



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION IX

**75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901**

NOV 7 2013

**OFFICE OF THE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR**

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
SH-112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Boxer,

Thank you for your letter of September 26, 2013 to Administrator McCarthy regarding the Allenco oil production facility in the University Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, California. I have been asked to respond directly on behalf of Administrator McCarthy.

We take seriously the health concerns raised in your letter. On October 24th I personally met with a number of impacted local residents and students, faculty and staff at Mount St. Mary's College to hear about their health and safety concerns. I also toured the oil production facility and met on-site with AllenCo corporate officials, as well as representatives from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD), and the County of Los Angeles Public Health Department.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is examining the University Park oil production facility to evaluate compliance with relevant environmental laws, including, but not limited to, the Risk Management Program; Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasures Program; and Stormwater requirements.

We are reviewing AQMD's ongoing investigation and the compliance history of the facility. Although AQMD has the primary role for responding to local air emission issues commonly associated with oil and gas production operations, EPA also has authority to enforce any applicable provisions of the Clean Air Act and local rules incorporated into State Implementation Plans.

I was concerned to learn that since 2010 the AQMD has received approximately 340 odor complaints and has conducted 64 site inspections at the facility (most recently in August 2013), and issued 16 Notices of Violation for nuisance and fugitive emissions. To date, the facility was required to spend over \$200,000 in cash penalties, and injunctive relief including: sump replacement, servicing of wells, new gauge hatches, valve and flange replacement, and facility-wide cleanup. The mitigation work also included the relocation of air vents away from Mount St. Mary's College.

Yesterday I sent a team of U.S. EPA inspectors to the facility. We are currently reviewing the information collected on-site and are seeking additional documentation. We will ensure public access to all relevant information as soon as possible and as appropriate. I understand that earlier this week the LA Regional Water Quality Control Board also conducted a stormwater inspection at the site.

This facility is regulated by numerous state, local and federal agencies. Given the various federal, state and local efforts to achieve compliance, EPA Region 9's Enforcement Director, Kathleen Johnson, will convene a meeting in mid-November with these regulators to ensure effective coordination. I will also personally meet with the State of California's Division of Gas and Geothermal Resources, to understand oil production operations in Los Angeles, and ask what may set this site apart from other similarly situated urban oil production sites in Los Angeles.

I want to assure you that the EPA is taking this public health issue very seriously and we will continue to collaborate with state and local agencies concerning this site. We will keep both you and the community informed of our actions. If you have any further concerns or questions, please have your staff contact my Congressional Liaison, Brent Maier, at (415) 947-4256. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jared Blumenfeld". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jared Blumenfeld