

Animal Health Update: Foul odor, low levels of hydrogen sulfide in Dominguez Channel in City of Carson

10.26.2021

Dear Veterinary Colleagues,

In early October, a strong foul odor became detectable by residents along the Dominguez Channel. On site investigation and air assessments by multiple government agencies, including the LA County Department of Public Health. The odor has been associated with **hydrogen sulfide**, likely emanating from decomposing vegetation along a 1 mile section of the channel in Carson. Water flow through the channel has decreased because of the drought, and this may be the underlying cause. The multiple agencies are working on a solution to the problem.

As of today, October 26, the odor and the measurable levels of hydrogen sulfide have decreased - most likely because of the because of the rain yesterday. However we would still like veterinarians to stay informed about this situation.

The low levels of hydrogen sulfide in the area recently may cause short-term symptoms, but should not cause long-term health effects. The most common symptoms in people are headaches, nausea, or eye, nose, and throat irritation. The effect on pets is similar. Pets exposed to it may have lethargy, loss of appetite, discharge from the eyes or nose, and potentially difficulty breathing. Pets with underlying conditions like asthma may be more affected. Birds may be more affected than dogs and cats. Treatment consists of reducing or eliminating exposure, and potentially supportive care to address symptoms.

It is recommended that people and pets in the affected areas **stay indoors** to reduce exposure when a strong odor is detectable in the area. Centralized heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and portable air filters can help improve indoor air quality, especially when they contain High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) or MERV-rated filters with activated charcoal (carbon).

Please read and share the attached educational materials with pet owners and the wider community. Please also visit the webpage created to share information about the incident:

<https://lacounty.gov/emergency/dominguez-channel/>

[Updated Community Notice for Odors in the City of Carson 10.12.21 v2.pdf](#)

[Updated SPANISH Community Notice for Odors in the City of Carson 10.12.21 v2.pdf](#)

Sincerely,

Karen

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