

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS
RELATED TO HYPERION

Harada, Patricia

Subject: FW: Christmas had H2S >70 ppb at Hyperion + headaches/metallic tastes

From: Weaver, Tracy (City Clerk) <tweaver@elsegundo.org>
Sent: Friday, January 6, 2023 3:47 PM
To: Sandoval, Lili <lsandoval@elsegundo.org>; Harada, Patricia <pharada@elsegundo.org>
Subject: Fwd: Christmas had H2S >70 ppb at Hyperion + headaches/metallic tastes

Hi ladies,

Two more emails to post.

~Tracy

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: El Segundo Citizens demand clean air <elsegundo.cleanair@gmail.com>
Date: January 6, 2023 at 3:39:31 PM PST
To: Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org>
Cc: Adena Hopenstand <adena.hopenstand@lacity.org>, BFerrer@ph.lacounty.gov, CA37.Casework@mail.house.gov, "Chaaban, Diane" <DChaaban@elsegundo.org>, Corrie Chitlik <corriezupo@gmail.com>, "George, Darrell" <dgeorge@elsegundo.org>, Hi Sang Kim <hi-sang.kim@lacity.org>, HollyJMitchell@bos.lacounty.gov, JWaldron@bos.lacounty.gov, John Pickhaver <johnpickhaverJR@gmail.com>, Kyle Wheeler <kyleburtonwheeler@gmail.com>, Lisa Jacobs <ljacobs@scng.com>, Michelle Keldorf <mkeldorf@elsegundoccb.org>, rad.nowroozi@sen.ca.gov, Sarah Meyer <sarahmeyer426@gmail.com>, Timeyin Dafeta <timeyin.dafeta@lacity.org>, Traci Minamide <traci.minamide@lacity.org>, Tyler Evains <tevains@scng.com>, WNASTR1@aqmd.gov, ALL ELECTED OFFICIALS <ALLELECTEDOFFICIALS@elsegundo.org>, barbara.romero@lacity.org, connor.sheets@latimes.com, cpc@lacity.org, "Pimentel, Chris (Mayor Pro Tem)" <cpimentel@elsegundo.org>, "Pirsztuk, Carol (Council Member)" <cpirsztuk@elsegundo.org>, crangan@ph.lacounty.gov, "Boyles,Drew (Mayor)" <dboyles@elsegundo.org>, "Sassoon, Elias" <esassoon@elsegundo.org>, Fernando.Campos@lacity.org, harriet.ryan@latimes.com, laura.nelson@latimes.com, "Giroux, Lance (Council Member)" <lgiroux@elsegundo.org>, matt.hamilton@latimes.com, mayor.helpdesk@lacity.org, mhaynes@aqmd.gov, "Nicol, Scot (Council Member)" <snicol@elsegundo.org>, Susana.Reyes@lacity.org, tmillerzarneke@elsegundoccb.org
Subject: Re: Christmas had H2S >70 ppb at Hyperion + headaches/metallic tastes

Thank you for the response. Forgive me as I am not a waste water treatment expert, but does that mean once the primary tanks have new covers odor and H2S levels will return to how it was for years pre-spill in 2020? And what is the current time line for getting those new covers installed?

On Fri, Jan 6, 2023 at 3:32 PM Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org> wrote:

Good afternoon,

As noted previously, emission spikes are mainly tied to wind and weather patterns and the primary tanks that require new covers. We have replaced all the Primary Battery A tank covers and are working diligently with our vendor to complete the remaining covers as quickly and efficiently as possible. In addition, we met yesterday with the contractors to review opportunities to expedite the process. In the meantime, the work continues.

We appreciate your patience.

Best,
Tonya

On Thu, Jan 5, 2023 at 8:40 PM Kyle Wheeler <kyleburtonwheeler@gmail.com> wrote:
Good evening Tonya and all on this email chain. writing to report that it smells like raw sewage throughout the city of el segundo tonight. Not breaking news since we've been dealing with this basically every night since the environmental catastrophe that took place at the hyperion plant nearly 2 years ago.

I have yet to receive a response to my question so I will ask it for the third time.

WHAT IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE CONTINUED H2S VIOLATIONS AND THE NOXIOUS ODORS COMING FROM THE PLANT, WHAT IS THE PLAN TO SOLVE, AND WHAT IS THE TIMELINE?

I along with over 200 residents have spoken with medical researchers at USC who are now conducting a health study on El Segundo residents due to the outcry from the community regarding the adverse health effects we have been experiencing since the spill nearly TWO years ago and the continued toxic odors benign emitted from your plant. Headaches, nose bleeds, skin rashes. This is not normal and I'm gravely concerned about my children and all the children and elderly that live in this community.

