

Message

From: Gray, David [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=881C62B1E54142388C1DE2F8E3799C33-GRAY, DAVID]
Sent: 9/5/2017 9:57:12 PM
To: Andrea Morrow [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=usercacf3350]
CC: Tabuchi, Hiroko [hiroko.tabuchi@nytimes.com]; Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Re: Urgent query from NYT on benzene plume

EPA continues to conduct ambient air monitoring in Houston, and is focusing on an area of potential concern associated with reported air emissions from a Valero facility in Houston. EPA has been on-scene conducting real-time air monitoring near the facility. None of the readings collected by EPA have been above first responder screening levels for volatile organic compounds in the air. EPA's Trace Atmospheric Gas Analyzer (TAGA) air monitoring bus is conducting air monitoring in southeast Houston around the Valero Refinery today, and will continue to conduct air monitoring around other refineries as they start back up. The TAGA is a self-contained mobile laboratory capable of real-time sampling and of outdoor air or emissions. The instrumentation refers both to the analytical instrument and the mobile laboratory built around it. EPA continues to investigate complaints in the area.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Sep 5, 2017, at 4:39 PM, Andrea Morrow <Andrea.Morrow@tceq.texas.gov> wrote:
>
> You'll need to check with EPA on that.
> David Gray 214-665-2200 (PIO-EPA Region 6 in Dallas)
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Tabuchi, Hiroko [mailto:hiroko.tabuchi@nytimes.com]
> Sent: Tuesday, September 05, 2017 4:37 PM
> To: Andrea Morrow <Andrea.Morrow@tceq.texas.gov>
> Subject: Urgent query from NYT on benzene plume
>
> Hi Andrea,
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> I wanted to confirm the following WSJ report.
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> Is it true that the EPA is investigating the presence of benzene in Manchester? Any more details you can give us? I'm at 212-556-2642
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> Thanks
> Hiroko
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> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/after-oil-refinery-is-damaged-by-harvey-benzene-is-detected-in-the-air-in-houston-area-1504638772>
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> The city of Houston, the Environmental Protection Agency and an environmental advocacy group are investigating a potentially hazardous plume of a carcinogenic substance in one neighborhood after a nearby oil refiner reported its operations suffered hurricane-related damage.
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> The city and the Environmental Defense Fund said extra air monitors they dispatched to Houston's Manchester region on Monday detected the presence of benzene, a component of crude oil and gasoline. Two monitors detected significantly different levels of the carcinogen at different times of the day, and additional sampling is needed to determine the concentration, according to Loren Raun, chief environmental science officer for the Houston Health Department and Elena Craft, a senior health scientist at the Environmental Defense Fund, which became involved in the investigation after offering the city assistance.
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> A Valero Energy Partners LP refinery in the neighborhood reported a hurricane-related leak on Aug. 27.
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> The EPA said it will deploy an air monitor to the area on Tuesday to help the investigation. Officials are seeking to pinpoint the source of the benzene plume, the concentration and how far-reaching the emissions may have spread, Ms. Raun said Tuesday morning after a call with EPA, EDF and Houston city officials.
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> "EPA continues to conduct ambient air monitoring in Houston and is focusing on an area of potential concern associated with reported air emissions from a Valero facility in Houston," said David Gray, a spokesman for the agency.
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