

Orozco, Norma

From: Dale Helvig <helvig_denny@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 19, 2022 12:20 PM
To: Thai, Minh; eComment; Sarmiento, Vicente; Phan, Thai; Penaloza, David; Lopez, Jessie; Bacerra, Phil; Hernandez, Jose; Mendoza, Nelida
Cc: Ridge, Kristine; Carvalho, Sonia R.; Mendoza, Steven; Zelaya Melicher, Fabiola
Subject: RE: 2022-07-19 CC Meeting General Comment: Lead Contamination in Santa Ana
Attachments: Orange County Register 2022-07-10.pdf

Mr. Minh Thai,

Environmental Justice is a complex issue. I think it is being made worse by how the City is presenting it. Below you reference the SB1000 definition of a disadvantaged community. I don't dispute this. However, the point I would like people to understand in the definition of Environmental Justice.

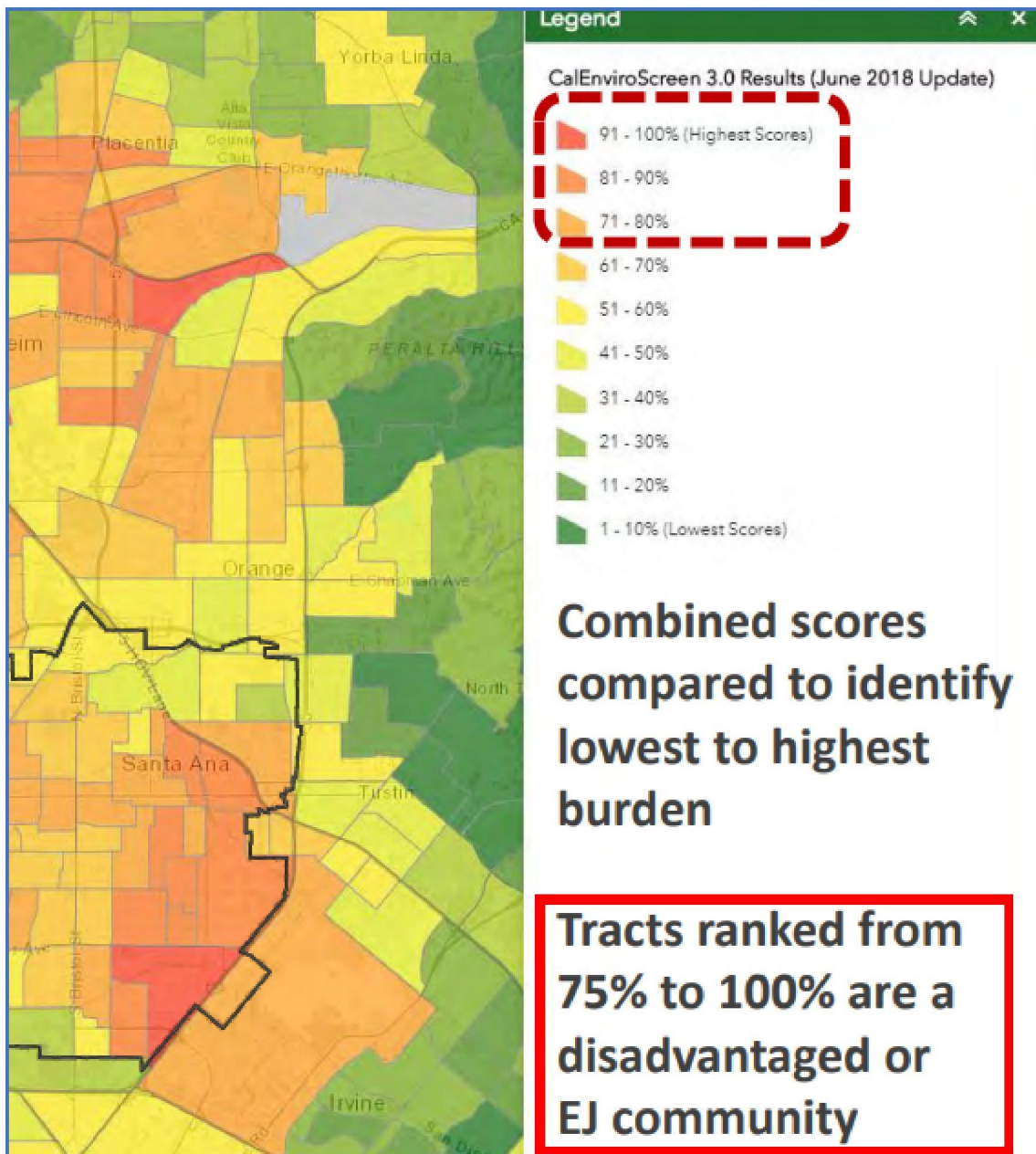
The EPA website on <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice> states:

