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Press Release

Refinery Safety Activists File Suit Against Cities of LA and Torrance to Reveal Hidden Hazard Analysis Reports

Torrance, Cal., June __, 2026:

Garden Grove, site of the recent close call with a large tank of methyl methacrylate (MMA), is not the only city in Southern California harboring a potential ticking time bomb when it comes to a mass casualty event arising from a toxic industrial chemical tank.

For over a decade, TRAA (Torrance Refinery Action Alliance) has been focused on the antiquated alkylation units of two area refineries: the Torrance Refinery at 3700 W. 190th Street, Torrance, a subsidiary of PBF Energy (one of the largest refiners in North America) and the Valero Wilmington Refinery at 2402 E Anaheim Street, Wilmington, just feet from the Long Beach border.

They are the only two refineries in California to use hydrogen fluoride (known as HF or MHF, for modified hydrogen fluoride, and also known as hydrofluoric acid when in solution) to make high octane gasoline. Both the transport of HF/MHF and the standing tanks of HF/MHF at each refinery pose a chronic danger to adjacent communities. Any accidental release—due to a refinery explosion, natural disaster, or intentional act of sabotage or terrorism—could cause a ground-

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hugging, slow-to-dissipate, toxic cloud to fan out with the prevailing winds.

For its entire existence, TRAA has had one simple goal: Not to shutter these refineries, but simply to promote the conversion of their alkylation units to a safer, alternative process—employing a safer chemical—as we see at other, more modern refineries.

OUR LAWSUIT

Thus, TRAA has just filed suit in Los Angeles Superior Court to seek crucial safety reports (which by law must include analysis of safer alternative processes) from the cities of Los Angeles and Torrance under the California Public Records Act. Unfortunately, the administration of both cities seem to be collaborating with these refineries to keep these documents secret, begging the question, “Why? What are they hiding?”

The reports are called HCAs, or [Hierarchy of Hazard Control](#) Analysis reports. By law, they must have been provided by 2022 to these cities’ fire departments, which serve as the respective oversight agencies (known as a UPA or CUPA, Unified Program Agency or Certified Unified Program Agency, under [CalARP, the California Accidental Release Program](#)).

The initiation of litigation has been necessitated by multi-year stalling tactics engaged in by both the Torrance Fire Department and the Los Angeles Fire Department, each of whom was the subject of public records requests made by TRAA in June 2023. These tactics have served to shield the two subject refineries, and the powerful corporations which own them, from having to disclose compliance with basic safety reporting regulations.

For more information on TRAA and the dangers of HF/MHF at refineries, including information about recent refinery conversions in Utah and Oklahoma and a map of the potential kill zone resulting from an accidental release, see [our web site](#) or call the contacts provided.