

News Release

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For Immediate Release



San Joaquin Valley
Air Pollution
Control District

TO:

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Business Sections**

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Proposed rule would reduce emissions from confined animal facilities Air District incorporates latest research into draft requirements, seeks public input

Fresno, CA – A draft rule that would reduce air-pollution emissions from existing dairies, beef feedlots, swine farms and other types of animal operations throughout the San Joaquin Valley will be the subject of public workshops in mid-March.

Draft Rule 4570, Confined Animal Facilities, is designed to eliminate about 18 tons per day of smog-forming chemicals known as volatile organic compounds. VOCs combine with other chemicals in the air to form ground-level ozone, or smog. Despite years of improved air quality, the San Joaquin Valley fails to meet state and federal health-based smog standards.

The draft rule incorporates the preliminary findings of recent scientific research conducted in partnership by the Air District, research institutions, the agriculture industry, health advocates and other agencies. State law (SB700) requires a rule on confined animal facilities be in place in the San Joaquin Valley by July 1.

The draft rule is an aggressive measure to achieve important emission reductions that are scientifically supported, said Scott Nester, the Air District's Director of Planning.

"Throughout the process of developing this rule, we've kept in perspective what we know, and what we don't know," Nester said. "We still have questions, and need more research. When the answers are available, they'll be incorporated into the rules. Now, though, we have an important draft rule that will reduce about one-quarter of the VOC emissions from the affected sources."

Public workshops on the draft rule are scheduled for 1:30 p.m. Monday, March 13 and 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 14. The workshops will be held in-person at the Air District's Fresno office at 1990 E. Gettysburg Ave. and will be video-conferenced to the District offices in Bakersfield at 2700 M Street, Suite 275 and in Modesto at 4800 Enterprise Way. The public may participate and comment at any of the three locations.

The rule would apply only to larger confined animal facilities. For example, the rule would affect about 230 dairies in the Valley with 1,000 or more milking cows and between one and three swine farms with 3,000 or more head of swine. For more details, see the rule online at www.valleyair.org.

The rule would have the most impact on facilities built prior to Jan. 1, 2004, when landmark air-pollution laws took effect, because many of them would need to retrofit or modify their current practices. Facilities built on or after that date already are subject to rules that reduce pollution by requiring that new and modified sources of air pollution adopt the best control technology available.

The Valley Air District covers eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the valley portion of Kern. For more information, visit www.valleyair.org. Or, call the nearest District office: Fresno (559) 230-6000, Bakersfield (661) 326-6900 and Modesto (209) 557-6400.