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

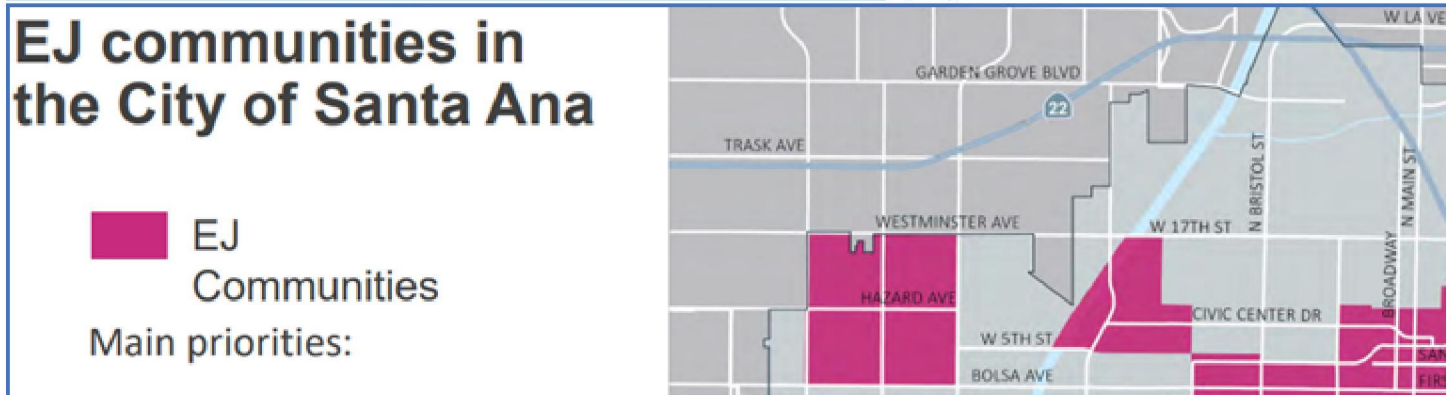
As such I believe we need to consider other areas of the City of Santa that have been overlooked, as a minimum, the homes adjacent to the interstate highways and those areas that have high lead contamination. By the EPA definition, **income** should not exclude a home from Environmental Justice. I still feel the cities analysis is flawed in addressing Environmental Justice [[Environmental Justice Background and Analysis March 2021 - City of Santa Ana \(santa-ana.org\)](#)].

From the link you provided, [Environmental Justice - City of Santa Ana \(santa-ana.org\)](#) most of the area south of 17th street and east of I-5, should have been included as a EJ Community, yet it was not.

[Environmental Justice - City of Santa Ana \(santa-ana.org\)](#), page 19:



[Environmental Justice - City of Santa Ana \(santa-ana.org\)](https://www.santa-ana.org), page 20:



Dale Helvig
Resident, Santa Ana

From: Thai, Minh <mthai@santa-ana.org>

Sent: Monday, July 18, 2022 3:01 PM

To: Dale Helvig <helvig_denny@msn.com>; eComment <ecomment@santa-ana.org>; Sarmiento, Vicente <VSarmiento@santa-ana.org>; Phan, Thai <TPhan@santa-ana.org>; Penaloza, David <DPenaloza@santa-ana.org>; Lopez, Jessie <JessieLopez@santa-ana.org>; Bacerra, Phil <pbacerra@santa-ana.org>; Hernandez, Jose <jhernandez@santa-ana.org>; Mendoza, Nelida <nmendoza@santa-ana.org>

Cc: Ridge, Kristine <kridge@santa-ana.org>; Carvalho, Sonia R. <SCarvalho@santa-ana.org>; Mendoza, Steven <SMendoza@santa-ana.org>; Zelaya Melicher, Fabiola <fzelayamelicher@santa-ana.org>

Subject: RE: 2022-07-19 CC Meeting General Comment: Lead Contamination in Santa Ana

Mr. Helvig,

Thank you for sharing the article. The identification of EJ/disadvantaged communities (EJ Areas) under SB1000 is based on a number of indicators related to people's exposure to pollution in their built environment and quality of life using guidelines established by CalEPA. For the General Plan update process and for the purpose of meeting the requirements of SB1000, the City utilized the online screening tool provided by the Agency to develop the map of EJ Areas for Santa Ana.

