

Firm fined \$230,000 for violating air rules

By James Burger, staff writer

Bakersfield Californian, Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2013

KS Industries, a Bakersfield-based construction and engineering firm, has been hit with a sizable fine for failing to upgrade the pollution controls on its vehicle fleet.

California Air Resources Board levied a \$230,250 fine on the local company, a press release stated, "for failing to update its diesel trucks to clean up harmful emissions as required by state anti-pollution laws."

According to the Air Resources Board, the company was supposed to update diesel particulate filters on 1996 to 1999 model-year trucks by Jan. 1, 2012, and 2000 through 2004 model-year trucks by Jan. 1, 2013.

KS Industries failed to meet those deadlines, CARB officials reported in the release.

A call to KS Industries was not returned Monday.

According to the press release from CARB, \$172,688 of the fine will be used to fund "air pollution research" and the other \$57,562 will fund a school bus retrofit program.

KS Industries will also, according to the release, be required to have its fleets meet state standards by Nov. 15, send staff to attend education courses, require drivers to comply with state rules on idling and make sure trucks also comply with federal emissions standards.

While the fine sounds steep, KS could have fared a lot worse.

The potential fine was \$1,000 per day of the violation per vehicle, and 49 vehicles were involved here, according to CARB spokeswoman Melanie Turner. But the fine is what it is because KS is a first-time offender and cooperated with the investigation, she said.

The state discovered the violations during an audit of the company, Turner said.

[Letter to the Bakersfield Californian, Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2013:](#)

The truth about fracking anything but hysterical

In her Oct. 20 column, Lois Henry offers refreshing and welcome objectivity as a contrast to the rising emotion around hydraulic fracturing ("Looking for the truth on fracking makes for compelling film").

In several meetings I have attended, and in conversations with concerned family and friends on this topic, there remains a seemingly unshakeable foundation of fear exacerbated by the lack or rejection of data from current and historical oilfield activities and the regulations/regulators that govern them.

Sensational films such as "GasLand" have proven effective in energizing opposition to hydraulic fracturing with viewers happy to repeat proven inaccuracies as if they are established fact. Interestingly, five pages further into the Oct. 20 Local section was a story from The Associated Press on the recent realization that hydraulic fracturing has been conducted offshore California for some time, inferring that this had been hidden from public view for some nefarious purpose ("State finds more instances of offshore fracking").

While dedicating the bulk of the column to possible future environmental impacts and the organizations that make these claims, Henry cannot help but report that there is no evidence of any compromises in these wells resulting in leaks or contamination, and that, according to its charter, the Long Beach Water Department has been diligently monitoring this project annually, also finding no impacts.

I applaud Henry and The Californian for seeking the truth rather than riding the tidal wave of misinformation on hydraulic fracturing.

Bill Bartling, Bakersfield