

March 21, 2024

Dear Honorable Palomar Airport Aviation Committee Members,

Thank you to Mr. Otto for sharing the information from the FAA regarding EAGLE and unleaded fuel in response to my February 20, 2024 email. But we can't wait until 2030 to protect the stakeholders at Palomar Airport safe from leaded fuel.

The following needs to be adopted by the Palomar Airport Aviation Committee along with the San Diego County Board of Supervisors: 1) purchase and placement of an unleaded aviation fuel gas tank within 2 years 2) informing pilots and training schools of the phasing out of leaded aviation fuel gas being sold and used at the airport 3) with a total ban of sale and use of leaded aviation fuel within 5 years or less. The upcoming sustainability plan for the airport should include these measures and reference the negative health impacts resulting from exposure to leaded fuel in the and its exhaust for those using the facilities and employed at the airport as well as those residing in nearby communities.

Lead affects the nervous system, red blood cells and cardiovascular and immune systems of all populations. Infants and young children are especially sensitive to even low levels of lead, which may contribute to behavioral and learning problems and lower IQ. Infants and young children can also be more highly exposed to lead because they often put their hands and other objects into their mouths that may be contaminated with lead from dust or soil. Children have increased sensitivity due to their developing nervous systems. According to the Center for Disease and Prevention: "No safe blood lead level in children has been identified. Even low levels of lead in blood have been shown to negatively affect a child's intelligence, ability to pay attention, and academic achievement."¹

Leaded fuel in most planes and cars was gradually phased out and ended in 1996. But 70% of the lead in the air is due to the combustion of leaded fuel used by piston-type engines of planes like those flown in McClellan-Palomar Airport. Unleaded aviation fuel is available in California. It is more expensive than leaded fuel. But this higher cost is outweighed by the health costs of continuing the use of leaded aviation fuel.

In 2008 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) set stricter standards for airborne lead. Subsequently McClellan-Palomar Airport was identified to have significantly higher lead levels than those set by EPA. Santa Clara County Airports banned AVGAS (leaded fuel) from being used at their airports after it was determined that students in a school nearby the San Jose airport had blood lead levels as high as children during the Flint Michigan water crisis.²

In October 2022 the EPA filed its Endangerment Finding on Leaded Aviation Fuel. The FAA has proven standards for safe unleaded aviation fuel.³ Senate Bill 1193 was introduced this year phases out the use of avgas and will be banned in California by 2030. The Palomar Airport Action Committee must indicate to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors to establish a plan that acts now to transition away the use of leaded fuel at McClellan-Palomar Airport.

Sincerely,



Vanessa Forsythe RN MSN

2177 Vista La Nisa

Carlsbad CA 92009

1https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/csem/leadtoxicity/physiological_effects.htm

2<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDC/DEOD/CLPPB/Pages/AviationGas.asp>

3<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-determines-lead-emissions-aircraft-engines-cause-or-contribute-air-pollution>