Please note that Lead Risk is one of the determining factors but not the only factor. However, I anticipate that any lead related land use policies and practices to be implemented in the City as part of the implementation of the General Plan will be applicable Citywide and not just limited to EJ Areas.

You can get a complete background the City's EJ process and methodology at the links below:

[Environmental Justice Background and Analysis March 2021 - City of Santa Ana \(santa-ana.org\)](#)

[Environmental Justice - City of Santa Ana \(santa-ana.org\)](#)

The summary below are excerpts taken directly from the City's document:

SB 1000's definition of a disadvantaged community include areas that:

1) are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative public health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation; and

2) have concentrations of people with low income, high unemployment, low levels of homeownership, high rent burden, sensitive populations, or low levels of educational attainment.

The California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool, or CalEnviroScreen (CES), was developed by the Office of Environmental Health Hazards Assessment on behalf of CalEPA. CES is a method for identifying communities that are disproportionately burdened by pollution and/or have a disproportionately vulnerable population.

In accordance with SB 1000, jurisdictions can use this tool to help identify areas within their communities where environmental justice concerns may arise. Goals, policies, and programs can then be developed to address concerns. The CES tool measures 21 different indicators related to people's exposure to pollution and quality of life. CES uses a census tract as a proxy for community. The results for each census tract are then measured against every other census tract in California. The outcome is a scale that sorts census tracts from the least impacted to the most impacted --- as a ranked percentile --- for each indicator.

Best regards,



Minh Thai | Executive Director
City of Santa Ana | Planning & Building Agency
714.667.2706 | 20 Civic Center Plaza | Santa Ana, CA 92701

The mySantaAna mobile app puts the power of the Santa Ana city government in the palm of your hand! The free app allows residents to quickly and easily report issues to the City, access City services, and find news and events.

Download the App:



[Click here](#) to report an issue directly from the City's website

From: Dale Helvig <helvig_denny@msn.com>

Sent: Monday, July 18, 2022 12:18 PM

To: eComment <ecomment@santa-ana.org>; Sarmiento, Vicente <VSarmiento@santa-ana.org>; Phan, Thai <TPhan@santa-ana.org>; Penaloza, David <DPenaloza@santa-ana.org>; Lopez, Jessie <JessieLopez@santa-ana.org>; Bacerra, Phil <pbacerra@santa-ana.org>; Hernandez, Jose <jhernandez@santa-ana.org>; Mendoza, Nelida <nmendoza@santa-ana.org>

Cc: Ridge, Kristine <kridge@santa-ana.org>; Carvalho, Sonia R. <SCarvalho@santa-ana.org>; Mendoza, Steven <SMendoza@santa-ana.org>; Thai, Minh <mthai@santa-ana.org>; Zelaya Melicher, Fabiola <fzelayamelicher@santa-ana.org>

Subject: 2022-07-19 CC Meeting General Comment: Lead Contamination in Santa Ana

July 18, 2022

Mayor Sarmiento and Santa Ana City Councilmembers
 City of Santa Ana
 20 Civic Center Plaza, 8th Floor
 Santa Ana CA 92702

Subject: Lead Contamination in Santa Ana

In my letter to you last year, [2021-12-21 Letter to City Council - GP Comments on Open Space Element](#), I made a comment about environmental justice and the area to east of the I-5 freeway. You chose to ignore it. A July 10th article published in the Orange County Register addresses lead contamination in Orange County and Santa Ana; Minh Thai provided input. I ask you to look at this issue again.

