Darling Ingredients, Inc. Update on Environmental Compliance

CalEPA

EPA

October 2026

Background

Darling Ingredients, Inc. (Darling) is an animal rendering facility located at 429 Amador Street, San Francisco, CA 94124. Community members are concerned about odors from the facility's operations and potential exposure to pollution that may impact public health.

Is the facility subject to environmental requirements?

Darling is subject to local, state, and federal requirements related to air emissions, water quality, and hazardous materials and waste.

Who is involved in this matter?

Multiple agencies at the local, state, and federal level are responsible for regulating Darling and have been engaged in inspection and enforcement activities. The following agencies have met to coordinate on environmental compliance activities:

- San Francisco City and County Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA)
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Bay Area AQMD)
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
- State Water Resources Control Board
- California Air Resources Board (CARB)
- California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)
- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9 (US EPA)

City & County of San Francisco CUPA Actions

The San Francisco Department of Public Health Hazardous Materials and Waste Program operates as the CUPA for San Francisco. The CUPA ensures compliance with requirements related to hazardous materials, hazardous waste, and storage tanks. The following is a summary of recent inspections by CUPA staff at Darling. All above identified compliance issues and violations were corrected timely.

- February 8, 2019: A routine inspection found that, while tank integrity tests were performed of the facility's aboveground petroleum storage tanks, insufficient documentation/records were kept or able to be provided by the facility.
- July 17, 2019: A routine inspection found that the facility's most recent hazardous materials inventory was missing some materials observed on site. In addition, the facility's most recent site map was lacking some required elements.
- August 8, 2022: A routine inspection found that the previously certified Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures Plan was outdated and needed to be renewed/recertified.
- March 4, 2026: A routine inspection identified the following violations. All items were addressed by April 7, 2026.
    - Failure to electronically submit a site map with all required content
    - Failure to keep a copy of waste oil manifests
    - Failure to properly label hazardous waste accumulation containers and portable tanks
    - Failure to keep monthly records for above ground tank inspections and integrity tests

Bay Area AQMD Actions

The Bay Area AQMD regulates air emissions and odors from Darling.

- 2018-2020: Conducted weekly inspection patrols along the Amador Street corridor where Darling is located. No violations at Darling were found.
- 2021-Fall 2022: Conducted daily inspection patrols along the Amador Street corridor where Darling is located. No violations at Darling were found.
- Fall 2022-Present: Conducts twice weekly inspection patrols along the Amador Street corridor where Darling is located. No violations at Darling were found.
- Beginning in April 2023, as part of the twice weekly inspection patrols, staff document upwind and downwind odor observations from Darling.
- Feb 2021 and Feb 2023: Conducted facility inspections to determine compliance with Air District regulations and permit conditions. No violations were found.
- May 31, 2023: Participated in a facility inspection at Darling with US EPA and CARB.
- Jan 2019-Jul 2023: Investigated four (4) air pollution complaints alleged against Darling. Odors from the facility were detected on two of those investigations; however, no violations of permit conditions or Air District regulations were documented.
- Aug-Oct 2023: Investigated five (5) air pollution complaints alleged against Darling or related odors. Staff detected odors ranging from cooking meat-like, rancid, and or fishy during three of those investigations at or near the complainants and traced the odors back to Darling. Winds had shifted from prevailing west-southwesterly winds to north-northeast winds, which carried odors into a residential neighborhood. No violations at Darling were found.
- Nov 22, 2023: Issued Notice of Violation# A62887 for an Aug 16, 2023 permit condition violation: Darling was denied breakdown relief for failure to operate its incinerator during rendering operations.
- Nov 2023-Aug 2024: Investigated twelve (12) air pollution complaints alleged against Darling or related odors. Staff detected odors ranging from putrid, rotten, and cooking meat during three of those investigations at or near the complainants and traced the odors back to Darling. No violations at Darling were found.
- Sep 2024-Aug 2026: Investigated eight (8) air pollution complaints alleged against Darling or related odors. On each occasion staff followed up promptly but detected no matching odors. During a routine compliance inspection in 2025, the inspector documented required boiler testing had been missed during the 2024 calendar year and a notice of violation was issued.

