

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
INCIDENT REPORT

Incident ID: 145543

**Incident Description**

**Incident Type:** Complaint, Facility Air Release  
**Incident Date:** 12/23/2012  
19:00:00  
**Parish:** St. Bernard  
**Municipality:** Meraux  
**Location:** Valero - E. St. Bernard Hwy. - Meraux  
**Lat/Lon:**  
**Basin/Segment:**  
**Substance(s):**  
**Media Impacted:**  
**Incident Desc:** c12-21027 Extremely loud noise emitting from Valero St. Bernard facility.

**Incident Status**

**Lead Investigator:** Lindsay Maloan  
**Incident Region:** Southeast  
**Incident Status:** Closed  
**Followup Status:** Closed  
**As Of:** 2/25/2013 00:00:00

**Incident Reporter 1**

**Received By:** Spo Contact  
**Received Date:** 12/26/2012 08:00:00  
**Dispatch #:** c12-21027  
**Reported By:** Suzanne Kneale  
**Phone:** 504-416-6848 (Home phone number)  
**Reporter Title:**  
**Organization:**  
**Address:**  
  
**Municipality:**  
**State:** LA  
**Zip Code:**  
**Comments:**

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
INCIDENT REPORT**

Incident ID: 145543

**Incident Source 1**

**Source Name:** Valero Refining - Meraux LLC - Meraux Refinery  
**Address:** 2500 E St Bernard Hwy

**Municipality:** Meraux  
**State:** LA  
**Phone:** 5042714141 (Work phone number)  
**Parish:** St. Bernard  
**AI #:** 1238  
**Related Permits:**

**Comments:** On 12/22-23/2012, LDEQ received citizen complaints regarding noise and flaring from the Valero Meraux refinery. I contacted a facility representative via email requesting further information. According to Valero, a brief 15 minute flaring episode occurred at the north flare, but no permit limits or RQs were exceeded. According to the representative, he could not verify the source of the noise, but suspected a siren from a dock or marine vessel.

LDEQ has determined that noise ordinances are regulated by local governments.

In industrial plants, flare stacks are primarily used as a safety measure for burning off flammable gas released by pressure relief valves during unplanned over-pressuring of plant equipment. Whenever industrial plant equipment items are over-pressured, the pressure relief valves serve as essential safety devices on the equipment, thereby sending excess material to flare. These pressure relief valves are required by industrial design codes and by law. A flare does not necessarily indicate an emergency situation or exceedance.

Facility records of CEMS data did not indicate an exceedance or permit limit during the specified time period.

Frequent surveillance of the area will continue.

## Lindsay Maloan

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**From:** Stubbe, Justin [Justin.Stubbe@valero.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 04, 2013 4:46 PM  
**To:** Lindsay Maloan  
**Cc:** Browning, Randall  
**Subject:** RE: [Incident#1221027] SERO c12-21027 T 145543 Kneale v ValeroSt.Bernard 12-23-12

Good Afternoon Ms. Maloan,

There were no process upsets during the afternoon or evening of December 23, 2012. We have no records of any sirens sounding off from within the plant. The complainant may have heard a siren from another dock or marine vessel.

Between 3:00 PM and 8:00 PM, the wind direction was from the south and south-southwest.

Please email or call if you have further questions. Thanks.

Justin Stubbe  
Environmental Manager  
Valero Refining-Meraux L.L.C  
(504) 278-5202

---

**From:** Lindsay Maloan [mailto:Lindsay.Maloan@la.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 27, 2012 2:06 PM  
**To:** Stubbe, Justin  
**Subject:** FW: [Incident#1221027] SERO c12-21027 T 145543 Kneale v ValeroSt.Bernard 12-23-12

Mr. Stubbe,

Another complaint, somewhat related to the previous.

Thanks again,

LMM

---

**From:** Brian Tusa  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 27, 2012 2:04 PM  
**To:** Lindsay Maloan  
**Cc:** Dionne Magness; Holly Herrmann; Brian Tusa  
**Subject:** FW: [Incident#1221027] SERO c12-21027 T 145543 Kneale v ValeroSt.Bernard 12-23-12

Assigned to you....related to 145541..

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**From:** SPOC [mailto:spoc.otrs@la.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 27, 2012 2:01 PM  
**To:** \_DEQ-SEROAdmin  
**Subject:** [Incident#1221027] SERO c12-21027 T 145543 Kneale v ValeroSt.Bernard 12-23-12

SPOC  
Cindy Lafosse

## Lindsay Maloan

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**From:** Brian Tusa  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 27, 2012 1:53 PM  
**To:** Lindsay Maloan  
**Cc:** Dionne Magness; Holly Herrmann; Brian Tusa  
**Subject:** FW: [Incident#1221016] SERO c12-21016 T 145541 Kneale v Valero  
**Attachments:** SERO c12-21016 T 145541 Kneale v Valero.txt

Assigned to you.

