

Legislation to address air quality

[Madera Tribune, Monday, Jan. 31, 2005](#)

Assemblyman Dave Cogdill, a Republican who represents part of Madera County, has introduced legislation to address growing air quality concerns in the San Joaquin Valley.

While specifics are still being developed, Assembly Bill 184 seeks to implement a pilot program to remove high polluting vehicles from the roadway.

"Not a day passes in the valley that we are not concerned about air quality," said Cogdill. "Dirty air not only impacts our health and increases health care costs, but it also affects our overall quality of life, and reduces agricultural productivity.

"Gross polluting vehicles are responsible for roughly half of all automobile related smog. By providing even more incentives to help people repair or replace these vehicles, we can improve our overall air quality in the central valley and beyond."

To develop the specifics of the air quality program, Cogdill will work with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, appropriate local and state government agencies, and other community stakeholders.

"One of the primary ways to achieve cost-effective and equitable air pollution control is targeting the dirtiest vehicles for repairs or replacement, rather than imposing restrictions and requirements on all car owners to prevent the polluting activity of only a few," Cogdill said.

AB 184 was introduced Jan. 24. The bill will be eligible for a policy committee hearing in February. To read the text of this legislation, visit www.leginfo.ca.gov.

Dairy air studied

[Modesto Bee, Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2005](#)

An advisory group on dairy air quality met for the first time Monday in Fresno to begin discussing how much pollution the facilities create. The Dairy Permitting Advisory Group, formed as part of a lawsuit settlement last year, will make recommendations to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District on the amount of smog-making gas coming from dairies. The group's deadline is April 15. The discussion will center on current dairy research projects on the gas, called volatile organic compounds or VOCs. Dairies also emit ammonia, methane and other gases. Officials said VOC levels will determine which dairies will be required to obtain an air permit. Current estimates for dairy VOCs are based on outdated science. The 12-member advisory group includes representatives from the dairy industry, the air district, local community groups and scientists.

Final public forum held on General Plan

[Stockton Record, Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2005](#)

TRACY -- The final public forum concerning updates to the city's General Plan focused on two topics Monday: the overabundance of homes compared with a shortage of well-paying jobs, and open space within and around Tracy.

Eighty residents attended the meeting, where they were put into seven small groups to discuss the issues for nearly two hours.

Most groups agreed that city policies should in the future limit warehouse developments to certain areas and try to create more centers for office and commercial uses.

Mark Connolly, a slow-growth advocate, said employment centers should be built inside the areas of the city already defined for development.

"That way, we'll prevent leapfrog development and keep areas available for open space," Connolly said.

The groups also generally agreed that Tracy should protect open space, particularly buffering development between Lathrop on one side and Mountain House on the other. The groups also recognized that it can be difficult to finance open-space preservation.

The General Plan is Tracy's plan for growth until 2025. It includes sections on affordable housing, traffic and air quality.

Bill Reeds, the city's director of development and engineering, said city staff and a consulting firm will take the citizen recommendations and incorporate them into the plan's final draft.

Reeds expects the revisions to take approximately two months to complete.

It must be approved by the City Council.