

## Questions and Comments from the January 24, 2007 Public Meeting on the January 15, 2007 Chevron Fire

### Health Services

1. When does a person evacuate as apposed to Shelter-in-place? Evacuation has long been used to move the public away from danger. Its goal in hazardous materials emergencies is to avoid or minimize exposure to dangerous chemicals. When evacuation can be completed before dangerous levels of hazardous materials move into the community, it is the public protective action of choice. This will avoid exposure to the hazardous material completely. It may also be preferable when the leak is large, unpredictable and difficult to control, or when there is a high risk of explosion or flash over. However, evacuations can take a very long time to complete, particularly in areas with high population density.
2. Why are only the people where wind is blowing notified? Everyone should know! Why isn't everyone notified? The Community Warning System informs the community members surrounding the refinery by the use of sirens, activating the Emergency Alert System, contacts with the media, and people with Weather Radios receive the message to shelter-in-place. The Telephone Emergency Notification System is used to notify people down wind of the incident and specific information on how to shelter-in-place. The Telephone Emergency Notification System is not as fast as the other tools of the Community Warning System and takes time to call each individual landline phone in the area of designation. So the people down wind are in the direct line of the hazards created by the incident and need to take protective action.
3. Why do we have to seal up the house? Won't the toxins get in the house and we were sealing ourselves in? Studies of sheltering effectiveness calculated that, for a typical dwelling and a plume lasting 10 minutes, the dose indoors would be about one-tenth of the outside dose. For other types of dwellings and releases, the indoor dose could be as little as one percent of that received outdoors. For our purposes, dose can be simply considered a measurement of how much (concentration) and for how long a person is exposed to a toxic material. If a person is exposed to a higher concentration for a longer period of time, the dose received will be higher. And the higher the dose of toxic material received, the more likely a person will become sick as a result of the exposure. If the dose of an accidentally released toxic material can be held to a low level, unhealthy effects of exposure can be minimized or avoided.
4. Why does towel or tape keep out bad air? The towel and tape reduce the openings where air and other chemicals may enter a building. By putting a towel over an opening or taping close an opening the chemicals entering will

be reduced. What about other chemicals? This is affective with all chemicals.

5. What are the effects of driving through an area where an accident has occurred? What if you were stuck in an area? If you are approaching a vapor cloud, it would be best to avoid driving into it. However, if you are in the vapor cloud, make sure that all the windows are shut and the vents in the car are all closed and drive on through as quickly as possible (within the allowable speed and traffic).
6. How does these affect children with asthma? Smoke from any type of fire may exasperate a preexisting breathing condition, such as asthma. Based on the wind direction and the air monitoring that was done during the incident, no long-term health impact is expected, including to children with asthma.
7. What makes you say all clear? How do you define an all clear? The release that is impacting the community has stopped, the situation is under control and there is no reasonable possibility that the situation will flare back up, and the effects of the release is no longer impacting the community then the Health Office working with the Incident Commander will issue the "All Clear".
8. We were lucky, but what about the community where the smoke blew? The smoke dissipated before it reached Marin County, which is approximately three miles away from the refinery, which means that the concentration of hazardous materials was diluted to where the health impact was negligible.
9. Is it a conflict of interest to have Chevron alert community? The refinery personnel are the first ones to know that there is a problem that could have a health impact on the community. Because of this, they can activate the Community Warning System by pushing a button. When Chevron alerts the community, they are acting as an agent of Health Services. If Chevron had to first notify Health Services that there is a problem, the alert and the notifications would be slowed down. Health Services can activate the Community Warning System for any of the refineries and many of the chemical plants in the County. This includes upgrading the level of warning if Health Services determines that this is appropriate.
10. What would happen if there was a Casino at Pt. Molate? The likelihood of affecting more people will be much higher if there were people in the direction of the plume.

### **Richmond OES**

11. Can there be people at key intersections to inform parents dropping off kids that there is a Shelter-in-place? A Shelter-In-Place means that everyone goes indoors; placing "people at key intersections" would mean breaking the Shelter-In-Place and placing individuals at potential risk outside. Richmond Police and Fire Personnel are not equipped with apparatus to stay outdoors

during a Shelter-In-Place. The Community Warning System with the sirens, telephone and media notifications are the best system we currently have for notifying the public of a potential hazardous materials release either at a fixed facility or transportation accident.