---

**From:** SPOC [mailto:s poc.otrs@la.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 27, 2012 1:36 PM  
**To:** \_DEQ-SEROAdmin  
**Subject:** [Incident#1221016] SERO c12-21016 T 145541 Kneale v Valero

SPOC  
Cindy Lafosse

--  
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality  
Single Point Of Contact  
Phone: (225) 219-3640  
Fax: (225) 219-4044  
--

--- Forwarded message from "webmasterdeq@la.gov" <webmasterdeq@la.gov> ---

From: "webmasterdeq@la.gov" <webmasterdeq@la.gov>  
To: SPOC <SinglePointof.Contact@LA.GOV>  
Cc: Jason Bonds <Jason.Bonds@LA.GOV>  
Subject: Complaint: Incident Report - AK5H 2523  
Date: 2012-12-22 22:31:03

<b>Caller Information</b>	
Date/Time Reported: 12/22/2012 10:29:44 PM	
Type of Incident: Complaint	
First Name:	Suzanne
Last Name:	Kneale
Phone #:	504-416-6848
Mailing Address:	
City:	
State:	
Zip:	
Email:	SJRKneale@aol.com
I request a follow-up on inspector findings:	
<b>Site Information</b>	
Alleged Violator: Valero St Bernard Parish	

Physical Location/Address:

East St Bernard Hwy

City: Meraux

State: LA

Zip: 70043

Date of Discharge: 12/22/2012 Time Noticed: Began: around 430pm Ended: ongoing Parish: (of occurrence) St Bernard Media

Affected: YES, Air If water, name of nearest water body: Description of Complaint Description of complaint:

Valero St Bernard Parish refinery -- 12/22/2012 around 10pm very large flare at the dock terminal.....also, since around 430pm a very high pitched constant tone (not quite a whistle, but a constant tone) emanating from Valero and audible in house, ongoing still at 1030pm, hurting ears and very disturbing in household..... Directions for Reaching the Site

--- End forwarded message ---

**Dionne Magness**

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**From:** Brian Tusa  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 27, 2012 1:53 PM  
**To:** Lindsay Maloan  
**Cc:** Dionne Magness; Holly Herrmann; Brian Tusa  
**Subject:** FW: [Incident#1221016] SERO c12-21016 T 145541 Kneale v Valero  
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**Sent:** Thursday, December 27, 2012 1:36 PM  
**To:** \_DEQ-SEROAdmin  
**Subject:** [Incident#1221016] SERO c12-21016 T 145541 Kneale v Valero

SPOC  
Cindy Lafosse

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--- Forwarded message from "webmasterdeq@la.gov" <webmasterdeq@la.gov> ---

From: "webmasterdeq@la.gov" <webmasterdeq@la.gov>  
To: SPOC <SinglePointof.Contact@LA.GOV>  
Cc: Jason Bonds <Jason.Bonds@LA.GOV>  
Subject: Complaint: Incident Report - AK5H 2523  
Date: 2012-12-22 22:31:03

<b>Caller Information</b>	
Date/Time Reported: 12/22/2012 10:29:44 PM	
Type of Incident: Complaint	
First Name:	Suzanne
Last Name:	Kneale
Phone #:	504-416-6848
Mailing Address:	
City:	
State:	
Zip:	
Email:	SJRKneale@aol.com
I request a follow-up on inspector findings:	
<b>Site Information</b>	
Alleged Violator: Valero St Bernard Parish	

Physical Location/Address:

East St Bernard Hwy

City: Meraux

State: LA

Zip: 70043

Date of Discharge: 12/22/2012 Time Noticed: Began: around 430pm Ended: ongoing Parish: (of occurrence) St Bernard Media  
Affected: YES, Air If water, name of nearest water body: Description of Complaint Description of complaint:  
Valero St Bernard Parish refinery -- 12/22/2012 around 10pm very large flare at the dock terminal.....also, since around 430pm a  
very high pitched constant tone (not quite a whistle, but a constant tone) emanating from Valero and audible in house, ongoing still at  
1030pm, hurting ears and very disturbing in household..... Directions for Reaching the Site

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**Basin/Segment:**  
**Substance(s):**  
**Media Impacted:**  
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**Incident Region:** Southeast  
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**Incident Reporter 1**

**Received By:** Spo Contact  
**Received Date:** 12/26/2012 08:00:00  
**Dispatch #:** c12-21027  
**Reported By:** Suzanne Kneale  
**Phone:** 504-416-6848 (Home phone number)  
**Reporter Title:**  
**Organization:**  
**Address:**  
  
