

# Why Benicia needs an ISO

NOVEMBER 7, 2017 *By Ralph Dennis* <http://beniciaheraldonline.com/letters-iso-cannabis-and-more/>

On Nov. 14, we all have a chance to learn more about the need for an Industrial Safety Ordinance (ISO) for Benicia. At 7 p.m. there will be a panel discussion at the Benicia Library with experts from Cal/OSHA, Cal/EPA, and Contra Costa County ISO officials on why and how Benicia can better protect our community with an ISO. Currently, Benicia is the only refinery town in the Bay Area not protected by an ISO. Contra Costa County's ISO governs three refineries. The city of Richmond has an ordinance that mirrors that of Contra Costa County and contracts with the county for enforcement activities.

An ISO would require Valero to produce a risk management plan and be subject to periodic audits and reports. The city of Benicia would be included in the discussions and reports produced through an ISO. After the near-catastrophic May 5 Valero Refinery emergency shutdown and major flaring incident, it is apparent that Benicia is at risk without an ISO. If an ISO had been in place when the May 5 incident occurred, the city of Benicia would have received a report within 72 hours of the event, not months later, if at all. This is just one example of how an ISO could provide Benicia and its community more input and access. An ISO in Benicia could also help establish community-wide air quality monitoring for our city and access to real-time data. I encourage everyone to attend the Nov. 14 Town Hall and panel discussion at the Benicia Library at 7 p.m. to hear from county and state officials about an ISO, how it is implemented and how the community and city of Benicia would be better protected with an ISO in place.

*Ralph E. Dennis,  
Benicia*