

3/13/18 AGENDA, ITEM 6A - CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBMITTAL OF A RESOLUTION OR LETTER SUPPORTING A REQUIREMENT TO IMPROVE SAFETY AT THE TORRANCE REFINERY BY THE SCAQMD THROUGH THE RULE 1410 PROCESS AND OPPOSING TO THE USE OF MODIFIED HYDROFLUORIC ACID AT THE REFINERY. SUPPLEMENTAL LETTER FROM LOUISE FLEMING SUBMITTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL ON 3/13/18 AT 4:14 P.M.

From: Louise Fleming <louiserfleming1@gmail.com>
Date: March 13, 2018 at 4:14:24 PM PDT
To: "citycouncil@hermosabch.org" <citycouncil@hermosabch.org>
Subject: Agenda Item#6a

Dear Hermosa Beach City Council members:

As a resident of the South Bay and a volunteer with the Torrance Refinery Action Alliance (TRAA), I urge you to chose option #2 for Agenda #6a, opposing the use of Hydrofluoric Acid, and submit a letter to the AQMD to adopt Rule 1410 to replace Hydrofluoric Acid (HF) and Modified Hydrofluoric Acid (MHF) alkylation with a safe alternative within four years of rule adoption. Although the Torrance Refinery is not located in Hermosa, the effects of an accidental release would spread to your City, thus causing immeasurable harm to its residents and neighboring cities.

The accident at the Torrance ExxonMobile Refinery on February 18, 2015, of a near-miss collision of the MHF holding tank from falling debris, was a huge wake-up call to all cities within a 7+ mile radius, that this could happen again, despite the safety claims made over and over by well-intentioned Refinery workers and Refinery management. And the next time, we may not be so lucky. How often had ExxonMobil proclaimed the safety of its refinery, before this explosion?

It is unfortunate that PBF Energy has chosen to pit its workers against their own neighbors who support this ban, as I believe the Refinery CAN choose to continue to operate, without the dangerous MHF (which essentially has the same effect as HF, if it were accidentally released).

In recent public hearings and other city council meetings, workers from the Refinery have overtaken the auditoriums and expressed their fears of losing their jobs, due to threats by the Refinery that the plant would close, or have layoffs, or raise the price of gas. False and misleading statements are being made to its workers and the communities, about the "exorbitant" costs of transitioning from MHF to a safer alternative.

These are crocodile tears! More realistic estimates from other sources are closer to \$300M-\$400M, over a 4-year period of a controlled, phased-in process. Also, please keep in mind some of the financial information to PBF's investors (see [investor news](#) and [2017 earnings estimates](#)):

- Purchased for "\$537.5 million, plus working capital. PBF financed the transaction with a combination of cash, including proceeds from its \$350 million public equity offering in October of 2015, and borrowings under its existing revolving credit facility."
- Stock price went from approximately \$19 to \$32 in about 6 months
- Net income in 2016 was \$170M to \$415M in 2017.

This is not to disparage this facility for being a “good investment,” especially to those who live outside the death zone of an unintended MHF release, but merely to point out that PBF appears to have the financial means to make this conversion responsibly, if it so chose to.

In conclusion, I hope Hermosa Beach City Council members will make the safety of their community a priority, and send a letter to the AQMD supporting the replacement of MHF over a 4-year period.

Thank you.

Louise Fleming

Torrance, CA