

INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE
Los Angeles Unified School District
Office of Environmental Health and Safety

TO: Local District Superintendents
Local Districts

DATE: October 11, 2021

FROM: Carlos A. Torres, Director
Office of Environmental Health and Safety

SUBJECT: ODOR FROM DOMINGUEZ CHANNEL IN CARSON

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) has been advised of foul odors emanating from the Dominguez Channel, a 15 mile waterway that travels through Carson and Gardena. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Public Health) and Public Works are investigating these odors along with the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD).

Public Health and Public Works have advised that preliminary findings suggest that organic plant material, left on the channel banks during low tide, may be the cause of the odor. The agencies have also ruled out any kind of release from nearby oil refineries or waste facilities.

Public Health conducted air monitoring and found very low levels of hydrogen sulfide in the air east of the Dominguez Channel. At these low levels, hydrogen sulfide does not have long-term health effects, but does cause nuisance odors (e.g., rotten egg smell) that may cause short-term symptoms and impact quality of life. Persons may experience temporary symptoms such as headaches, nausea, or eye, nose, and throat irritation. Symptoms should go away when the odors are no longer present.

Where odors are present and causing discomfort, schools may initiate an Indoor Activity Schedule by keeping doors and windows closed as much as possible and keeping ventilation running. Schools are already utilizing enhanced air filtration due to COVID-19 which will also help in this situation. The agencies are continuing to identify the source of the odor, however until the odor event subsides, schools can take the above actions.

OEHS will continue to monitor conditions and provide updates as necessary. Please share this information as needed. Additional information may be found in each school's Integrated Safe School Plan. Should you have any questions or need assistance, do not hesitate to contact my office at (213) 241-3199.

c: Members, Board of Education
Megan K. Reilly
Pedro Salcido
Principals
Devora Navera Reed
Roberto A. Martinez
Alfonzo Webb
Alison Yoshimoto Towery

Leslie Ramirez
Maryhelen Torres
Shannon Haber
Mark Hovatter
Robert Laughton
David Hart
Rowena Lagrosa
Paulina Rock

Pia Escudero
Antonio Plascencia Jr
Dean Tagawa
Joseph Stark
Trenton Cornelius
Jose Cole-Gutierrez
Amanda Wherritt