

SAMPLE LETTER ORGANIZATION

February XX, 2015

Dr. Barry Wallerstein
Executive Officer
South Coast Air Quality Management District
21865 Copley Drive
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Re: Air Toxics Health Risk Communication and Management Guidance

Dear Dr. Wallerstein:

For nearly 30 years, California businesses have worked with state and local air quality officials to help reduce emissions and air toxic risks by 80%. We are proud of our contributions to environmental and public health protection and work diligently to preserve these benefits while we strive to remain competitive under the most stringent air quality standards in the country.

But now, as you are aware, new risk estimates resulting from changes to air toxics health risk assessment guidelines recently adopted by the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, could force local businesses to notify surrounding communities that health risk from their operations is on the rise – even though their facility emissions have stayed the same or even decreased.

Before adopting your updated AB 2588 communications and risk management guidelines, we urge you to listen and work with local business leaders in order to avoid unnecessarily alarming the public while harming local businesses and our economy.

Specifically, [*insert organization*] urges you to develop and implement reasonable and realistic policies, including both risk communication and risk management guidelines.

With respect to risk communication, under the new guidelines our member businesses could be required to notify the public of a “new” health risk, even though their emissions have not changed or even decreased. Risk communication policies must be developed in a way that the public is offered clear and credible explanations of why the health risk assessment guidelines have changed and what the changes really mean in terms of actual health risks. It is important the public realize air toxics emissions have not increased; rather, the state has changed the way it estimates air toxics risk. Failure to do so will leave the public with the false impression that air emissions have worsened, when the exact opposite is true.

With respect to risk management, our members need reasonable policies that will allow them to operate their business without excessive new costs for risk reduction measures or delaying their permitting renewal process. Onerous new policies could significantly harm our members’ operations or jeopardize their ability to obtain local permits.

Again, we urge you to work with local businesses and organizations in developing your risk communications and risk management guidelines.

We appreciate the time you are putting into these guidelines and look forward to working with you on this process.

Sincerely,