



**San Diego  
Pediatricians for  
Clean Air  
and  
AAP-CA3 Climate  
Change & Health**

**AAP-CA3 Committee Co-Chairs:**

Vi Thuy Nguyen, M.D.  
Melissa Campbell, D.O., M.P.H.

**SDPCA Leadership:**

Sabrina Perrino, M.D.  
Wayne Mai.  
Sdpediatriciansforcleanair.com

**Mission Statement:**

AAP-CA3 Climate Change and Health Committee. Our mission is to simultaneously promote the health of both San Diego's children and its ecosystems by empowering children through education and outreach to protect their environmental resources and in turn improve their own physical and mental health. We support measures that combat climate change & promote a healthier environment for our children.

March 21, 2024

Re: Leaded avgas at Palomar Airport

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Dr. Benjamin Shleifer and I'm representing San Diego Pediatricians for Clean Air (SDPCA) and concerned physicians throughout San Diego county regarding the continued use of leaded AVGAS in our airports.

It is well established that there is NO safe level of lead. Lead-formulated AVGAS is the primary source of lead emissions in the United States today.

Airplanes that use leaded AVGAS emit lead into the air that is breathed in by children in nearby communities.

By nature of their physiology, children absorb lead to a much higher degree than adults, and it accumulates over time in their body.

Though lower levels of lead may not cause any overt symptoms initially, over time lead can affect a child's brain development, resulting in reduced IQ, behavioral changes including reduced attention span and reduced educational attainment. The neurological and behavioral effects of lead are believed to be irreversible.

Lead exposure also damages other vital organs other than the brain. Lead exposure can lead to hypertension, kidney impairment, and damage the immune system.

There are readily available non-leaded aviation fuel options currently. Though they may cost more, the investment is a small price to pay for the health and future well-being for children in our area.

We are strongly encouraging Palomar Airport to make the switch to unleaded AVGAS and protect the health and well being of our children.

In health,

Benjamin Shleifer MD, FAAP

Vi Thuy Nguyen MD, FAAP

Maya Kalbag, UC San Diego School of Medicine Class of 2026

Ethan Trinh, UC Riverside Premedical Student