

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0531

January 27, 2025

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Environmental Protection Agency Leadership:

I am writing to express my significant concerns and **request timely responses to the below questions** about the hazardous waste processing site that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established at the Lario Staging Area, which is located within my district at 15701 E. Foothill Blvd., Irwindale, CA 91706. **Neither my office nor many local officials in California's 31st District have yet to receive any notification of the EPA's plans to establish or operate this site**, which according to reporting would include processing of hazardous household materials including propane tanks, cylinders, and batteries.

On January 25, 2025, the mayors of several cities in our district contacted my office. They learned, through residents and local news reporting,¹ that a hazardous waste processing site was established in the 31st District to process waste from the Eaton Fire. To my office's knowledge, the EPA did not provide any prior notice or information to local officials. EPA officials did not contact my office. While I received limited information at a site visit this week, EPA has yet to respond to timely requests from my D.C. office to schedule a briefing to collect more information.

My heart goes out to all wildfire victims and those who lost their homes, and I understand that the work to clear affected neighborhoods of hazardous waste must commence. At the same time, I have serious questions about the EPA's establishment of this site with no prior notification or safety briefing with relevant local, state, and federal officials. The communities of the 31st District have legitimate concerns about potential negative health and environmental impacts that this site may create. The Lario Staging Area is adjacent to several recreational areas that are used by bicyclists, hikers, and community members.² The health of our communities and of our natural resources should not be taken lightly.

As such, I request immediate responses to the following questions:

1. Are there requirements for the Environmental Protection Agency to notify state, local, and/or federal officials prior to creating hazardous waste processing sites, especially when community members reside and work within less than one mile away from the processing site?

¹ <https://pasadenanow.com/main/epa-to-begin-hazmat-removal-at-614-eaton-canyon-fire-sites-in-pasadena>

² <https://www.sgvcitywatch.com/irwindale/toxicity-concerns-force-four-sgv-cities-to-oppose-eaton-fire-debris-site>

2. How long will this site be in operation?
3. What specific public health protections and environmental safety protocols have been put in place? Please provide as much detail as possible.
4. How was the Lario Staging Area selected as the location for this site? Who was consulted in the process of making this decision?
5. What financial assistance or grant assistance will become available to cities that may incur damage on their roads or other public property due to the operations of this site?
6. Please provide the name, title, and contact information for the official leading the establishment and operations of this site who can respond to questions from residents about impacts to their health and safety.

Please respond to these questions **by no later than Friday, January 31st at close of business**. I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress