



Paramount Air Quality Issue – FAQs

(For a fuller list of Q&As, please visit the City's website at paramountcity.com)

Q: What is hexavalent chromium?

A: Hexavalent chromium (also known as chrome 6) is a metal and is one type of air pollution that can cause negative health effects. Chrome 6 is a known human carcinogen. Chrome 6 does NOT have an odor. You can read more about hexavalent chromium on the Centers for Disease Control website: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hexchrom/>

Q: Can I get cancer from hexavalent chromium?

A: Long-term exposure over years or decades to hexavalent chromium can increase the likelihood of cancer, particularly lung cancer.

Q: Are hexavalent chromium levels in Paramount consistently and currently at 350 times above the typical level for our area? Have these levels been found throughout the entire City?

A: No and No. In late October/early November, the highest levels of hexavalent chromium were found within three samples taken from two air quality monitors in the industrial section of town. Since then, hexavalent chromium levels at these locations have declined, but still are much higher than typical levels for our area. Further, other monitors in the industrial zone continue to be at unacceptably elevated levels for our area.

Additional sampling from around town indicate that the extremely elevated levels of hexavalent chromium are limited to a tight area within the industrial zone. Regardless of location, any elevated level of hexavalent chromium or other toxins are unacceptable. SCAQMD has continued to test additional sections of the City to ensure elevated hexavalent chromium levels are geographically limited. The City will also be looking at further testing options to confirm that high levels are not being detected in residential zones while supporting regulatory authorities to reduce hexavalent chromium sources no matter the zone.

Q: Where were these two monitors located?

A: In the City's industrial area. One monitor was located at Garfield Avenue and Madison Street and the other was located at Minnesota Avenue and Madison Street.

Q: What is the typical level for our area?

A: The typical level for hexavalent chromium across the entire 4-County region monitored by SCAQMD is 0.06 nanograms per cubic meter. The level

measured in Compton (the closest permanent SCAQMD monitoring station to Paramount) during the most recent region-wide study of air toxics was at 0.11 nanograms per cubic meter, which is more typical of our general location in a highly urbanized area.

Q: Has the SCAQMD found the sources of the high levels of Chrome 6 detected in the City's industrial section?

A: Most likely. SCAQMD found two businesses it believed to be the primary sources: Aircraft Heat Treating and Anaplex Corporation.

Q: What has the SCAQMD done to reduce emissions from these two businesses?

A: In regards to Aircraft, the company and SCAQMD agreed to an administrative order, known as an Order for Abatement, that was adopted by the independent SCAQMD Hearing Board on Dec. 16. The enforceable order requires Aircraft to immediately take 22 actions to reduce chromium 6 emissions. In addition, if SCAQMD air monitors detect an outdoor level of hexavalent chromium above 1.0 nanograms per cubic meter, as determined by three samples, the company must shut down all equipment that could emit the cancer-causing compound.

In regards to Anaplex, the company declined to enter into an immediately enforceable administrative order. As a result, SCAQMD sought a court order to require them to immediately comply with the same conditions as those required of Aircraft in order to protect the health of Paramount residents. The Court ruled against SCAQMD. However, SCAQMD will return to the Independent Hearing Board on January 5, 2017 in attempt to force Anaplex into compliance.

Q: What is being done to identify businesses that place air quality at risk in the City?

A: SCAQMD is conducting a systematic air monitoring program throughout Paramount to determine if there are other sources of hexavalent chromium emissions. SCAQMD also will be monitoring for a wide range of metal emissions in selected industrial areas.

The City of Paramount assisted the SCAQMD and LA County Fire in sweeping 190 (as of 12/20/16) businesses in town to review their operations, permit status and reporting paperwork to ensure the businesses were fully compliant with various environmental laws. Of these, 143 businesses have been determined to not require permits or the businesses were in compliance. Additional follow up inspections and enforcement actions are happening.

Q: Has the City gotten involved with this air quality issue?

A: According to State law, the SCAQMD has sole jurisdiction to adopt and enforce local air quality laws. The California Air Resources Board and the United States Environmental Protection Agency also adopt and enforce state and federal standards. Nonetheless, the City has played an active role in partnering with SCAQMD in order to enable the agency to move as fast as possible and is working to provide timely and accurate information to residents to help them understand the issues. Because the City has not been responsible for air quality, it has not had expertise in air quality issues. However, this issue has raised broader questions about environmental quality and the City Council has directed City Staff to explore a long-term strategy for monitoring environmental quality factors and supporting policies that will facilitate cleaner jobs in our community.

The City also adopted a 45-day moratorium on all new metal-related businesses in town on December 13, 2016. This means that no new metal-related businesses can open up or expand in town until the City Council lifts this ban or it expires. The City Council can extend the moratorium for up to 18 months.

Q: Where can I learn more about this issue and stay informed?

A: The City has launched a new information website, paramountenvironment.com that provides links and information on a full array of environmental questions, as well as links to other resources. Additionally, the SCAQMD website (www.aqmd.gov) has a lot of information specific to air quality, including test results from the various monitoring stations and updates on enforcements actions. You can also dial into a public conference call that AQMD hosts each week on Tuesday night at 6:30. The number is 866.244.8528 Access Code: 4063768.

Apply to take part in the Air Quality Sub Committee

The City Council Air Quality Sub Committee is accepting applications for residents to participate in the Sub Committee. To find all the pertinent information, and an application form, please go to the City's website at paramountcity.com.

Upcoming Meetings

01/10/17 - 6:00 PM
City Council Meeting

01/11/17 - 6:00 PM
Planning Commission

01/18/17 - 6:00 PM
Parks & Recreation Commission

01/24/17 - 5:00 PM
City Council Meeting

01/25/17 - 6:00 PM
Public Safety Commission