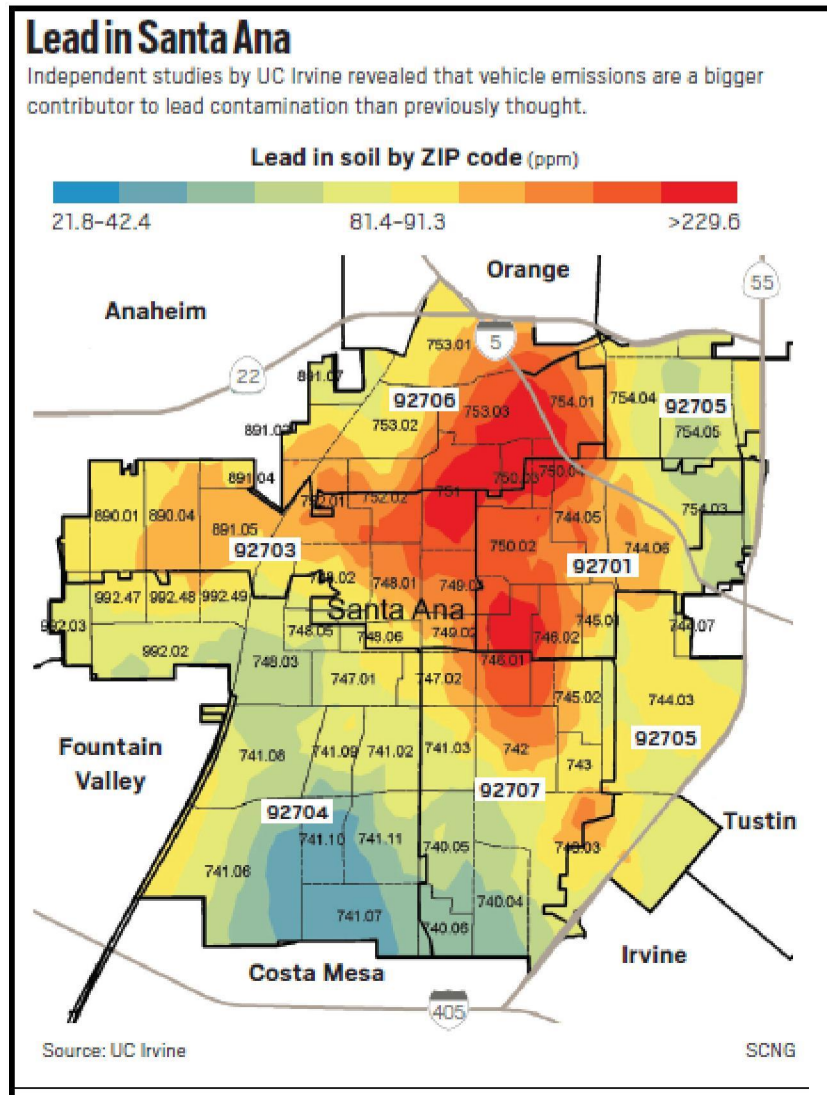
GENERAL COMMENTS

ITEM 14

1. Why were areas north of the I-5 Freeway excluded from the environmental justice consideration? Homes next to the freeway in the communities of Mabury Park, Grand Sunrise and Park Santiago inedited with black particulate and noise as much as other areas that are impacted by the freewa

The homes immediately adjacent to the I-5 freeway are impacted the most, however the City took the easy step of drawing a line at the I-5 freeway and ignored the homes east of the freeway. I was surprised by this considering one of the council members resides in this area.

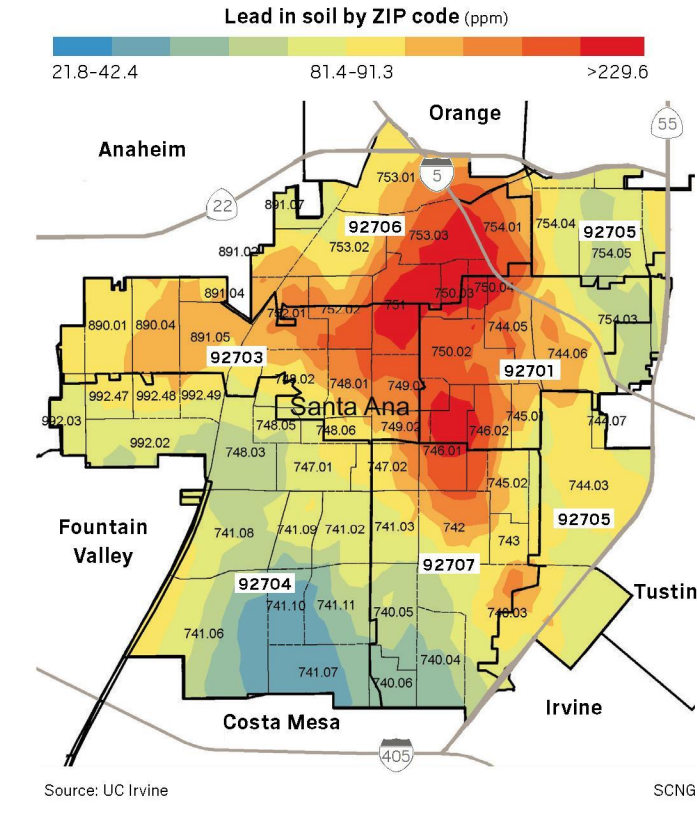
Please look at the attached article and reevaluate the City's position with open eyes.