We are frustrated by the lack of action, the lack of oversight, and the lack of communication. The continued smell is a daily call to action, so please don't think we are going to give up. We will continue to do whatever it takes to get answers and results.

We have a group of 500 who are ready to hear your plan. We invite you to come to El Segundo to deliver it to us in person.

On Jan 3, 2023, at 7:51 PM, Kyle Wheeler <kyleburtonwheeler@gmail.com> wrote:

Good evening, Tonya.

We wanted to follow up on the below email thread as we have yet to get a response to our questions and we are growing impatient. As residents who's daily lives are being dramatically impacted by the disfunction at the Hyperion waste water treatment plant we demand answers.

I will ask my question again.

WHAT IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE CONTINUED H2S VIOLATIONS AND THE NOXIOUS ODORS COMING FROM THE PLANT, WHAT IS THE PLAN TO SOLVE, AND WHAT IS THE TIMELINE?

I would also like to call out that we have been in communication with our Mayor and City Manager and they have informed us that their calls and inquiries to plant management have gone unanswered. How is that acceptable?

Please advise.

On Dec 27, 2022, at 7:18 AM, Corrie Chitlik <corriezupo@gmail.com> wrote:

Tonya,

I subscribe to the H2S alerts and I've never once gotten an alert. The system does not send out alerts.

This isn't just about H2S, we want to know what other air toxics we are being exposed to which cause a metallic taste in peoples mouth.

When I talked to the AQMD (some young man, I forgot his name), he said Hyperion hasn't been transparent or easy to work with. That's very concerning since our town has over 20% of the residents under 18.

-Corrie

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 26, 2022, at 7:45 PM, El Segundo Citizens demand clean air <elsegundo.cleanair@gmail.com> wrote:

Tonya,

This is actually not a correct statement. The AQMD inspector (Inspector Hayes) was alerted about the H2S by an El Segundo community member who happened to check the monitors because the stench was so terrible.

Inspector Hayes then came to town, confirmed the odor, and proceeded to the plant to investigate. When he met with the staff they were unaware that the H2S levels were drastically above your permit guidelines.

It was because of our community members alerting the AQMD of the issue that your staff was alerted.

WHAT IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE CONTINUED H2S VIOLATIONS (2 this week!) AND THE NOXIOUS ODORS COMING FROM THE PLANT AND WHAT IS THE PLAN TO REMEDY?

We are demanding an answer. The plant is poisoning the community, endangering human life, and the continued negligence and inaction is criminal.

Please advise,
Kyle Wheeler

On Mon, Dec 26, 2022 at 7:16 PM Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org> wrote:

Corrie,

As you know, Hyperion did experience a temporary elevation in H2S yesterday. The numbers were back to normal within an hour and immediately reported to AQMD.

The monitoring system simultaneously relayed the information to El Segundo residents. At the same time, our operations staff checked odor control equipment and found no issues. Additionally, they conducted an odor survey in the El Segundo community, and the readings were below five ppb.

Please be assured that these matters have our top priority.

Thank you,
Tonya

On Mon, Dec 26, 2022 at 1:32 PM Corrie Chitlik <corriezupo@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello,

The press is copied on this email. It's been over a year of inaction and lack of data to what we are being exposed too.

On Christmas Day, it was over 70 ppb H2S and today everyone has headaches and metallic taste in their mouth. There has got to be other air toxics of concern in the air whenever Hyperion is having operator negligence (see below). There's a wastewater plant and a biogas plant so you can't tell me I am only being exposed to H2S whenever emission control equipment breaks down. H2S is not the only pollutant of concern.

Here's an example of sewage causing metal tastes in the mouth and that is why other toxins need to be monitored. My understanding is a TO-15 was done during a non-odor event for <24 hours, which is a waste of tax payer money. We want VOCs samples during maintenance upsets so we know what we are being exposed to during breakdowns. This is criminal to expose our children and seniors to such health hazards for over a year and gaslight us into this just being an H2S issue:

https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/79-74-653.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0fE_CGvr6qOBCOTH6UTLTnzG89s6v3brR9878oqCmpj9jX0Sd3A1HTshU

-Corrie Zupo

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 23, 2022, at 2:59 PM, Corrie Chitlik <corriezupo@gmail.com> wrote:

Okay, thank you. Looks like we all might have a stinky Christmas. Is the pressure gauge also going to also be fixed and will the water levels be inspected on a maintenance schedule of some sort? That'll let the operators know ahead of time if the filter is spent. All compliance equipment in the air permit should be stored in the warehouse at min and max levels. At this point, the system #1 isn't being maintained per the air permit.

