



---

Issam Najm, President; Susan Gorman-Chang, Vice President; Gabriel Khanlian, Secretary; Andrew Krowne, Treasurer; David Balen, Signer; Jason Hector; Alex Kim; Becky Leveque; Jennifer Milbauer, Asaad Alnajjar

---

**Ad Hoc Committee: Aliso Canyon Gas Storage Facility  
Minutes**

Monday, September 11, 2017,  
6:00 – 7:00 pm  
Porter Ranch Branch Library  
11371 Tampa, Porter Ranch

**Note: Ad Hoc Committees are not subject to the notice and posting requirements of The Brown Act.**

Introductions

Susan introduced all Ad Hoc Committee members

- 1) Susan Gorman-Chang, Vice President Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council & Co-Chair Sustainability Committee
- 2) Jarrod DeGonia, Senior Field Deputy, Supervisor Kathryn Barger
- 3) Katie Butler, Health Impact Assessment Analyst, County of Los Angeles Public Health
- 4) Andrea Polidori, Atmospheric Measurements Manager, SCAQMD

We tried to Skype in Diane Gonzales from UCLA but technical difficulties prevented us doing so. Lane put the meeting on Facebook live.

Lane Semper will be taking Minutes.

Review Procedures for Ad Hoc Committee

Susan reviewed our role as being advisory only and that we return to full PRNC Board with information and/or recommendations. Our focus is air monitoring going forward. We believe the Porter Ranch community needs air monitoring that is:

1. Independent (Not SoCalGas & not Gov't Agency)
2. Raw data not rounded or smoothed
3. Raw data available in real time & on Smart Phones
4. Data that is kept for later analysis
5. Redundancy/cross checks desirable

## Aliso Canyon: LA County Lawsuit Status

Jarrold told us what he could about the lawsuit. For SoCalGas v. County of Los Angeles, he reminded us that the County is bringing charges of Public Nuisance and Unfair Business Practices. *(Please note that while the term “public nuisance” sounds trivia to the layperson, it is in fact the bedrock of environmental law. Public nuisance doctrine has been used successfully for over a century in court case wins to stop entities from polluting starting with the landmark case Georgia v. Tennessee Copper Company, Supreme Court of the United States, 206 U.S. 230; 27 S. Ct. 618, May 13, 1907, Decided)*

There is hearing on the SoCalGas v. County of Los Angeles on October 11, 2017 at 2:00. SoCalGas has asked for the case to be dismissed.

The temporary restraining order to prevent SoCalGas from re-injecting gas into Aliso Canyon Gas Storage Facility, was first denied by a trial judge, then allowed by a Court of Appeals judge temporarily while that Appeals court judge reviewed the request, and that Appeals court judge subsequently denied the restraining order. Los Angeles County is appealing to the California Supreme Court on this matter, but there is no timeline on when or even if the California Supreme Court will take up this appeal.

## Status of any SCAQMD Monitors left in Porter Ranch?

The SCAQMD monitor trailer in The Highlands is no longer transmitting data. The last data was transmitted at the end of July 2017, as reflected on the graph on the SCAQMD website. The trailer was left there just in case SCAQMD decides they need to monitor the air again.

So currently, besides SoCalGas methane monitors (see below comments from Katie & Andrea regarding that), Argo Scientific is the only system left measuring methane.

Andrea stated that SCAQMD was monitoring inside and outside the Aliso Canyon Gas Storage Facility. SoCalGas had hired contractors to do two area monitoring flyovers. CARB published monitoring data that showed greater than 250 kg an hour and on one occasion it was closer to 500 kg/hour. Katie explained 250 kg/hour is a threshold the state of California has come up with, above which is not considered a safe level. This is a measure of the flow coming out of the facility as opposed to parts per million (ppm) which is what we in the community are used to seeing and focusing on. Katie explained the state of California wanted to ensure that the facility was at 250 kg/hour or less before allowing reinjection.