Dale Helvig
Resident, Santa Ana

Lead in Santa Ana

Independent studies by UC Irvine revealed that vehicle emissions are a bigger contributor to lead contamination than previously thought.



SANTA ANA

Studies: Lead in city's soil from vehicle emissions

UCI researchers conclude gas used in 20th century 'predominant contributor'

By Kaitlyn Schallhorn

kschallhorn@scng.com

To examine lead contamination in Santa Ana, and how vehicle emissions have played a role, researchers went back in time.

It's a time-consuming effort, one that requires much detangling, but UC Irvine researchers painstakingly dug through archives of historical Santa Ana, putting together a look at its fledgling footprint in the early 1900s.

Meanwhile, UCI researchers and community volunteers collected soil samples around Santa Ana, which were sent to a lab for detailed testing of lead measurements.

Placed side by side, the two maps — one a historical outline of Santa Ana's roads, traffic patterns and houses and the other highlighting the current and highest



LEONARD ORTIZ — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The intersection of 17th and Main streets in Santa Ana is one of the areas researchers say contains high levels of lead in the soil. Two new studies found, through analyzing historical data, that leaded gasoline used in the 20th century is the biggest cause of existing lead in the soil in Santa Ana.

lead contamination levels — were nearly identical.

UCI researchers concluded, in a pair of recent studies, that historical leaded gasoline is a “pre-

dominant contributor to contemporary soil-lead contamination in Santa Ana.”

“The current approach used by

LEAD » PAGE 13

Lead

FROM PAGE 1

public health agencies to prevent lead poisoning, which is primarily focused on lead paint and consumer products, is overlooking leaded gasoline as a major source of environmental lead," said Juan Manuel Rubio, a historian and UCI Mellon Humanities Faculty Fellow. "Our results also indicate that legacy soil-lead may be present in many other urban environments that received similar flow of traffic to Santa Ana during the 20th century."

Concerns about lead in Santa Ana are not new. Much has been written about how Santa Ana's communities, particularly lower-income households, grapple with lead contamination and its impact on children. But this newer study sought to answer a different question: Where did all this lead come from in the first place?

"Lead soil contamination in Santa Ana is quite clearly anthropogenic," Shahir Masri, an environmental scientist at UCI and an author of the studies, told the Register.

In layman's terms, evidence suggests lead contamination is human-related.

Masri dug deep into the archives, digitizing old images and painting a layout of Santa Ana a century in the past.

Through the use of historical mapping, researchers found greater concentrations of lead in modern times around the historical downtown of Santa Ana which has "experienced higher traffic volumes over a longer period of time."

Additionally, maps from the Automobile Club of Southern California in the 1920s and 1930s showed the historical 101 Highway (now the 5 Freeway), the primary route between Los Angeles and



LEONARD ORTIZ — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Shahir Masri, an environmental scientist at UC Irvine, worked on a UCI study that showed high levels of lead-contaminated soil in Santa Ana being largely due to the use of leaded gasoline.

Leaded gas impacts

Lead in gasoline has existed since the early 1920s, and the EPA began to set reduction standards in 1973. Twenty years later, the Clean Air Act, the country's comprehensive environmental law, banned the sale of leaded fuel outright for on-road vehicles, according to the EPA.

The impacts of leaded gasoline have long worried environmentalists.

"There is no doubt in my mind that lead in the environment is still a major public health problem and that leaded gasoline is a major contributor to total lead exposure," Lee Thomas, the Environmental Protection Agency administrator during the Reagan administration, said in 1985.

"The elimination of lead from gas is one of the greatest environmental achievements of all time," Carol M. Browner, the EPA chief under the Clinton administration, said in 1996.

