



## AIR QUALITY COMPLAINTS

The Ventura County Air Pollution Control District is the local agency responsible for ensuring healthful air quality for all county residents. You can help protect public health by reporting air quality complaints.

Most air quality complaints are reported when people detect something unusual in the air that affects their quality of life. Complaints focus on any injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance that could harm people's health and well-being. The District receives over 500 air quality complaints a year. The most common types are those caused by odors, smoke, paint spraying operations, agricultural burning, fugitive dust, diesel fumes, and construction equipment.

### HOW TO | REPORT AN AIR QUALITY COMPLAINT?

Some residents make complaints by mail, fax, or email ([complaints@vcapcd.org](mailto:complaints@vcapcd.org)), but the complaint line is by far the most common way of making a complaint. When you call the complaint line to report an air quality complaint about a stationary source (like a factory or business) or any other type of complaint, you will need to provide the following information:

- **Your name, telephone number & full street address.** *Note: Because APCD policy strictly prohibits the release of any information that would identify a complainant to an alleged source or to another non-APCD personnel without your consent, all information about you and your complaint will be kept confidential by staff. You can make an anonymous complaint, but the District encourages people who report stationary source complaints to provide their name, address and telephone number. This helps inspectors verify complaint information and allows them to inform complainants of the status of the investigation.*
- **Time and date the air quality incident occurred and whether it is still continuing.**
- **Nature of the problem - - smoke, odor, dust, etc.**
- **Whether you have experienced this type of problem in the past, and if so, when.**
- **And, if possible, the name and address of the alleged source and the type of operation.**

### COMPLAINT LINE INFORMATION

#### 24- HOUR COMPLAINT LINE

**(805) 303-3700**

*Complaints received after business hours are usually dispatched to APCD personnel the following business day. If they are received on the weekends, they are dispatched Monday morning.*

#### COMPLIANCE DIVISION

**MONDAY – FRIDAY**

**8 AM – 5 PM**

**(805) 303-3708**

#### APCD OFFICE

**MONDAY – FRIDAY**

**8 AM – 5 PM**

**(805) 303-4005**

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

The District responds quickly to all complaints, usually within 24 hours. It is also APCD policy to inform you of the results of the investigation, provided you have left contact information.

Every air pollution complaint is carefully reviewed. Whenever possible, an APCD inspector will contact you by telephone to determine the nature, source and cause of the complaint. The inspector will verify the complaint information as well as the description and frequency of any health problems alleged to have resulted from the situation. The inspector may ask you for additional information.

Additional information can include:

- **Frequency of annoyance or occurrence of the smoke, dust, odor or other problem in the complaint.**
- **Names and addresses of other persons affected, if available.**
- **Location and extent of any property damage.**
- **Duration of the air quality problem at each occurrence.**
- **Description of odors, if any.**
- **Wind direction if known.**
- **Any other information that will relate the air quality problem to a specific source, operation, or piece of equipment.**

Some complaints can be resolved over the telephone and require no further follow-up, others need more investigation. If a complaint cannot be immediately resolved via phone, the inspector attempts to locate and verify the alleged source by surveying and canvassing the suspected area. On verifying the source, the inspector conducts an inspection to determine the cause of the air quality problem. APCD considers a complaint to be “confirmed” if an inspector smells the odor, or views the dust or smoke, in the presence of the person who originally lodged the complaint.

Often, by the time the inspector arrives on the scene, the odor has gone away, or the dust or smoke has disappeared. But even if the inspector cannot confirm your complaint, he or she will fill out a complete report. The APCD keeps a permanent record of all complaints investigated in the County.

Complaints are classified as private and public. A “private” nuisance means only a few people are affected. (example: a neighbor-to-neighbor dispute). In such cases, the affected party may need legal help to resolve the problem.

## A NUISANCE IS CLASSIFIED AS “PUBLIC” AS DESCRIBED IN APCD RULE 51:

*A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public or which endangers the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public or which cause or have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property.*

If the investigation of your complaint reveals either a “public:” nuisance situation or a violation of APCD regulations, our inspectors can issue a Notice of Violation; this is a written ticket informing a business or facility that it has failed to comply with an APCD rule or permit condition, or a state air pollution regulation or public nuisance law. Under the law, the business receiving the notice of violation can be fined each day, or part of the day, it is in violation. After the investigation, the inspector may contact you to discuss findings and resolve the complaint. In severe cases, the APCD may go to court to stop the violation or even seek criminal prosecution.

## OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Check out the District website at [vcapcd.org/faq.htm](http://vcapcd.org/faq.htm) for frequently asked questions regarding the complaint program.

Additional air quality complaint references:

### ■ **Agricultural odors**

Ventura County Agricultural Commission  
(805) 933-2926

### ■ **Pesticide & herbicide spraying**

Ventura County Agricultural Commission  
(805) 933-2926

California Department of Pesticide Regulation  
(916) 445-4300

The National Pesticide Telecommunications Network  
(800) 858-7378

### ■ **Gas odors or leaks**

Southern California Gas Company

(800) 427-2200 – residential

(800) 427-2000 – commercial & industrial

### ■ **California Air Resources Board**

(800) 952-5588

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