



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –Tuesday, March 22, 2016

ENGLANDER CALLS FOR CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION OF TERMO COMPANY FOR ILLEGAL RELEASE OF GAS IN ALISO CANYON

LOS ANGELES— Today, Councilmember Mitchell Englander submitted a motion requesting that the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) report to the City Council any action pending with regard to the Termo Company for the illegal release of natural gas in the Aliso Canyon Field. Additionally, the motion calls for District Attorney Jackie Lacey and Attorney General Kamala Harris to review the case for possible criminal or civil prosecution as allowable by law.

“The actions of The Termo Company appear willful and intentional,” said Councilmember Mitchell Englander. “I am convinced that their total lack of regard for the rules protecting the health and safety of their host community rises to the criminal level. This community deserves justice.”

The Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) is responsible for regulating the State’s oil and gas operations and investigating potential violations of statute and regulations. Last week, DOGGR issued a \$75,000 civil penalty order to The Termo Company of Long Beach for illegally venting natural gas in the Aliso Canyon field.

DOGGR levied \$25,000 penalties for each of three violations, noting that not only did the gas venting appear to be intentional, but also that the operator tried to hide it under foliage. Current law caps the penalty amount the Division can assess at \$25,000 per violation.

The leak was discovered when the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and South Coast Air Quality Management District flew over the field on January 23 with a forward looking infrared (FLIR) camera. Oil and gas division personnel were dispatched to the site to find the source of the leak.

Division inspectors returned on January 28 to find that the operator had removed the pipeline, which had been connected only to the wellhead, indicating the venting was intentional. Termo was cited for three violations: unreasonable waste of gas, improper disposal of oil field waste, and failure to maintain and monitor the production facility.

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