead testing and the soil sampling go beyond the requirements of the order that suspended Exide’s operations in April in that they will help determine whether lead emitted from Exide’s operations has impacted the community.

The order announced today is the result of discussions between Exide and the Department, and Exide must obtain permission from the bankruptcy judge to implement it. The Order would resolve the suspension issued in April. The bankruptcy court is not expected to consider the matter until Nov. 5, 2013, at the earliest.

Since April, Exide has initiated improvements designed to reduce the company's impact on the surrounding communities. These include a temporary system to address the leaking water and controls on arsenic emissions.

"We are encouraged by Exide's efforts to respond to our concerns, but this is not the end of our efforts to address the conditions at the Exide facility," Johnson said. "While this resolves the Order for Temporary Suspension order, we are not walking away. We fully expect them to pay attention to the community and to the regulatory agencies, and we expect a prompt response to our requests to address any concern we raise."

DTSC is working closely with both the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to ensure that Exide's operation is monitored on an almost daily basis.

"We are very aware of the intensity of the community's concerns about the safety of this plant and are confident that this Order, along with SCAQMD's and LA County Health Department's oversight will help demonstrate to the community that protection of their health and safety are paramount to our agencies" said Johnson. "DTSC is fully prepared to exercise its authority to keep this plant in compliance, up to and including closing the plant if warranted, and nothing in this agreement precludes us from doing that," he added.

For additional information, click [here](#).



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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov. To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

The Mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated properties, identifying and promoting safer ingredients in consumer products, and ensuring stewardship through enforcement, regulation and pollution prevention.