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El Paso Times

MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2026 | ELPASOTIMES.COM

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Black smoke flows from gas flares at the El Paso Marathon Petroleum refinery during a refinery problem on July 8, 2025.
FERNANDO MENDEZ/SPECIAL TO THE EL PASO TIMES

TCEQ probes pollution emmissions at refinery

Vic Kolenc
El Paso Times
USA TODAY NETWORK – TEXAS

An equipment breakdown at the El Paso Marathon oil refinery in early August resulted in the release of much more pollution than previously reported.

The breakdown on the night of Aug. 4 resulted in the release of 31,100 pounds, or 15.6 tons, of 33 different pollutants,

show a new report Marathon submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, or TCEQ, on Tuesday, Aug. 18.

The 97-year-old refinery emitted a strong odor during the event and some nearby residents reported getting sick from the fumes, prompting a barrage of complaints and calls from El Paso politicians for accountability.

Most of the emissions were many times more than allowed under the re-

finery’s permitted limits, and over three times the 9,779 pounds of emissions from three pollutants that Marathon reported in its initial report filed with the TCEQ on Aug. 5. Some of the pollutants could be harmful to people’s health in certain amounts.

A Marathon statement sent Aug. 18 to the El Paso City Council conceded the odor from the event was strong,

See POLLUTION, Page 2A

Who made the ballot in 4 City Council races?

Adam Powell
El Paso Times
USA TODAY NETWORK – TEXAS

The stage is set for the El Paso City Council election.

Along with casting ballots in the gubernatorial contest and a highly contentious U.S. Senate race in November, El Pasoans will vote in four City Council races.

The last day to file for a spot on the ballot was Monday, Aug. 17, and more than a dozen candidates answered the call. With so many candidates in the race, it’s likely the City Council elections will have to be decided in a December runoff.

All four seats have an incumbent looking to stay in office, but at least three of them will have to answer for their votes against renegotiating the deal with Meta over its Northeast data center, a move that led some residents to shout, “Vote them out,” immediately after the vote was taken.

The city would have faced legal liability had it unilaterally terminated its agreement with Meta. Outside counsel warned City Hall of staggering financial risks to taxpayers if it broke the Chapter 380 Economic Development Program Agreement.

See BALLOT, Page 2A

Wiwynn to add 1,100 jobs at Socorro factories

Vic Kolenc
El Paso Times
USA TODAY NETWORK – TEXAS

The growing public and political backlash against data centers in the El Paso area and across the nation isn’t hurting Wiwynn Corp.

The Taiwan data-center equipment maker is doing a major expansion of its 8-month-old manufacturing complex in Socorro, an El Paso suburb, adding hundreds of new jobs.

“At this time we don’t see that (data center) backlash impact us,” said Joseph Hsu, managing director of Wiwynn’s North America operations, which includes several plants across the

border in Juárez, Mexico. He’s based in the El Paso area.

“I think people are now starting to use AI (artificial intelligence) in their day to day life already. This adds to the demand growth.”

The company plans to open a second Socorro factory in 2027, adding just over 1,100 employees to its workforce now at 1,330 people, Hsu said.

It plans to have four factory buildings by 2028 in the Socorro Logistics Center industrial park along Nuevo Hueco Tanks Boulevard, an extension of Eastlake Boulevard, in far East El Paso County.

See WIWYNN, Page 4A



Wiwynn Corp.’s 8-month-old factory in the Socorro Logistics Center industrial park employs 1,330 people. A second factory is to open in 2027.
VIC KOLENC/EL PASO TIMES



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