It was Algeria that was the last country to use leaded gasoline, phasing it out by mid-2021.

Lead exposure can lead to damage to the brain or nervous system as well as hearing and speech issues in children, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Although difficult to see, the effect can be long-term, the CDC warns.

Patricia Flores, the Orange County Environmental Justice project director who worked on the studies, noted the highest levels of lead were found in Santa Ana's lower-income neighborhoods, replete with immigrants and families.

"These are already the most marginalized communities in Orange County," Flores said, calling the contamination an "environmental crisis" that especially affects younger generations.

Although the studies only looked at Santa Ana,

Masri said comparable areas in Southern California could experience similar contamination issues near older roadways.

Minh Thai, the executive director for the Planning and Building Agency of Santa Ana, agreed: "This could likely be something that affects many communities throughout the state of California, especially ones that are next to the major corridors."

Santa Ana's approach

When the Santa Ana City Council approved the city budget for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, it included funding for a new "Environmental Justice Section" in the Planning and Building Agency.

Thai wants the position to be filled "right away." In addition to the new role, other professional technical positions and administrative support from the agency will be allocated to the environmental section.

"We're one of the first cities, if not the only city in the state of California, to really take the environmental justice issue seriously because it is a serious matter for our residents," Thai said in an interview. "We understand that these contamination issues don't just get addressed overnight."

Thai said it's a multi-pronged approach to addressing lead issues in the city, which includes engaging the community, identifying problem areas, educating on the health effects and prevention and abating lead contamination.

These are all approaches the new environmental justice leader, once chosen, will consider, Thai said.

But addressing, specifically, the impact of vehicle emissions on Santa Ana's soil may be a "longer-term issue."

"Our resources are limited, and we're evaluating how best to use our resources to help our community," Thai said. "Right now, the first step is addressing the real impacts being felt by our residents, and then the longer-term issue is to look at how we can start to address some of the source polluters that have created these problems."

One possible option for down the road — albeit, a costly and time-consuming one that, while he floated it, is not at the top of Thai's to-do list — is to pursue remediation or litigation with current or past polluters. Thai pointed to public agencies that build and support roads, car manufacturers and petroleum producers, for example.

"There are a variety of responsible parties. The question is then who, if not all, can be held accountable," Thai said. "That's really a very expensive and complicated process, so by no means I'm advocating we take that route."

The two UCI studies can be found in the Environmental Research and Toxics journals.

July 5, 2022

Dear Mayor and City Council of Santa Ana and Orange County Supervisors and other interested parties:

On June 30, 2022, The City Council of Santa Ana posted a statement on the city website:

“The City of Santa Ana recently learned that one of its officials and the official’s family were threatened with physical violence. The City Council wants to make it absolutely clear that it will not tolerate threats against public officials and employees of the City of Santa Ana. The City will work in partnership with the Orange County District Attorney and other state and federal authorities to ensure that any threats which violate criminal law are fully investigated and prosecuted....”

This is noble and right. *Will you make the same efforts for citizens of Santa Ana?*

The nightmare of last night, July 4, 2022 from 7 PM to AFTER 1AM must never be allowed to happen again. I am referring to the out-of-control illegal fireworks raging across our city and the surrounding areas. I have lived here for over six years, and this is getting worse and worse. And may I add that in Santa Ana, the explosions are year-around.

I live near the corner of Macarthur and Main on the top floor of the Pinnacle apts. I have an almost 360 view of the surrounding cities. A few years ago, it was fun to watch a few shows in the distance. Now on July 4, horrible explosions are happening nearer and nearer to my residence.

My heart was saddened by my call to dispatchers who reported trying to keep up with the “hundreds of phone calls” they received the night of July 4. I suffered in absolute terror at the bombs going off all around me for hours and hours. I made my calls, there was nothing anyone could do. If “hundreds” of calls came in last night reporting this, I am not the only one who has had enough and I am guessing thousands more people like me tried to get through on the lines. I heard a helicopter around 9 or 10PM. I suspect they were not able to do anything at this point. The last time I called dispatch, she said they were dealing with emergencies.

I called the Fireworks line a few days before July 4 and was told that more officers were to be put on from July 1-5. Then I saw on the website fireworks are allowed during those days. Why should any fireworks be allowed on any day other than July 4?

