

PRESS ADVISORY FOR  
July 30, 2007

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## **Refineries Attempt to Avoid Study of Mercury**

Sacramento, CA – During a hearing tomorrow afternoon, the State Water Resources Control Board will consider a plea from local oil refineries to avoid disclosing how much mercury they release into the environment. The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board issued the order for the study on May 2007, after years of advocacy efforts by Baykeeper to hold the refineries accountable. The oil refineries are now seeking a stay and rescission of that order.

At tomorrow's hearing, Baykeeper and NRDC, represented by the Law Firm of Kecker & Van Nest LLP, will argue why the public and the environment are harmed by the oil refineries' delay and why the refineries must account for and reduce the amount of mercury they release into the Bay Area's environment every year.

The Board recently passed a mercury clean-up plan for San Francisco Bay that requires all sources of mercury – including oil refineries – to reduce their mercury pollution to the Bay. New information has shown that the Bay Area's five refineries could be depositing approximately 3,700 pounds of mercury into the local environment every year. Mercury is a known neurological and developmental toxin that is especially harmful to fetuses and young children and is responsible for public warnings to limit eating fish from the Bay.

**What:** Hearing to consider a stay on an order to determine how much mercury local oil refineries release into the Bay Area environment.

**Start Time:** Tuesday, July 31, 2007 at 1:00 p.m.

**Estimated End Time:** 4:00 p.m.

*Sejal Choksi, Program Director of San Francisco Baykeeper, will be available for comment by cell phone immediately after the hearing.*

**Where:** Cal/EPA Building  
1001 I Street  
Sierra Hearing Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Online Access:** The hearing will be webcast online at <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/broadcast/>

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Founded in 1989, Baykeeper is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the water quality of the San Francisco Bay for the benefit of the fish, wildlife and human communities who depend on it. Baykeeper uses advocacy, science and the courts to hold polluters accountable and ensure that our clean water laws are enforced.