



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE CHIEF DARYL L. OSBY

NEWS RELEASE

Public Information Officer: Captain Ron Haralson

DATE: 9/16/20

Contact: 213-200-2477

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UPDATE: HAZ MAT TEAMS WILL OVERSEE TANK REMOVAL LINKED TO LINGERING PUNGENT ODOR

Los Angeles, CA – Starting today, Health Hazardous Materials Specialists from the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) will oversee the process of treating and neutralizing a small spill of mercaptan (a chemical used to odorize natural gas) that leaked late last week near the City of Compton. The final step includes removing the empty tank, that contained the chemical, from the site scheduled for Friday, September 18, 2020.

While the minor spill has since been stopped, the initial pungent, rotten egg odor has lingered but is harmless and non-toxic. Please be assured the smell is not a gas leak and it poses no fire or health concern.

On Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 11:20 a.m., the LACoFD responded to a reported gas leak at an abandoned oil field near South Main Street and Rosecrans Avenue in the unincorporated area near Compton. Upon arrival, firefighters discovered a chemical spill that resulted in a pungent but harmless odor emitting throughout the immediate area and areas downwind to the east.

No civilian or firefighter injuries were reported. The South Coast Air Quality Management District has been on-scene assisting with air monitoring and work plan approval for the final removal of the remaining mercaptan material.

A recorded and updated phone message directed toward those who live or work near the affected area will be sent via Alert LA County this morning, informing the public that there are no health or hazard risks due to any possible odors along with information on the tank removal.

Community members who want additional information may contact the Public Information Office at (213) 200-2477.

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