In December, 2021, a proposal was introduced by some council members in response to citizens requests to ban all fireworks in Santa Ana. I learned the TNT Fireworks company tugged on the heartstrings of the board, and did not make any changes to policy. Their reasoning was funding for the band and athletics departments. Hogwash. The Santa Ana Unified School District budget is over \$700,000,000 with 85% going to salaries and benefits!

In that Dec. 2021 proposal (www.newssanta.org/is-it-time-to-ban-all-fireworks-in-santa-ana), the proponents and opponents argued about smoke, trash, culture, non-profit revenues. According to this article, **the number of total fireworks seized in Santa Ana alone increased from 1,725 in 2017 to 59,493 in 2021!** This is unacceptable.

However, there is much, much deeper damage done on these fireworks nights. Has anyone considered the following:

Children, animals, veterans, and others with PTSD have NO ESCAPE during this war-like environment on July 1-4. Do you realize that we are trapped in our homes? We suffer through terror and fear inside our homes, and we stay for fear of our homes being burnt to the ground.

There are **many** horses in Orange County and the surrounding cities. Understand that these are prey animals with highly developed hearing and sense of smell. Their protection from threat is to RUN AWAY. Where are they kept? In a stall or paddock, locked in. The terror these wonderful creatures are suffering is immeasurable. **Trapped. Terrorized. Smelling fire, smoke, hearing explosions.** The OC Fair Eq. Center is VERY NEAR all these explosions. I can only imagine what they go through on July 4.

Our animals in our homes suffer the same terror. They shake, bark, cry. The loud explosions outside my door last night, had my poor dog barking and barking to try and “protect” us, or out of sheer terror. She does not run and hide. Both our hearts were pounding for hours.

If you were in town, you experienced the ever-increasing crescendo of explosions. They start around 5 PM, they get louder, more frequent and brazen as the night wears on, until sometime around 10-11 PM there are immeasurable, constant explosions all around us that we cannot hear, our hearts are pounding, our dog is barking and crying, and we are trapped in our residence to “ride out this storm.” This is no different than a war zone attack. This truly is a nightmare that must end.

How many people got up at 5 or 6 AM to go to work this morning? Did they get rest? Did their children have their needs met by frazzled parents? Were those people on the roads able to focus on their drive to work or at their job today? The implications of this branch into many areas.

It is clear that this situation IS OUT OF CONTROL in Santa Ana, and probably the surrounding communities, as well. Let me be clear: I do NOT place any blame on law enforcement for this problem. We love our SAPD and OC Sheriff.

The policy for fireworks in Santa Ana (and Orange County in general) must change. We must now take a proactive stance beyond a “illegal fireworks hotline” and ban all fireworks for good. We must revisit the Dec. 21 agenda item. Yes, there will be those who defy these laws. Yes, people will cry and complain about their charity revenues. But to be honest, the City of Santa Ana has not been strong enough to prevent this problem from spiraling out of control.

There may have been ways to deal with this quickly and with much public outreach communicating zero tolerance and severe consequences. As examples: I recently witnessed the police parked on MacArthur with lights on a residence, using their loudspeaker to get someone to come out of an apartment. I have also heard them on occasion overhead announcing missing persons or suspects on the run. I heard NO such warnings last night. This could have been a deterrent very early on in the day? More community outreach in the weeks before July 4 may have helped. I thought last night about water buckets on helicopters. Funny, but feasible: first a warning, then splash..

There was a barrage of explosive in-the-air fireworks one street behind the apts. across Main St. from us – and another somewhere around the Marke apts across Macarthur. We were surrounded. It would have been easy to douse them in the act after fair warning. Fire danger? I shudder to think of the damage...

However, the reality is that the city and county governments and law enforcement agencies have been unable to effectively control this worsening problem. The stress on resources appears to be overwhelming. Therefore, the feasible solution is now to prohibit all fireworks, except public displays to have some clear prevention and mitigating policies in place. This problem will not disappear overnight. But Santa Ana and the entirety of OC government can show unity and proactively take a strong stand in the interest and protection of we, the citizens of these areas.

