

Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council

www.pasadenacac.org

Summary of Tuesday, October 22, 2013 Meeting

Annual Report on Air Emissions from PCAC Plants

The annual report of emissions from plant members of the Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council (PCAC) described what PCAC plants make, reasons for the reports, the accuracy of the trends, the common sources of air emissions in plants, and the two inventories from which the data are derived. They are the air emissions inventory (EI) submitted annually to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) submitted each year to EPA. Some PCAC plants do not fall under the reporting requirements due to the type of business, the chemicals they make or handle, or the quantities involved. The main reasons for change from 2011 to 2012 also were reviewed.

The annual report showed that emissions have been on a downward trend at the same time as plants are producing more products. Since 1995, production has increased 15%. The number of pounds of emissions per million pounds of product has declined 78%. In 2012, there was a slight increase in this ratio: 315 pounds of emissions per million pounds of product compared to 302 pounds in 2011. Plants made 64 billion pounds of product last year.

PCAC plants/ emissions inventory increased 5% from 2011 to 2012 but has decreased 73% since 1995. A review of the criteria pollutants for which PCAC requested data shows an increase of 0.3% in the last year compared to a 77% decline since 1995. The releases to air reported to EPA in the Toxics Release Inventory decreased 13% from 2011 to 2012 and have been reduced 69% since 1995.

From 2011 to 2012, there was a decrease in most of the pollutants that PCAC tracks but sulfur oxides (SO_x) rose and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) remained steady. Though SO_x increased 25% in the last year, it has declined 79% since 1995. All pollutants in the PCAC report have decreased more than 50% since 1995. Those that contribute to ozone formation have been reduced as follows: NO_x down 88% since 1995 and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) down 73% since that year. Scientific discoveries about ozone formation in the early 2000s led to greater controls on 4 highly reactive VOCs since 2006, and they are down 55% since then.

In discussion with plants, members learned that some of the changes will be long-lasting while others may vary from year to year. In some cases, the emissions estimates changed because a chemical was added to the reporting list or because calculation methods were improved. When this occurs, the inventory numbers may go up or down, but the emissions themselves may not have changed. PCAC will follow the annual report on emissions from PCAC plants with a review of regional air quality trends at the Dec. 5, 2013 meeting.

Readers may view Toxics Release Inventory by plant, county, chemical, etc. at www.epa.gov/triexplorer. The emissions inventory data may be found on the TCEQ website <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/point-source-ei/psei.html>. Data for 2012 will be available there in January.

UPDATES FROM PCAC PLANTS

Based on reports submitted by all 17 of the Pasadena Citizens' Advisory Council plants, in the month or so since the last plant update:

14 of 17 plants had no environmental reportable incidents

15 of 17 plants had no OSHA recordable injuries

13 had neither

a total of 5 environmental incidents occurred in 3 plants

a total of 2 OSHA recordable injuries occurred in 2 plants