

# Eleven Disadvantaged Los Angeles Communities Endure Heaviest Use of Oil-drilling Chemicals. Analysis

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*Eleven disadvantaged neighborhoods and communities endure the heaviest use of toxic oil-drilling chemicals in Los Angeles County, according to South Coast Air Quality Management District data analyzed by the Center for Biological Diversity.*

The 15 zip codes in which oil companies used the most chemicals known to cause serious health problems (“air toxics”) include several areas of Long Beach, South L.A. County and the Westside. In one Long Beach zip code, the oil industry has used almost 50 million pounds of air toxics since 2013.

Eleven of the 15 zip codes with the heaviest air toxics use contain neighborhoods like Wilmington that are considered “disadvantaged” by the California Environmental Protection Agency. The agency’s CalEnviroScreen index weighs the percentage of residents who are people of color, poverty levels, asthma rates and other measures of pollution burden and vulnerability.

“Oil companies are using massive amounts of chemicals that make people sick in communities already suffering high rates of asthma and other health problems,” said John Fleming, a Center staff scientist who conducted the analysis. “State regulators give out drilling permits like they’re candy, and here in Los Angeles we see how it hurts people of color and vulnerable residents the most.”

An [earlier analysis](#) of air district data revealed that oil companies have used more than 98 million pounds of chemicals known to cause serious health problems in L.A. County since 2013. These air toxics were often used dangerously close to homes, hospitals and schools.

Over 80 percent of air toxics usage involved just 12 chemicals, including carcinogens like crystalline silica and formaldehyde. Hydrochloric acid, one of the most frequently used air toxics, is a corrosive gas that can cause suffocation or irreversible lung damage at high concentrations.

Today’s analysis underscores the disproportionate harms of California’s oil extraction on vulnerable communities. Gov. Jerry Brown faces growing pressure to confront California’s oil

and gas production prior to hosting the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco this week.

On April 11 a diverse array of environmental, public-health, faith, labor and community groups launched the [Brown’s Last Chance](#) campaign to demand that he halt new oil and gas extraction and devise a just transition plan to phase it out entirely. To date more than 800 organizations have signed on.

“Fossil fuel dependence is a disease, and environmental injustice is one of its nastiest symptoms,” Fleming said. “That’s why Governor Brown should tackle the root of this problem by planning an end to California’s incredibly dirty oil extraction.”

Los Angeles County zip codes where air toxic usage was highest between June 4, 2013 and Feb. 28, 2017

Rank	Zip Code	Community(ies)	Total amount of air toxics used by mass (lbs.)	CalEnviroScreen Score Percentile*
1	90802	Long Beach	48,271,904	80.2
2	90056	Ladera Heights	12,242,946	58.9
3	90744	Wilmington	5,513,548	94.3
4	90813	Long Beach	3,552,481	96.1
5	90670	Santa Fe Springs	3,501,947	93
6	90755	Signal Hill	3,440,721	78.6
7	90640	Montebello	1,225,214	86.5
8	90048	West Hollywood	1,210,425	54.8
9	90018	Jefferson Park, Leimert Park	377,147	91.1
10	90710	Harbor City	303,994	75.8
11	90019	Mid-City, Arlington Heights	183,180	84.3
12	90804	East Long Beach	162,277	84.5
13	90815	Long Beach	143,194	34
14	90064	Cheviot Hills, Rancho Park	137,151	38
15	90745	Carson	125,245	87.4

\*Communities with CalEnviroScreen scores in the top 25th percentile are designated "disadvantaged communities" by the California Environmental Protection Agency.

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