

News Release

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For Immediate Release



San Joaquin Valley
Air Pollution
Control District

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Business Sections**

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Proposed rule to reduce emissions from confined animal facilities Public comment period ends Tuesday

Fresno, CA – A final draft of a 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 has been posted for public review on the Valley Air District's website, www.valleyair.org.

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. In addition to reducing VOCs, the rule also eliminates 113 to 127 tons per day of ammonia emissions or 39 to 44 percent of the total ammonia emissions for each facility. Despite years of improved air quality, the San Joaquin Valley fails to meet state and federal health-based smog standards.

The rule would apply only to larger confined animal facilities, for example:

- dairies with 1,000 or more milking cows; about 230 such Valley dairies would be directly affected by the rule.
- swine farms with 3,000 or more head of swine; between one and three would be affected.
- other facilities; see the draft rule for details.

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 available control technology.

Air District staff worked closely with animal facility operators and health advocates to develop the draft rule. The rule also relied heavily on the findings of the Dairy Permitting Advisory Group (DPAG). The DPAG reviewed all relevant science and technology available to these operations and suggested reasonable but effective control practices. The DPAG was a cooperative effort between the dairy industry, the Air District, environmental representatives, the scientific community and various state and federal agencies.

"The proposed rule represents the best science available, yet we understand the need for more research and future enhancements as this field of science develops," said Seyed Sadredin, Executive Director of the Valley Air District. "It is the most comprehensive regulation ever put together to control emissions from these types of operations, yet it is designed to provide operators a flexibility that will allow them to choose effective measures best suited for their operations."

Public comments on the proposed rule will be accepted through April 18. The rule is scheduled to be considered for adoption by the Air District's Governing Board in June.

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.