



MBARD, Ethics & Managing the News

February 6, 2025

Moss Landing, Calif.

The Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO) of Monterey Bay Air Resources District, Richard Stedman, appeared before the Monterey County Board of Supervisors at the emergency meeting held on Tuesday, January 21, 2025.

Richard Stedman, in his official capacity, would state to the board at that emergency meeting, “We did have some setbacks, however, particularly with the news media who were using some of our data and some of the EPA’s regular smoke data, and improperly and erroneously reporting the air quality throughout the Monterey Bay region was harmful or unhealthy. We did talk to the news media about this, and they said they would retract, but they continued attributing moderate air quality conditions around the Monterey Bay to the Vistra fire which was not appropriate.”

Less than a week later January 27, 2025, Dr. Aiello and his team of scientists from San José State University’s Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML) would release a statement informing the public that soil testing results “have detected unusually high concentrations of heavy-metal nanoparticles in marsh soils at Elkhorn Slough Reserve following the recent fire at the nearby Vistra Power Plant’s lithium-ion battery storage facility.” The statement from MLML would also clarify “the field surveys, conducted within a radius of approximately two miles from the power plant, measured a dramatic increase in marsh soil surface concentration (hundreds to thousand-fold) of the three heavy metals Nickel, Manganese and Cobalt.”

It is concerning that Richard Stedman in his official government capacity would deliberately try to influence the news media into retracting reports on air quality conditions as being attributed to the Vistra fire. In light of Dr. Aiello and his team’s findings of heavy-metal nanoparticles within a two-mile radius, the news media were correct in attributing the poor air quality to the Vistra fire in Moss Landing, Calif.

The heavy-metal nanoparticles detected within a radius of 2 miles from the Moss Landing Power Plant were from the Vistra fire and they were carried there by the heavy-metal laden smoke, the very smoke that Richard Stedman, the APCO of MBARD, insisted that reporting it as “harmful or unhealthy” was improper and caused a “setback” for MBARD. This type of conduct only further erodes public trust and jeopardizes public safety and health.

1-21-2025 Monterey County BoS Emergency Meeting Vistra Fire Moss Landing: Richard Stedman of MBARD

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQuK9Oilufc>