

# Midcoast Community Council

*An elected Advisory Council to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors*

*representing Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton, and Miramar*

PO Box 248, Moss Beach, CA 94038-0248 | [midcoastcommunitycouncil.org](http://midcoastcommunitycouncil.org)

**Claire Toutant** | **Gregg Dieguez** | **Michelle Weil** | **Len Erickson** | **Dave Olson** | **Jill Grant** | **Dan Haggerty**  
Chair                      Vice-Chair                      Treasurer                      Secretary

Date:                      June 8, 2022  
To:                              San Mateo County Board of Supervisors  
Cc:                              Gretchen Kelly, Manager, County of San Mateo Airports  
                                    Ann M. Stillman, Interim Director of Public Works  
From:                        Midcoast Community Council  
Subject:                    Request for reduction and eventual elimination of leaded aviation fuel at HMB Airport

We appreciate the Department of Public Works taking the time to [respond](#) to the [MCC letter](#) on lead exposure as a result of Half Moon Bay Airport operations, but the response did not fully address our concerns.

The statement “it’s impossible to isolate lead exposure from the Half Moon Bay Airport versus other sources,” is not accurate. The [Reid-Hillview Airport study](#) found that children living closest to the airport had higher levels of lead in their blood than those who lived farther away, even after accounting for emissions from other sources including lead-based paint.

Based on this study, we can conclude that people living near the Half Moon Bay Airport are being exposed to lead from aviation fuel, which obviates the need for a study specific to our area. Therefore, the MCC rescinds its request for a study of blood lead levels.

Though we appreciate the stormwater runoff testing initiated as a result of our original letter, it is potentially an unreliable means of detection due to the effects of dilution and the fact that lead is tightly bound to soil and generally does not move except when disturbed. The County leases airport land to farmers who grow vegetables in the soil, and the public deserves to know about potential contaminants in the food that is grown and consumed. We therefore ask for an independent assessment of the safety of agricultural practices at the airport.

We understand from Gretchen Kelly that the Airport has requested Measure K funding to install an unleaded aviation fuel tank at the Half Moon Bay Airport, and we celebrate this decision. However, we

ask that swift action be taken to approve this expenditure prior to the September budget revisions, so that construction can begin and pilots have an unleaded fuel option at the Half Moon Bay Airport as soon as possible.

We also ask that San Mateo County continue to work to reduce activities at the airport that emit significant amounts of lead such as repeated touch-and-go operations.

San Mateo County should join Santa Clara County at the forefront of the move to eliminate leaded fuel, and should not wait for the federal government to take action. Santa Clara County stopped selling leaded aviation fuel at its airports on January 1, 2022, and San Mateo should chart a path to do the same prior to 2030. When leaded fuel is eliminated, we hope the County will work with pilots to ensure that antique aircraft can continue to operate safely.

Thank you for taking our concerns seriously. We appreciate the opportunity to partner to make our area safer for current and future generations.

s/Claire Toutant, Chair