-Corrie

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 23, 2022, at 2:20 PM, Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org> wrote:

Corrie,

Thank you for your patience as we awaited information from our vendor and AQMD on this issue. The change out of the saturated activated carbon is scheduled for December 26, 2022. After the change out, the activated carbon filter will be placed online.

Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Very best,
Tonya

Tonya Durrell

Public Information Director
LA Sanitation and Environment
Community Services Group

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On Thu, Dec 22, 2022 at 5:11 AM Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org> wrote:
Corrie,

I will provide details on any needed repairs and schedule later today.

Thank you!

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Corrie Chitlik** <corriezupo@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Dec 21, 2022 at 11:54 PM

Subject: Re: Hyperion Meeting November 10

To: Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org>

CC: Kyle Wheeler <kyleburtonwheeler@gmail.com>, Citizens El Segundo <elsegundo.cleanair@gmail.com>, George, Darrell <dgeorge@elsegundo.org>, John Pickhaver <johnpickhaverjr@gmail.com>, Michelle Keldorf <mkeldorf@elsegundoccb.org>, Sarah Meyer <sarahmeyer426@gmail.com>, <barbara.romero@lacity.org>, <cpimentel@elsegundo.org>, <cpirsztuk@elsegundo.org>, <dboyles@elsegundo.org>, <esassoon@elsegundo.org>, <lgiroux@elsegundo.org>, <snicol@elsegundo.org>, <tmillerzarneke@elsegundoccb.org>, <mhayes@aqmd.gov>

Hi Tonya,

Thank you for the details but I am unclear on replacement timeline. Will this be fixed before Christmas? My understanding is activated carbon is just coconut shell material (or filters) that are easily replaced on the day-of (sort of like a water filter). Usually this item is in the stores inventory. I used to be a contractor at Miller Lite Beer Company and this was a day-of swap out since it was an inventory item. Any idea when it won't smell like sewage and the filters will be replaced?

-Corrie

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 21, 2022, at 10:39 PM, Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org> wrote:

Good evening all,

In response to the recent inquiries regarding odor complaints at Hyperion, please note that on 12/20, Hyperion staff became immediately aware of the equipment malfunction of an activated carbon filter installed near the south end of the Primary Battery D, near the El Segundo side. The unit was installed to augment the Primary Centralized Scrubber System. Even without the activated carbon filter, the main system-- Primary Centralized Scrubber System, should work independently for most of the collection and treatment of the foul air from the primary treatment area.

Typically when an activated carbon filter is used up or saturated, it will no longer work properly. The saturated activated carbon will have to be replaced before the filter resumes its operations. Yesterday, 12/20/2022, the operations staff, in response to the high H₂S reading measured at the Central Monitoring Station, determined that the

activated carbon filter was no longer working effectively. The unit was immediately secured. Hyperion staff are working on replacing the activated carbon and placing the filter back online. Meanwhile, the main, Primary Centralized Scrubber System, is or has been online doing its function as usual.

As part of our communications protocols, this information was provided to the El Segundo Public Works Director last night when the event occurred.

Thank you,
Tonya Durrell
Public Information Director
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On Tue, Dec 20, 2022 at 8:57 PM Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org> wrote:
Thank you for your email. We will look into this right away and provide an update as soon as possible.

Tonya

On Tue, Dec 20, 2022 at 8:54 PM Kyle Wheeler <kyleburtonwheeler@gmail.com> wrote:
Hi all - adding Mayor Boyles, the El Segundo city council members, as well as the city attorney to this thread because I want to ensure all are up to speed, as it seems Hyperion doesn't always keep our city in the loop with issues at the plant.

Tonya,

It's been an awful week on the west side of El Segundo, but today was exceptionally bad. At 10am the entire west side smelled like human waste. It was nauseating. I called the plant and was told everything was good and they had no idea why it's been so smelly for the last week or so. Well, at 5pm another wave of the most nauseating odor (human waste) rolled through town. My second call to the plant today revealed that your NEW scrubber system is no longer operational and has been completely taken

off line. How is this possible? How much tax payer money was wasted on this new scrubbing system that is no longer in service? And how long will it take to repair?

My question is why does this continue to happen? I run my own business and if I failed my clients as much as Hyperion has failed El Segundo, and LA city for that matter, I would have been sued so many times I would be out of business. Where is the accountability? Where is the transparency?