### **Richmond Fire**

12. What would have happened if another fire broke out? 1/3 of Richmond fire fighters were at Chevron. Four companies from Richmond Fire responded to the Chevron incident on January 15. There are automatic aid agreements already in place that will be called upon by dispatch to respond effectively (e.g. El Cerrito Fire Department (3 stations), Contra Costa County Fire Department (2 stations) and mutual aid request from additional Fire Department in the area (e.g. Pinole, Rodeo-Hercules, Albany, etc.) to respond to other fire emergencies in the area.

### **Sheriffs Office**

13. Why can't Chevron call TENS contractor and start call process? Was there adequate work staff? The Community Warning System (CWS) includes a variety of alerting tools, of which the Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS) is only one. Other tools include sirens, links to radio and TV stations, weather radios, Internet alerts and the County's cable TV channel. Chevron has a single notification procedure that triggers all those systems under the authority of the Health Services Department. Adding a separate activation procedure for TENS would distract Chevron staff from managing a facility emergency and increase the risk of errors or inconsistencies, without actually addressing the problems with the current TENS.

14. Why can't we connect sirens to phone calls? The current TENS vendor does not offer that level of technical integration. However, that capability is a requirement for the replacement system for which the contracting process is already underway.

15. We need to figure out a system that works for our community. System was created in 1998 for the community. Now more cell phones, more languages, and different community. No warning system will ever be perfect, but the Office of the Sheriff is constantly examining ways to improve warning service. A key element of this program is an update of the CWS warning system based on the international Common Alerting Protocol technical standard. This new capability will make it easier and less expensive to add new alerting tools as they become available, and to measure and compare the effectiveness of existing methods.

### **Chevron**

16. Who is responsible? If Chevron has best safety in place then why the accident? Chevron is responsible for the safe and reliable operation of our facility, investigating the cause of the incident and implementing corrective

actions with an objective of preventing a recurrence. Protecting the health and safety of our employees and community is a core value and a top priority for Chevron. We want all employees to return home safely at the end of their work day and we are committed to striving to reduce all incidents to zero.

17. How do these affect children with asthma? How will Chevron help the children? To date, analysis conducted of the air sampled throughout the community during the incident indicates there was no evidence of adverse air quality, and hence, we would not expect adverse health impacts to have resulted from the incident. That's a result consistent among community sampling and monitoring done by the Contra Costa Department of Health Services, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and Chevron.
18. What is Chevron's accountability to the community and the city of Richmond? For more than 100 years, the Richmond Refinery has maintained a commitment to operating safely and reliably in a community where Refinery employees live and work. The Refinery's commitment to safe and reliable operations includes actions to comply with the City of Richmond's Industrial Safety Ordinance and the health-based air and water quality standards established by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
19. Why are there no contact names for Chevron? Just phone and address. Chevron Richmond Refinery External Affairs is available to assist the community with questions. Dean O'Hair, manager of External Affairs and his staff will make sure your question is answered. Please contact the External Affairs office at 510 242 4507. Additionally, someone is available to investigate odors and respond to community questions on a 24 hr basis, please call 510 242 2127 for assistance.
20. What unit broke down, what happened? The incident occurred in the Refinery's crude unit. An investigation into the cause of the incident is underway. The Refinery is fully cooperating with Cal-OSHA, EPA, BAAQMD and Contra Costa County Health Services working on behalf of the City of Richmond. As the investigation continues we will work with the regulatory agencies to share information. For current updates please visit the Contra Costa County Health Services website: <http://www.cchealth.org/>.
21. What caused the accident? Did Chevron have proper permits? An investigation into the cause of the incident is underway and we will work with the regulatory agencies to share information. As part of the investigation we will determine the root cause and take appropriate actions to prevent a recurrence. For current updates please visit the Contra Costa County Health Services website: <http://www.cchealth.org/>. Chevron has processes in place to obtain the proper permits for work at the Refinery.