Because of some high readings, SCAQMD deployed their mobile vehicle monitors to track down where the high kg/hour leaks were coming from. They sent out the Inspector Compliance group and they were able to identify that that the northwest portion of the field was consistently the location where most of the methane was coming from. This is the

area where Termo Oil has its operations. After going up there several times, the SCAQMD inspectors were able to identify some of the Termo Oil tanks that were leaking. Termo drills for oil in Aliso Canyon and Jarrod stated they also drill for, transport and sell natural gas. They have compressors, pipes, tanks etc. Termo was one source, but not the only source. SoCal Gas equipment was also found to be leaking, as SCAQMD found compressors and leaking valves that that belonged to SoCalGas. However, even at that, it is difficult to justify 500kilgrams per hour. Andrea stated their investigation continues. Andrea believes another flyover is scheduled. Scientific Aviation is the third part contractor that does the flyovers. JPL has done flyovers, but Andrea is not sure they will do any more.

#### Follow Ups from July 17, 2017 meeting

Andrea, SCAQMD

- *SCAQMD Final Report and Executive Summary* on air quality monitoring data are already posted and available on the SCAQMD website.
- *EPA Star Grants for low costs air monitoring sensors.* Sensors are in the testing phases and if the devices work they may deploy some into the community. Andrea stated he is referring to small methane monitoring made by Axetris (See website at <https://www.axetris.com/en/lgd/environmental-compliance/natural-gas-detection>) which cost about \$5,000 per unit. They would be for perhaps not only SCAQMD personnel but maybe also for residents to keep so they could be used right away as soon as a resident smells mercaptan (the odorant added to gas) and not have to wait for the SCAQMD to receive 3 calls within one hour and then have permission to come out and take an air sample.
- *Additional mobile monitor car -\$40,000:* See above as the Axetris monitors would probably be more cost effective, so they are focusing on that.
- *Permanent fence line type monitoring option* (like Argo): See Jarrod's comments below
- *Total number of complaints of gas smell after SS-25 well was plugged:* Andrea will have to get back to us, but there have been **68** new complaints since July 31, 2017 when SoCalGas starting injecting gas again into the facility.

- *Date of the next Rule 1148.3* (Regulations for underground gas storage facilities) Workshop: Meeting date not set yet.

Katie, County of Los Angeles Public Health Department

- *Final report from UCLA on particulate matter*: Katie reported they had to put this on hold when SoCalGas began reinjection, in order to focus efforts on monitoring the air data and health reports. They are still a month out from publishing this.
- *Status of JPL Flyovers and their report if any*: Katie is not sure if JPL is conducting flyovers anymore, but DOGGR has required flyovers since reinjection and that data is posted here: [https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/methane/NG\\_Chart\\_All.png](https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/methane/NG_Chart_All.png)
- *Increased asthma in Porter Ranch*: Katie is still investigating this.

Katie also shared with us that UCLA has been focusing on health complaints, which have doubled since injections resumed on July 31, 2017. The health complaints are correlating with the spikes in methane, as seen from the Argo Scientific air monitoring system (currently located in the back yard of a Porter Ranch resident).

Katie & Andrea on their interview with SoCalGas to understand SoCalGas monitoring

Katie & Andrea met with SoCalGas to discuss some of the perceived shortfalls of SoCalGas data as reported out from the methane monitors. Katie and Andrea stated that a flat 2.0 is impossible, since methane naturally fluctuates in the air. Interviewing SoCalGas, they found that 2.0 is the lowest level that the SoCalGas monitoring system can read. In addition, SoCalGas admitted that their system rounds down, so that 2.4 will be rounded down to a flat 2.0. Katie stated the example from Craig Galante that he shared with us at our last Ad Hoc Aliso Canyon Committee Meeting in July was particularly helpful in shedding light on this. His documents compared the readings from Argo Scientific on methane levels reported on <http://fenceline.org/porter/data.php> with those from the SoCalGas methane levels reported on the SoCalGas website at <https://socalgas.esriemcs.com/MethaneMonitoring/> The discrepancies were clear.