**Municipality:**  
**State:** LA  
**Zip Code:**  
**Comments:**

Tom  
5/21/13



## INCIDENT REPORT

Incident ID: 145543

**Incident Source 1****Source Name:** Valero Refining - Meraux LLC - Meraux Refinery**Address:** 2500 E St Bernard Hwy**Municipality:** Meraux**State:** LA**Phone:** 5042714141 (Work phone number)**Parish:** St. Bernard**AI #:** 1238**Related Permits:**

**Comments:** On 12/22-23/2012, LDEQ received citizen complaints regarding noise and flaring from the Valero Meraux refinery. I contacted a facility representative via email requesting further information. According to Valero, a brief 15 minute flaring episode occurred at the north flare, but no permit limits or RQs were exceeded. According to the representative, he could not verify the source of the noise, but suspected a siren from a dock or marine vessel.

LDEQ has determined that noise ordinances are regulated by local governments.

In industrial plants, flare stacks are primarily used as a safety measure for burning off flammable gas released by pressure relief valves during unplanned over-pressuring of plant equipment. Whenever industrial plant equipment items are over-pressured, the pressure relief valves serve as essential safety devices on the equipment, thereby sending excess material to flare. These pressure relief valves are required by industrial design codes and by law. A flare does not necessarily indicate an emergency situation or exceedance.

Facility records of CEMS data did not indicate an exceedance or permit limit during the specified time period.

Frequent surveillance of the area will continue.

## Lindsay Maloan

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**From:** Stubbe, Justin [Justin.Stubbe@valero.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 04, 2013 4:29 PM  
**To:** Lindsay Maloan  
**Cc:** Browning, Randall  
**Subject:** RE: [Incident#1221016] SERO c12-21016 T 145541 Kneale v Valero

Good Afternoon Ms. Maloan,

A brief, 15-minute flaring episode occurred at the North Flare at approximately 3:30 pm on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. No Reportable Quantities (RQs) or permit limits were exceeded, no emergency condition existed, and there was no off-site impact.

We have no records of any upsets at the River Dock or Marine Vapor Recovery (MVR) Flare on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. We spoke with a dockman who was on shift that evening, and he recalls nothing unusual. The MVR Flare is a pollution control device that combusts vapors displaced when loading barges or ships. Because of its short statute, the flame on the MVR flare appears proportionally larger than the flame on the two main refinery flares.

Please email or call if you have any further questions.

Thanks,

Justin Stubbe  
Environmental Manager  
Valero Refining-Meraux L.L.C  
(504) 278-5202

---

**From:** Lindsay Maloan [mailto:Lindsay.Maloan@la.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 27, 2012 1:55 PM  
**To:** Stubbe, Justin  
**Subject:** FW: [Incident#1221016] SERO c12-21016 T 145541 Kneale v Valero


Please let me know if there were any upsets or releases during this time period.

Thank you.

LMM

---

**From:** Brian Tusa  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 27, 2012 1:53 PM  
**To:** Lindsay Maloan  
**Cc:** Dionne Magness; Holly Herrmann; Brian Tusa  
**Subject:** FW: [Incident#1221016] SERO c12-21016 T 145541 Kneale v Valero

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From: "webmasterdeq@la.gov" <webmasterdeq@la.gov>  
To: SPOC <SinglePointof.Contact@LA.GOV>  
Cc: Jason Bonds <Jason.Bonds@LA.GOV>  
Subject: Complaint: Incident Report - 3D1V 2525  
Date: 2012-12-23 19:08:03

<b>Caller Information</b>	
Date/Time Reported: 12/23/2012 7:07:15 PM	
Type of Incident: Complaint	
First Name:	Suzanne
Last Name:	Kneale
Phone #:	504-416-6848
Mailing Address:	
City:	
State:	
Zip:	
Email:	SJRKneale@aol.com
I request a follow-up on inspector findings:	
<b>Site Information</b>	
Alleged Violator: Valero Refinery St Bernard Parish	

Physical Location/Address:

East St Bernard Hwy

City: Meraux

State: LA

Zip: 70043

Date of Discharge: 12/23/2012 Time Noticed: Began: 7pm Ended: about 10 mins Parish: (of occurrence) St Bernard Media Affected: YES, Air If water, name of nearest water body: Description of Complaint Description of complaint: extremely loud and unusual noise from Valero area around 7pm, almost like a siren or high pitched siren from the Valero dock and terminal area ..... NOT the high pitch constant tone from 12/22, which was also audible in the house again today starting around 4:50pm today 12/23. calling Valero about the high pitch constant tones on 12/22and 12/23, was told it was due to wind direction and lack of trees because of Hurricane KATRINA. that high pitched constant noise is still ongoing Directions for Reaching the Site

---- End forwarded message ----