We are not going to just go away. Residents are just getting angrier by the day. As Mrs. Chitlik stated, we are working closely with Ben Allen, Ted Lieu, and have a meeting with Karen Bass' office to bring them up to speed on the turmoil the Hyperion plant has put El Segundo through for the last 20 months.

As Mrs. Chitlik previously stated, in short, we are angry and motivated and are in this for the long-haul. I wish that Hyperion would do the right thing and work with the City of El Segundo.

Sincerely,
Kyle Wheeler

On Mon, Dec 19, 2022 at 9:14 PM Corrie Chitlik <corriezupo@gmail.com> wrote:
Hi Tonya,

Happy holidays and happy new year. I don't want to come off rude, because I know you're just doing your job, and I have been in your shoes when I worked at AES Redondo Beach. It's not fun dealing with angry residents. I don't really have any questions, but I am angry at the City of LA and LASANS. I think there's a lot of wordsmithing and diluting going on with the executive teams. The District is systematically complicated, and that is why it's top heavy with upper management. Usually, the system is designed to wear out and confuse residents, and we eventually give up.

It's winter, so it's not stinky daily, but it was stinky this weekend. I am concerned that this summer time when it heats up, it's going to be a repeat of 2021 and 2022. This is not going to be our new normal because when I moved here in 2014, it never stunk and the facility was properly maintained (I think). We purchased our home in 2018, and I would have never invested in a home less than a mile from Hyperion if I knew we lived next to a mis-managed facility. The fact it's the largest wastewater plant in the USA, I just assumed it was properly maintained. Wouldn't you assume the same if your property tax bill was 5 digits and LASANS increased your sewer rates by 91% in August 2020?

I am angry that every AQMD Hearing Board is a waste of everyone's time. The 12/15 zoom call was uneventful since no one was prepared and nothing was really resolved. The H2S monitoring system is severely delayed (by hours and calibrations don't take hours) and unreliable (shows 0 ppm often when it stinks). The H2S limit was last updated in 1969 and it doesn't take into account highly dense residential cities. We don't have fence-line monitoring for other air toxics of concern (shockingly, I learned in 2019 that this town has a lot of cancer and auto-immune diseases. Two kids have died since we bought our house).

At this point, this is all just making me more and more angry. We are in conversations with Senator Ben Allen because I think we are at the point where the State of CA needs to step in. We are also working with USC to study the long-term impacts of H2S (which isn't my top concern since H2S isn't cancerous, but it's a piece of the puzzle). This is too time consuming at the local level and we really aren't getting

anywhere. I think the City of ES's letters over the past several months have been rational and fair, but we aren't getting a resolve. The amount of taxpayer dollars that have been devoted to this on-going issue is highway robbery to the working class and we are just borrowing against our childrens future.

In short, I am angry and I am motivated to follow this in the long-haul. I wish that Hyperion would do the right thing and work with the City of El Segundo.

-Corrie

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 19, 2022, at 9:25 AM, Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org> wrote:

Good morning all,

I hope you are enjoying this season and have a happy new year!

Thank you all again for meeting with us, and let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Tonya Durrell

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On Thu, Nov 10, 2022 at 11:41 AM Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org> wrote:

Oh, no. I hope things are okay. Thank you for letting me know.

Best,

Tonya Durrell

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On Thu, Nov 10, 2022 at 11:12 AM Corrie Chitlik <corriezupo@gmail.com> wrote:
Hi Tonya,

I had two work emergencies pop up and I can't attend. I apologize for the last minute cancellation. Sarah, John, and Michelle are still able to attend. We appreciate the meeting!

-Corrie

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 9, 2022, at 12:07 PM, Corrie Chitlik <corriezupo@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Tonya,

Confirmed and thank you. I copied the other attendees as well.

Best regards,

Corrie Zupo

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 9, 2022, at 10:59 AM, Tonya Durrell <tonya.durrell@lacity.org> wrote:

Hi Corrie,

This email is to confirm our meeting scheduled for tomorrow, November 10, from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Please see the meeting information below and share it with your guests:

- Enter through Gate C located off the intersection of Vista del Mar and Hyperion Way.
 - Security will greet you at the entrance and will request to see your government-issued ID.
 - Please notify security that you are part of the Hyperion meeting, and they will direct you where to park.

Thank you so much, and we look forward to meeting with you!

Tonya Durrell

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Tonya Durrell
Public Information Director
LA Sanitation and Environment

Inline image