Katie and Andrea asked SoCalGas why so many monitors often show 0 reading, which is impossible. SoCalGas said that is when the units are offline and being maintained. Katie and Andrea commented to them that they should indicate they are offline, then, instead of a

0 reading which is misleading. Katie and Andrea stated that SoCalGas told them that their methane monitors have a problem when there is any humidity in the air and often then go offline or need maintenance. The fact that SoCalGas system rounds the actual readings makes that information less useful as no one can track cycles or patterns in the data, as the data has been manipulated by rounding.

Susan

- *What is community's highest priority:* Susan communicated to Jarrod the purpose and priority of this Ad Hoc Committee is to discuss how to secure a permanent, independent air monitoring system as discussed above.
- *List of specific cancer types that teachers have at Castlebay Lane Elementary:* A stakeholder ensured that public health nurse contacted Katie, and Katie has been in contact with this public health nurse and will report back. A stakeholder present stated that 4 teachers who had cancer are deceased. Currently, there is a list of 8 teachers now with cancer. Stakeholder will communicate with Katie.

#### Funding Ideas

Estimated cost is \$750,000 over 10 years for 4 monitoring locations including equipment, set up, ongoing maintenance, website, public relations, and analysis. SCAQMD is providing funds for Torrance Refinery, so can SCAQMD provide funding for Porter Ranch for the long term?

Katie stated that \$750,000 would be bare bones system, and that it would be closer to \$1 million most likely. They'd also like to measure benzene, ozone, nitrous oxide, and more. Katie is familiar with Argo Scientific and their work up in Richmond, California and feels they will be very valuable.

Jarrold stated he, Katie & Andrea will be meeting with Sheila Kuehl, who is our representative for this area on the Board of the SCAQMD. They will present all of the evidence to her that we have discussed here today and will ask for permanent monitoring system for the foreseeable future for Porter Ranch to be paid for by SCAQMD. Jarrold is optimistic and said he believe Sheila Kuehl is receptive to the idea. Susan thanked Katie, Jarrold, and Andrea for their professional, valuable and tangible help in this process, and noted that their expertise and research they are bringing to Sheila Kuehl is, credible, meaningful and powerful. Jarrold pointed out that while it is important for officials to know the community has no faith in SoCalGas's methane monitoring system, it is critical to prove

how and why the system is lacking and Katie and Andrea can do that for us. Jarrod stated this is a long run policy decision for SCAQMD. Jarrod stated the request is to take \$1 million of the settlement received by SCAQMD from SoCalGas and utilize those funds for permanent monitoring system for Porter Ranch. Buy in from the SCAQMD Governing Board is critical.

A stakeholder brought up the question that if SoCalGas air monitoring is lacking, are they truly complying with the court ordered settlement to provide air monitoring in Porter Ranch? Are they in violation of that order? Jarrod will make a phone call and try to find out if SoCalGas is violating the terms of their agreement.

Susan asked about a Health Study, and Jarrod said they are working on the State level to get that to happen. He thinks the state is the best venue and we have the best chance of getting the funding needed for a real Health Study at that level.

#### Wrap Up

A stakeholder asked about whether any water, such as in Limekiln Canyon Creek, has been tested for chemicals. Katie stated pool water from people's residences has been tested, but to her knowledge creek water has not.

Susan asked if the statement to close Aliso Canyon in 10 years, first mentioned she thought by Governor Brown, was a serious and valid goal and if any of the agencies are working towards that. Jarrod stated he thought that yes, that 10 year goal is a valid one people are still talking about but that the hope is to close it earlier than 10 years from now.

Andrea brought up AB 617, which was passed into law. Andrea stated it will be transformational in the area of air monitoring around polluting facilities of all kinds. AB 617 created mandatory SCAQMD focus on measuring air toxins in our communities. The trend seems to be moving in the direction of permanent fence line type of monitoring of facilities.

Also, Andrea brought up the 2 day Workshop/Conference SCAQMD is sponsoring September 27 and 28, 2017 called "Making Sense of Sensors" which is open for the public to sign up for and attend. This will be a very educational 2 days and will be held in their SCAQMD headquarters in Diamond Bar.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 23, 2017, 5:00 pm, here in the Los Angeles Porter Ranch Branch Library. By then, the meeting with Sheila Kuehl should have taken place and perhaps we will know where we stand.