

EIP: WORST OIL REFINERIES PRODUCE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE CARCINOGENIC AIR POLLUTION THAN OTHER FACILITIES, RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT CONSISTENCY OF OIL INDUSTRY REPORTING

Ranking of Refineries Finds 10 Worst in TX (6); LA (3) and PA (1); Nine of 10 Worst Plants Produce Only 15 Percent of Refining Capacity, But a Third of Carcinogenic Emissions.

WASHINGTON, D.C.//February 8, 2007///Nine oil refineries in the United States account for only 15 percent of the nation's refining capacity, but a third of total carcinogenic pollution emissions reported by the oil industry, according to a new report from the nonprofit Environmental Integrity Project (EIP). Major inconsistencies in the carcinogen emission data analyzed by EIP raise serious questions about the accuracy and completeness of oil industry reporting to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) about such pollution.

Entitled "Refined Hazard: Carcinogenic Air Pollution from America's Oil Refineries," the EIP report identifies the top 10 refinery sources of air emissions of carcinogens in 2004 as follows: (1) BP/Texas City, TX; (2) Exxon Mobil/Baytown, TX; (3) Flint Hills/Corpus Christi, TX.; (4) La Gloria/Tyler, TX; (5) Lyondell-Citgo/Houston, TX; (6) Exxon Mobil/Baton Rouge, LA; (7) Valero/Corpus Christi, TX; (8) Sunoco/Philadelphia, PA; (9) Chalmette/Chalmette, LA; and (10) Citgo/Lake Charles, LA.

EIP Director Eric Schaeffer said: **"Companies like Exxon Mobil and Sunoco Companies keep reporting record profits while increasing emissions of more cancer causing chemicals from their refineries. Let's hope oil companies invest some of that windfall in making the air around their refineries a little safer for their neighbors to breathe."**

Schaeffer added: **"What we are really seeing here are the shortcomings in the 'honor system' for reporting these emissions. Overall level of emissions of carcinogens declined between 1999 and 2004, but there were big jumps at some refineries and inconsistency in the quality and level of reporting at others. EPA should stop taking industry self-reporting at face value, and investigate whether these emissions are being accurately reported as the law requires."**

Meg Healy, research director, Galveston-Houston Association for Smog Prevention (GHASP), said: **"We in Houston have known for years that emissions inventories, including the EPA's Toxic Release Inventory (TRI), are notoriously inaccurate. And nowhere is it more important to get the emissions inventories right than in Houston. We not only have three of the top 10 on this list, these three refineries represent only a small fraction of the total industrial emissions in this region. So we need more accurate emissions inventories. But we also need regulators to use that information more effectively – to identify and implement emissions controls on the most significant polluters."**

National Refinery Campaign Coordinator Denny Larson said: **"This shocking new report should result in serious investigation and hearings by both the Congressional**

Environmental and Government Oversight Committees due to the hazardous chemicals thousands are exposed to. The worst part is the unnecessary toxic pollution that people have to breathe in gasoline production sacrifice zones. There is a cleaner and greener way to operate refineries."

"This report should serve as a wake up call," said Suzie Canales, with Citizens for Environmental Justice in Corpus Christi, Texas. **"The perception locally by the 'powers that be' is that our air is clean because we're in attainment, barely. But that only looks at six criteria air pollutants. Our air is not clean. We are on the worst-refinery list twice in the top 10 in the country for emitting carcinogens. It does a huge disservice to the low-income people of color – who are living by these facilities and being blasted with some of the highest levels of carcinogens -- to mislead them by telling them their air is clean."**

The EIP report uses data from the EPA Toxics Release Inventory to catalogue refinery air emissions of certain pollutants that are known or believed to cause cancer. The TRI is a database that contains information on toxic chemical releases reported annually by certain covered industries, including petroleum refineries. Designations of chemicals as carcinogenic or possibly carcinogenic in humans are made by expert consensus groups established by the U.S. National Toxicology Program, or by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is an agency of the World Health Organization. The carcinogens emitted by U.S. refineries include benzene, ethylbenzene, butadiene, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), naphthalene, formaldehyde, and metals such as nickel and lead.

Key findings of the EIP report include the following:

- The BP Texas City refinery – where a major 2005 explosion resulted in 15 fatalities -- was by far the largest refinery source of carcinogen emissions in 2004, due mostly to its reported release of nearly two million pounds of formaldehyde in that year. BP has claimed that the formaldehyde release resulted from a change in its emission calculations, raising questions as to whether other refineries are reporting accurately.
- La Gloria, a small refinery in Tyler, Texas, is the largest refinery source of air emissions of benzene, a known carcinogen.
- Sunoco's Philadelphia refinery is the largest single U.S. refinery source of polycyclic aromatic compounds, which include probable or suspected carcinogens.
- Excluding BP Texas City, Texas refineries accounted for 36 percent of total refinery air emissions of carcinogens in 2004, but only 24 percent of the nation's refining capacity. In the aggregate, Texas refineries emitted two and a half times the volume of carcinogens per barrel of oil as did California refineries in 2004.
- Exxon Mobil reported emitting 455,000 pounds of carcinogens from its seven refineries in 2004, a 23 percent increase since 1999.

- Refinery emissions of carcinogens reported by the oil industry increased over the five-year period in eight states (California, Colorado, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and West Virginia), and declined in 23 states (Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming) plus Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

For a full copy of the EIP report, go to <http://www.environmentalintegrity.org> on the Web.

ABOUT EIP

The Environmental Integrity Project (<http://www.environmentalintegrity.org>) is a nonpartisan and nonprofit organization established in March 2002 to advocate for more effective enforcement of environmental laws. EIP was founded by Eric Schaeffer, who was director of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Regulatory Enforcement. He resigned in 2002 after publicly expressing his frustration with efforts of the Bush Administration to weaken enforcement of the Clean Air Act and other laws.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: A streaming audio replay of this Environmental Integrity Project will be available as of 6 p.m. ET/5 p.m. CT on February 8, 2007 at <http://www.environmentalintegrity.org>.