

Toxic Poison or Nuisance Odor?



In the past decade, have you smelled a “natural gas” odor but no one ever found a gas leak? You are not alone.

NW Natural has received over 10,000 complaints for an odor in the past decade – and it wasn’t from a gas leak.

Where is the odor coming from and why is this release allowed? Good questions.

1. The odor comes directly from APES and ORCCO – oil re-refineries collecting and refining used motor oil and dirty industrial lubricants for resale. DEQ has admitted it comes from them and we have tracked it down by following our noses directly to the plant. Both refineries are located in North Portland near the Columbia River.
2. A decade ago the thermal oxidizer (emission control device) at APES was illegally removed. Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has known since 2011 but hasn’t forced APES to reinstall due to a loophole in the law.
3. DEQ has never conducted full-spectrum stack testing to provide fact-based emissions data. DEQ’s flawed monitoring did not obtain results showing the true danger of these emissions.

Why should you be concerned?

Local resident illnesses (bloody noses, respiratory distress, headaches, etc.) worsen when wind blows directly from APES and ORCCO. Gases and metals released during the refining process are dangerous and known carcinogens. A recent Mutual Agreement and Final Order between DEQ and APES is flawed; bundling requirements of the thermal oxidizer while allowing installation delay with APES' proposed expansion plans. It does not provide accountability if APES does this again (or any oil refinery), and the law says this is OK.

We NEED your help! APES and ORCCO are both asking for permit approval. Metro is asking for public comment by May 19. NOW is the time to get involved.

TAKE ACTION!

1. **Contact your local governing authorities:**
 - a. Provide written comments to Metro by May 19 (see next page for information).
 - b. Write letters/call the following decision makers every Tuesday for **Take Back Our Clean Air Tuesdays** (see next page for list of representatives and their contact information).
 - c. Provide verbal testimony - Attend DEQ meetings, City Council meetings, Town Halls and public legislative events to voice your concerns.
2. **Contact your local media sources:**
 - a. Send letters to editors or contact media outlets about your concerns through public access areas listed on each media source website.

Please include the following key points in your comments:

- Oregon is all about being green and a leader in climate change, but our own air is dirty because the law is not stringent enough to protect us citizens. The Oregon Legislature needs to make a special rulemaking for oil refineries and it needs to include all three types – Oil refinery, Oil re-refinery, and oil recyclers.
- DEQ and EQC need to demand independent testing at oil refineries, re-refineries and recyclers in the stacks ONGOING and FULL SPECTRUM!
- APES and ORCCO need their operations shut down by using Governor Brown’s Cease and Desist authority or by using DEQ’s authority to shut them down until new rules are written and they are reclassified as title 5 polluters.

Write or Call the following people every Tuesday for Take Back Our Clean Air Tuesday:

- Governor Brown, 503-378-4582
- Tina Kotek, 503-286-0558. Rep.tinakotek@state.or.us
- Senator Lew Frederick, 503-986-1722, Sen.LewFrederick@oregonlegislature.gov
- Senator Michael Dembrow, 503-986-1723, Sen.MichaelDembrow@oregonlegislature.gov
- New DEQ Director, Richard Whitman, 503- 229-5300, Whitman.richard@deq.state.or.us
- Louis Bivins, DEQ, 503-229-6333. Bivins.louis@deq.state.or.us
- DEQ Complaint Line: 1-888-997-7888.

To submit comments for both APES and ORRCO to Metro:

Metro Solid Waste Information Compliance & Cleanup
600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232
Fax 503-813-7544
Email: SWICC@oregonmetro.gov
More info: oregonmetro.gov/solidwastepublicnotices

For more information and talking points, please refer to these excellent resources:

- “The Big Stink” in Portland Tribune: <http://pamplinmediagroup.com/pt/9-news/348568-227698-the-big-stink-on-hayden-island>
- “Cleaning Up Our Toxic Air” in Portland Tribune: <http://portlandtribune.com/sl/353972-233028-cleaning-up-our-toxic-air->
- Website: <http://www.pdxnhn.org/>
- Facebook: @Pdx North Harbor Neighbors