22. Why doesn't Chevron hire local contractors? 100s of contractors from all over do work during shutdown etc. Chevron is committed to operating the Refinery safely, reliably and incident free. Due to the nature of our industry, we rely on contractors to provide specialized expertise and perform work. We select the most qualified contractors based on safety and work performance. To help local residents meet the rigorous skill and safety qualifications required to work for a refinery or a contractor, Chevron funds a Regional Occupational Program at Richmond's Kennedy High School that each year provides job training for about 70 students.
23. How does Chevron compare to other plants worldwide? Safety and reliability is a core value for the Chevron Richmond Refinery. The Refinery has an active and robust process safety management program. As one measure of safety performance, based on total recordable incidents at the Refinery, 2006 was our safest year on record. The latest Bureau of Labor Statistics Report shows Chevron's Richmond Refinery 2005 total recordable incident rate was almost one-half the rate of other petroleum refineries in the U.S. (All U.S.= 0.7, Richmond Refinery=0.4). Historically, using the same measure, the Richmond Refinery safety performance is better than other industries such as transportation and warehousing, education and health services, construction and others. (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor 2006)
24. Chevron's employees work 12 hours/day, 14 days straight. Is this safe to be working with dangerous material? At Chevron, the health and safety of our workforce and the community is a core value and a top priority. Chevron's employment policy includes that no employee may work more than 7 consecutive days.
25. Why did Chevron send only their fire chief? Refinery Fire Chief Mark Ayers represented the Refinery and discussed the immediate response to the incident, and other Refinery managers in attendance, included Tery Lizarraga, manager of Health, Environment & Safety and Dean O'Hair, manager of External Relations. Also attending and available if needed to provide information were refinery subject-matter experts and other employees.

#### **BAAQMD**

26. We need more accurate air quality data? The air quality information obtained by the BAAQMD is very accurate. The air quality data collected during the fire was obtained using the most accurate equipment and testing devices available. The BAAQMD has air quality monitors surrounding the Chevron refinery. The BAAQMD also has the ability to collect air samples at other locations by using a mobile air monitoring van.

27. How can the sample show just background levels and not cumulative when we can see the smoke? We all saw the smoke rising into the air and the emissions from the fire were in the smoke plume. We also saw the smoke plume rise over the Richmond community and go out over Marin County and the bay. Because the emissions from the fire were in the smoke plume and not close to the ground, the air quality at ground level close to the refinery was slightly over what is considered as normal.
28. Will Chevron be fined? The Air District inspection staff is investigating the circumstances surrounding the Chevron fire. It is too soon to provide the details pertaining to the settlement of a violation notice.

**1/24/2007 Community Meeting Regarding Chevron 1/15/2007 incident Comments:**

- Chevron needs to get advice from the community. They should have a CAP.
- Need to increase penalty on industry
- No better safety pattern at refinery in my 30 years experience in refineries for employees and community.
- We need to figure out a system that works for our community. System was created in 1998 for the community. Now more cell phones, more languages, and different community.
- Need quick accurate information
- Fix the broken system
- Chevron supports non-profits provide great resource to our community.
- I heard sirens and knew it was not a test day and could see smoke moving towards Marina.
- Everyone in Pt. Richmond should know if an alarm sound there is a fire. If the smoke smells go inside.
- Chevron puts great efforts into safety. They are doing a great job and are a great economic resource to community.
- Must learn to function on our own. Get free CERT trainings.
- Heard sirens at 5:15 Channel 5 had news at 5:30.
- Start a system where neighbors are responsible for calling others in the community; Tony Semenza of CAER can lead this.
- We didn't hear sirens, didn't receive call, and drive 8 blocks away.
- We cannot put our health at risk while Chevron makes millions.
- Use common sense, when you hear alarm know there's a fire at Chevron. If you smell smoke, go inside and shut the door.
- We need better warning system and we have great people working on it.

