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Environmental Justice Air Monitoring Project

I am submitting this comment regarding the project of air monitoring in the central valley on behalf of El Comite para Bienestar de Earlimart. First I want to urge you to take more time to decide where this monitoring will be done. For next steps sake, and to keep focused, I firmly believe the DPR-EJ principles and plan of action, goals, etc. should be in place first. Just to ensure everything is in accordance with the ultimate goal of safer pesticide use in environmental justice areas. If we proceed without these things in tact, I think we may be putting the horse before the cart.

However, if DPR-EJ decides to move forward with the AMP (Air monitoring Project), my colleagues from the Safe Air For Everyone (SAFE) Campaign and I came up with great criteria to adhere to. Everything being said there at the meeting was EJ oriented. Please take their suggestions and do the homework and select the community as best fits the criteria. SAFE believes DPR should focus on communities that meet the following criteria: high pesticide use, low income, community of color, surrounded by dairies, and has experienced acute pesticide drift incidents.

While many communities in the Valley fit this criteria, I would suggest the area of ARVIN-Lamont. The reason is because in ARVIN the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution District has existing air monitors to measure the air quality. The importance of measuring the pesticides in the air is high. But, to read the combined measurements of pesticides and particulate matter, and ozone would prove to be in my opinion-invaluable. By focusing on Arvin, DPR could compare its pesticide monitoring data with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's data determining the extent pesticides contributed to poor air quality. This would help DPR gather data to fulfill its other role of regulating pesticides' air impacts as well as monitoring the impacts to environmental justice communities.

In addition, Arvin /Lamont would be the best selection for air monitoring is because it qualifies under most of the criteria SAFE has asked for: Arvin has high pesticide use; Arvin is low income; Arvin has many dairies around it; and Arvin is a community that was recently drifted on. Ultimately, It would be my hope that DPR would do it's own pesticide air monitoring and then take the air quality monitoring levels the Air District does, overlay these air monitor studies to find out exactly how many pollutants are in the air, and to decipher what threat they are to public health.

Recently, EPA finished up its air monitoring project in Macfarland, the air monitoring was being done because residents wanted an answer to the cancer cluster in the 1990. They did extensive air studies. The final report hasn't been released, but the graphs they provided the community showed severe particulate matter in dangerous levels. My hopes would be to somewhat duplicate the study done in Macfarland. And regarding the pesticides in Macfarland, there weren't levels to cause concern. This was unfortunate for the community wanting answers as to what had caused the cancer cluster, but the answers to that were washed away with time. But present day levels do not remove the fact that levels may have been high in the 1990's. This just reinforces the need for monitoring during and immediately after pesticide application to determine how long remain in the air and at what quantity.

Additionally, I echo my associates in requesting more than one AMP being done, and situate another air monitor in either 2 or 3 other locations. I have heard Huron is a great candidate, as is Caruthers. I will stipulate again that any pesticide air monitoring should be enhanced with air monitors measuring ozone, and particulate matter.

I will fax this letter in as well because I want to send the graphs of Macfarland along. Please provide me with a fax number.

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