



**COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE BULLETIN**  
April 2011

***Rule 4311 FLARES – Flare Minimization Plans, Unplanned Flaring Events and Reportable Flaring Events***

Rule 4311 is intended to limit the emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOC), oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), and sulfur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>) from the operation of flares at any stationary source with the potential to emit more than 10 tons of VOC or NO<sub>x</sub> per year with the exception of municipal solid waste landfills, which are exempt from this rule.

A **Flare Minimization Plan** (FMP) was required by July 1, 2010, for a petroleum refinery flare or any flare that has a flaring capacity equal or greater than 5.0 MMBtu per hour.

The next compliance deadline of July 1, 2011, is nearing and it requires the following for flares subject to a FMP:

- Flaring, except in emergencies, is prohibited unless it is consistent with an approved FMP
- Petroleum refineries shall minimize SO<sub>x</sub> flare emissions to less than 1.50 tons per million barrels of crude processing capacity, calculated as an average over one calendar year
- The vent gas flow to the flare shall be monitored with a flow measuring device
- Flares with flaring capacities equal to or greater than 50 MMBtu per hour shall begin Vent Gas Composition monitoring, Pilot and Purge Gas monitoring, Water Seal monitoring (if applicable), General monitoring, and Video monitoring (if applicable)
- **Unplanned Flaring Events** shall be reported to the District within 24 hours of discovery
- **Reportable Flaring Events** shall be recorded

Beginning July 1, 2012:

- The operator of a flare subject to a FMP shall submit an annual report to the District that summarizes all **Reportable Flaring Events** from the previous 12 months. The first report shall be due by July 31, 2012, and by July 31 of each year thereafter
- A Reportable Flaring Event occurs when more than 500,000 standard cubic feet of vent gas is flared per calendar day, or when sulfur oxide emissions are greater than 500 pounds per calendar day
- The operator of a flare subject to the monitoring requirements listed in the previous section shall submit an annual monitoring report to the District covering the previous 12 months. The first report shall be due by July 31, 2012, and by July 31 of each year thereafter

Rule 4311 may affect your operation in ways not mentioned in this Bulletin as there may be further exemptions and requirements. You may gain additional information by reading the full text of the rule at: <http://www.valleyair.org/rules/currentrules/r4311.pdf> or by calling the District's SBA at the numbers listed below:

**Modesto: 209-557-6446    Fresno: 559-230-5888    Bakersfield: 661-392-5665**

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4800 Enterprise Way  
Modesto, CA 95356-8718  
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1990 East Gettysburg Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93726-0244  
(559) 230-6000 ♦ FAX (559) 230-6062

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(661) 392-5500 ♦ FAX (661) 392-5585