



4305 Santa Fe Avenue, Vernon, California 90058  
Telephone (323) 583-8811

May 8, 2013

Honorable Joe Aguilar  
Mayor  
City of Commerce  
2535 Commerce Way  
Commerce, California 90040

Dear Mayor Aguilar:

The City of Vernon Health and Environmental Control Department (VHECD) closely scrutinizes and carefully monitors exposure conditions at the Exide Technologies, Inc. facility in Vernon to ensure safe working conditions for plant employees and compliance with all applicable environmental statutes within our municipal purview to protect public health and safety away from the plant.

As you know, the City of Vernon and VHECD does not have the authority to regulate Exide Technologies for air emissions and toxic substances. Those authorities are vested with the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) and the California Environmental Protection Agency's Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

The City of Vernon works in cooperation with both state regulatory entities to protect the health and safety of Vernon residents and the 55,000 private sector employees who work in our city each day, including among them: residents of the cities of Bell, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, Maywood and Huntington Park and Commerce. Safety is our first priority.

The staff of VHECD takes their regulatory authority seriously. We are proud of their accomplishments in keeping Vernon businesses safe and protecting the environment for our surrounding communities.

AQMD officials have informed our city that emissions from lead dust at the Exide Technologies facility were reduced to acceptable levels in 2012 and the plant is in compliance with AQMD regulations. AQMD is working with Exide Technologies plant officials on corrective actions to plant processing methods and procedures to reduce and ultimately eliminate potentially harmful arsenic air emissions.

On April 8, we formally requested, in a letter to AQMD Executive Officer Dr. Barry Wallerstein, that AQMD issue a health advisory for the Eastern and Western Regions of the South Coast Air Basin; after we found out from newspaper stories that quoted AQMD officials there was a

*Exclusively Industrial*

potential problem of arsenic air emissions at Exide's plant that might affect upwards of 110,000 residents in Southeast L.A. County. Based on the news stories, we were alarmed. We believed nearby residents that could potentially be affected could become alarmed.

Your letter to our city confirms our belief. We felt an AQMD health advisory that explained the risks and detailed any preventative measures that residents should take to protect their health – particularly for seniors and young children – was a prudent and responsible step to take by our region's air quality regulatory authority.

To date, AQMD has not acted on our request for a health advisory. It should be noted that the City of Vernon Health and Environmental Control Department lacks the authority to issue an air emissions health advisory.

We have been informed that AQMD plans to hold a series of community meetings to inform the public about any potential risks stemming from operations at the Exide Technologies facility in Vernon. We suggest that the City of Commerce seek such a meeting with AQMD staff for residents in your community.

The DTSC recently halted operations at Exide Technologies in Vernon after discovering what is believed to be a broken underground pipe at the facility that may allow toxic substances to leak from the plant in the soil beneath the facility.

We have been made aware that Exide Technologies has filed corrective action plans with the DTSC to mitigate and resolve the toxic substance issue. Vernon VHECD and Department of Community Services staffs are monitoring that circumstance at Exide.

We appreciate your letter. We look forward to further collaboration with your city on important issues of mutual concern. We share your concern regarding public health and safety. We pledge to do everything within our municipal power to safeguard the lives of our residents, workers and residents of our neighboring communities.

We urge you contact the officials most directly responsible for handling the recent Exide Technologies air quality and toxic substance environmental matters:

Mr. Rizgar Ghazi  
Branch Chief, Office of Permitting  
Department of Toxic Substances Control  
8800 Cal Center Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95826-3200

Barry R. Wallerstein, D.Env.  
Executive Officer  
South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD)  
21865 Copley Drive  
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

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Respectfully,



W. Michael McCormick  
Mayor

cc: Hon. Violeta Alvarez, City of Bell  
Hon. Pedro Aceituno, City of Bell Gardens  
Hon. Jack Guerrero, City of Cudahy  
Hon. Oscar Magana, City of Maywood  
Hon. Mario Gomez, City of Huntington Park  
Hon. Ricardo Lara  
Hon. Kevin de León  
Marisa Olguin, Vernon Chamber of Commerce