

Whiting refinery: Committed to being a good neighbor to NWI

Donnie Brown Mar 31, 2024



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Dear residents,

I want to express my gratitude for your patience as our employees worked tirelessly to safely bring the Whiting refinery back to normal operations. We appreciate the support you’ve shown us and our nearly 2,000 employees.

But I know this recent disruption to our operations, along with other incidents, has understandably caused frustration among many of you.

The message I’d like to share today is this: We hear you.

Specifically, in our recent community meetings, we heard several key themes and I wanted to address some of them here.

- **Communication:** After the recent incidents, you told us there wasn’t enough information coming from bp or local officials. To try to address this, bp is changing how we communicate with residents to be able to provide more information, faster. More to come on this soon. We’re also talking with Lake County Emergency Management officials to make sure they have what they need to keep the public informed, given their important role in issuing road closures, shelter-in-place notices, and other alerts.
- **Transparency.** You told us the refinery feels closed off, with residents having little knowledge of what happens behind the fence line. One way we hope to begin changing this perception is by hosting a Whiting community event in June. This will be a great opportunity to ask questions, meet Whiting employees and learn more about what we do. We will also share regular site updates during the year via community committees, external email updates, the Whiting page on [bp.com](#) (once launched), and in regular communications with our contacts at the tri-cities (Whiting, Hammond, and East Chicago).
- **Community Engagement.** You told us you’d like for us to meet more consistently with community members to hear concerns and answer questions. In response, we are working to establish a community advisory committee, comprised of a cross-section of residents, businesses and public officials who can give us input and help us continue to improve.
- **Investment.** Some of you told us you don’t see bp investing enough to repair or improve equipment inside the refinery. Let me answer by saying: Safety is bp’s top priority. In recent years, we’ve invested billions of dollars into the refinery to maintain safe, compliant, and reliable operations, and we will continue investing. Each year we invest several hundred million in capital and maintenance with significant investmentn during annual turnarounds where we take portions of the refinery down for more extensive overhauls. In addition to our normal investments, we see an opportunity for major investments in low-carbon energy projects at the refinery in the coming years.
- **Giving back.** You told us you don’t always see the community benefit of having a large industrial neighbor, apart from financial investment and the many jobs it brings.
- But bp also invests significantly into the community itself, spending more than half a million dollars annually on everything from local STEM education programs in the public schools and at Ivy Technical Community College to an ongoing tree-planting initiative in partnership with the Student Conservation Association to annual sponsorships of great local events like the Festival of the Lakes, Pierogi Fest and Fusic Fest. We will continue looking for ways to invest in the communities of Northwest Indiana where our people live and work.

We will continue to take action on the things you told us and continue to make improvements based on the lessons learned recently. We don’t want this dialogue to end, so we will continue to reach out and be open to hearing from you and learning from you along the way.

One thing is certain: We are committed to learning from these recent incidents. We are committed to running a business that puts safety first. We are committed to being a good neighbor in Northwest Indiana.

Best,

Donnie Brown

VP of Refining, bp Whiting Refinery.