

Environmental Health Coalition

COALICION de SALUD AMBIENTAL

401 Mile of Cars Way, Suite 310 ♦ National City, CA 91950 ♦ (619) 474-0220 ♦ FAX: (619) 474-1210
ehc@environmentalhealth.org ♦ www.environmentalhealth.org

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Tony LoPresti (English, Spanish)

c) 831.246.3780

w) 619.474.0220 x126

Residents Demand a Cleaner Port

Port to vote on trucks program and \$3 million for Clean Air Plan

(February 28, 2008) – San Diego, CA. The Barrio Logan and National City communities, at increased risk for asthma, cancer and higher death rates because of their proximity to Port terminals, anxiously await the March 4 review by the San Diego Board of Port Commissioners of a draft program that could reduce emissions from trucks serving the terminals by more than 85%.

In February, the Port reviewed the Clean Air Plan and agreed to develop programs to achieve emission reductions. However, Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) and residents were angered by the Port's reluctance to go beyond voluntary programs.

“We want the ports cleaner. We have the right to breathe air without toxics,” said Irma Tranquilino, an EHC leader residing in National City. Besides concerned residents, representatives from health, labor, and community organizations will attend the meeting in which the program is reviewed.

The Port will also vote on a resolution which would commit several million dollars in funding for upgrades to trucks and for construction of “cold-ironing” infrastructure at the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal (TAMT) in Barrio Logan. Cold-ironing allows ships to plug in and draw their energy from the local electricity grid instead of running diesel engines which pollute while at berth. Over 500 tons of air toxics are released into the air each year by ships docked at TAMT, according to the Port's statistics.

In October 2006, EHC requested the San Diego Port Commissioners to develop a Clean Ports Plan and continues to lead the effort to ensure adoption of an enforceable plan.

“The Port plays an important role in the region, but they are placing an unnecessary burden on our region's air quality and health. They need to take charge of this problem before it spirals out of control,” said Tony LoPresti, Policy Advocate for EHC.

###