- Nature of industry = pollution whether Dr. Brunner can measure air quality or not there is still pollution.
- There is going to be spill/accidents, lets make Chevron contribute funds to pay for the services we need. Potholes/homeless etc.
- Saying there is no impact is not accurate.
- A lot more needs to be done to fix the system, possibly relocation.
- At 5:40 I heard sirens and went outside and it stunk. Chevron should be fined and money given to community because it has to many accidents.
- Chevron is interfering with my personal time, calling at 5:30 a.m. you're violating the communities' personal time. I worked at Rodeo refinery and was made to be a fire fighter and I didn't want to do it.
- Media was reporting in front of Chevron that there was a shelter-in-place, that is a conflicting message, and it is not safe.
- Need to consider other languages in the area.
- Washington Elementary practices SIP all the time. Children and teachers at this school know what to do when CWS is activated. Can alert parents from school. However, this event was before school. Can there be people at key intersections to inform parents dropping off kids?
- Chevron Fire did a great job.
- Worked at Chevron 42 years and recognize that they have good safety practices. Ladies if you are in your kitchen 24 hrs/day how many accidents would you have?
- When I recently moved to this area, I was not given information on CWS or sirens. Realtors and landlords should inform new homeowners/renters about CWS.
- If we're required to Shelter-in-place, Chevron should give us grants to fix cracks and windows so it is save to stay inside.
- We should have freedom to breath. Provide us all with air purifiers.
- Been working for 7 years with community. Chevron needs to be more accountable. Need to think of way to transition from fossil fuels.

- Since Air District's flare control has been adopted, Chevron is the only facility whose flaring episodes have gone up.
- Chevron is poisoning this community you must go.
- Community – it is time to take a stand against Chevron.
- Need more \$ in healthcare to come for the community.
- We all take risks, we must realize accidents do happen, so let's work together, do this the way it's supposed to be. Keep it positive.
- Chevron is trying to expand facility's production with use of denser crude oil.
- Fire burned for 9 hours. Wind shifts, everyone should notify in their own languages.
- Chevron – we're not going to allow it.
- Never got a phone call
- Heard Chevron representative on KCBS saying there was no danger to community 1 hour before we were told to Shelter-in-place conflicting message.
- Send out comments and questions to those signed-up
- Why did Chevron send only their fire chief? [Chevron employees were asked to raised their hands and there were over 20 in attendance]
- Warning system would not have been necessary had there not been an accident.
- At 5:20 a.m. – 5:30 a.m. the day of fire. Chevron spokesperson was on the news and said there was no impact to community. This is when Shelter-in-place was going on. This is contradictory.
- A lot of comments are on the warning system. Should focus on the fact that there was an incident.
- Homeless have no protection from fire and no cars to drive away. What need do people have for city officials if they have to fend for themselves.
- Accidents do happen. Now is a good time to come together to develop solutions. It is good that Chevron is here and willing to listen. Let's all work together to get something positive done.

- Cannot measure long-term impacts on a short-term basis. System does not adequately address what happens.
- Need to focus on more than Chevron. Focus on whole community.

## **Timeline January 15, 2007**

5:18 Fire Starts

5:23 Chevron activates the Community Warning System with a Public Health advisory.

5:33 Chevron activates the Community Warning System and four sirens

5:40 CCHS talks to KCBS

5:41 HazMat staff begins assessing community impact

5:45 CCHS calls Bay City News

5:45 CCHS calls NWS; NWS asks for e-mail

6:00 CCHS emails SIP Message to NWS

6:09 CWS Duty Officer notifies TENS Dialogic contractor

6:10 KCBS activities Emergency Alert System

6:11 NWS broadcasts SIP

6:34 Dialogic starts phone calls

6:49 CCHS puts up first of nine website postings (cchealth.org) with SIP info

6:56 CCHS resounds siren

7:29 CCHS resounds siren

7:59 CCHS resounds siren

8:05 Chevron isolates source of fire

8:39 CCHS Health Officer and Incident Commander issue All Clear

8:39 CCHS posts "All Clear" on website

8:41 CWS sends All Clear

8:47 TENS contractor Dialogic begins All Clear phone calls

6:49 CCHS puts up first of nine+ website postings (cchealth.org) with SIP info