State and Regional Water Board Actions

The State and Regional Water Boards regulate storm water and wastewater at Darling. Darling has coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Industrial General Permit Order No 2014-0057 (IGP) for storm water and the NPDES Pretreatment Program for wastewater. Inspections are conducted to ensure compliance with both permits by the Regional and State Water Boards and local municipalities.

- April 13, 2023: The State and Regional Water Boards found multiple violations during an IGP inspection and issued a Notice of Violation (NOV). Darling complied with all required corrective actions (e.g., provided photo documentation of cleaned drain inlets, covers for grease containers, and a spill kit for the fueling area) by the August 18, 2023 NOV deadline.
- April 27, 2023: Pretreatment program inspection by State Water Board, US EPA, and

the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC). Recommendations by the State Water Board included increased spill and leak prevention, proper pump maintenance, and a thorough inspection by SFPUC.

- Darling is also under a Consent Decree with San Francisco Baykeeper (2017) which requires the facility to implement additional storm water Best Management Practices and sample for additional pollutants beyond the IGP requirements.
- Oct 14, 2024: The State Water Board conducted an unannounced site visit at the facility. Informal compliance and enforcement actions by State Board and Darling ingredients staff prompted a swift return to compliance on October 30, 2024. No violations of the IGP were found during the site visit.

CARB Actions

CARB is responsible for protecting the public from the harmful effects of air pollution and developing and enforcing programs and actions to fight climate change. For stationary sources like Darling, CARB's enforcement program helps ensure protection of public health and the environment through support and oversight of air district permitting and enforcement programs. CARB participated in a facility inspection at Darling on May 31, 2023, with US EPA and Bay Area AQMD.

CDFA Actions

The CDFA Meat, Poultry and Egg Safety Branch licenses and inspects rendering facilities that recycle animal carcasses, packing house waste, and inedible kitchen grease (IKG). Darling holds a Rendering and Inedible Kitchen Grease Transporter license with CDFA. Routine inspections of Darling show acceptable conditions and have resulted in no violations of the Food and Agricultural Code or violations of the California Code of Regulations.

- June 9, 2023: CDFA staff conducted an inspection of Darling's rendering activities/storage methods of IKG and inedible materials. Operations were clean and in compliance. No violations were found.
- August 10, 2023: CDFA staff conducted an inspection of Darling's rendering activities/storage methods of IKG and inedible materials. Operations were clean and in compliance. No violations were found.

CalEPA Actions

CalEPA is the parent agency to six boards, departments, and offices charged with protecting public health and the environment, including CARB and the Water Boards. CalEPA has not exercised independent enforcement authority over activities at Darling but helps to ensure enforcement and compliance activities are consistent, effective, and coordinated.

US EPA Actions

US EPA coordinates with state and local environmental regulatory agencies to ensure compliance with environmental requirements. US EPA conducted or participated in the following inspections at Darling:

- April 27, 2023: Clean Water Act pretreatment program inspection by State Water Board, US EPA, and the San Francisco PUC.
- May 31, 2023: Clean Air Act inspection, accompanied by Bay Area AQMD and CARB. The inspection team toured the facility and interviewed Darling about the equipment, operations, emission controls, and current state of the facility. Areas of concern were identified and conveyed to the facility. The investigation is ongoing.
- April 23, 2024: Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure inspection. US EPA identified minor plan deficiencies, and the facility was directed to correct them

Report an Odor Complaint:

Call Bay Area AQMD's 24-hour toll-free hotline at 1-800-334-ODOR (6367) or complete an online complaint form at www.baaqmd.gov/complaints

For More Information Contact

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