Sincerely,

Lori Corrente

714-486-2029

31 E. Macarthur Crescent, B505, Santa Ana, CA. 92707

CC:

Santa Ana City Council

OC Board of Supervisors

Phil Bacerra, Santa Ana Ward 4

OC Sheriff Don Barnes

Orange County Register

Epoch Times, OC section

Los Angeles Times

Officials warn of particulate pollution from fireworks

[Air, from B1]
appear quite as bad as in 2020 or 2021, said Scott Epstein, air quality assessment program supervisor at the AQMD. The effect of fireworks on air quality is typically a function of the intensity or number of fireworks, as well as the weather on July 5, he said.

"It looks a little bit cleaner than last year, but I hesitate to use the word 'clean,' because it's not clean," Epstein said. He said wildfires are the only other events that can compromise air quality as fireworks do.

"You need a big wildfire to get to those levels," Epstein said.

He said it's hard to fully compare this year's air quality with those of prior holidays until the end of Tuesday.

Areas outside the city of Los Angeles — from Thousand Oaks to El Monte and Riverside — had unhealthy air quality levels Tuesday morning, according to data from the AQMD. Parts of downtown L.A. were still considered unhealthy for sensitive groups Tuesday afternoon, but most of South



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

AN LAPD bomb squad officer destroys illegal fireworks that were dropped off during an anonymous buyback program in Mission Hills last week.

L.A. had recovered from the fireworks pollution as of 10 a.m.

Epstein said that as of Tuesday morning, west-to-east winds had moved most pollutants inland into the San Fernando and San Gabriel valleys and the In-

land Empire. He expected the worst of the pollution should be gone by Wednesday, when the agency's advisory expires.

"We are expecting a fairly normal day tomorrow, but normal doesn't mean clean this time of year," Epstein

said. Starting then — just after most fireworks shows — air quality metrics worsened, dropping to "unhealthy for sensitive groups," and by 10 p.m., the measurement dropped two index levels into "very unhealthy."

That level remained for the next three hours, improving to unhealthy for most of Tuesday morning, according to the Air Quality Index.

According to the index, during the same time frame, north Orange County saw a similar shift, moving from good or moderate air quality before 10 p.m. to unhealthy or very unhealthy afterward. But by 4 a.m. Tuesday, that area's air quality had recovered back to moderate, data show.

The west San Gabriel Valley region followed a similar trend during the evening's fireworks, moving from relatively good air quality measurements Monday evening into unhealthy or very unhealthy by late Monday and into Tuesday.

But some areas not far from the coast, such as Culver City, didn't record any drastic changes in air qual-

ity, remaining at healthy levels throughout Monday evening and into Tuesday. Others more to the south, including Long Beach and Hermosa Beach, recovered quickly from fireworks, though those areas still recorded unhealthy levels of pollution soon after 9 p.m. By Tuesday morning, most of the coast and southern L.A. were back to healthy or moderate air quality levels.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District warned residents that breathing in fine particulate matter can lead to "cardiovascular and respiratory health effects," such as coughing, difficulty breathing, decreased lung function or even heart attacks.

"It's pretty hard to tell when your air is polluted," Epstein said. "It's a little different with wildfires because you can smell the wood smoke.... So it's really important that people stay informed of that and check their air quality."

The AQMD recommends people stay indoors when air quality is poor, close windows and run air conditioning or air purifiers.



RAUL ROA Los Angeles Times

FIREWORKS and downtown L.A. are seen from Whittier in this 21-second exposure. Fireworks emit high levels of particulate matter and metal air pollutants.

Fallout from the fireworks: Dirty, unhealthy air lingers

Officials warn of
particulate pollution
in much of Southland
after Fourth of July.

By GRACE TOOHEY

Air quality dropped considerably after hundreds of Fourth of July firework shows and smaller sets lighted up skies across the Los Angeles region Monday and remained at unhealthy levels into Tuesday morning for many areas.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District issued a particulate advisory through Tuesday for much of Southern California, from Los Angeles to the Coachella Valley, because of fireworks, which emit high levels of particulate matter and metal air pollutants.

"Fine particulate matter levels on July 4 and July 5 are typically among the worst days of the year in the South Coast Air Basin," the advisory said. "The smoke and combustion products from fireworks add to the fine particles already present in the

basin that are primarily caused by motor vehicles, as well as fugitive dust and industrial emissions."

The advisory warned that using personal or backyard fireworks "may lead to localized fine particulate matter concentrations above observed regional levels."

Fireworks on the previous two Fourths of July set record-high air pollution levels for the holiday.

As of Tuesday afternoon, the aftermath from this year's fireworks didn't yet

[See Air, B5]