

## **Air pollution culprit to be examined**

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Reactive nitrogen – a cause of air pollution, among other problems -- will get a grilling by experts at a two-day workshop in Fresno next week.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in collaboration with the California Water Institute at California State University, Fresno, is holding the public workshop and interagency meeting to discuss the status of research on the management of reactive nitrogen in the San Joaquin Valley and other areas of California.

The workshop will be held June 4-5 at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center in Fresno.

Reactive nitrogen research is critical in improving EPA's ability to understand the pathways of reactive nitrogen compounds into drinking water and PM 2.5 air pollution.

The workshop is expected to provide an opportunity for EPA's Office of Research and Development to describe the most recent scientific information on reactive nitrogen, and will give state and local agencies and other stakeholders an opportunity to provide input into ORD's research program.

Participants will include representatives from EPA's ORD, USDA, Central Valley Water Board, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, academia, environmental and community groups, and agriculture groups.

The workshop will run from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. both days.

Reactive nitrogen gases such as nitrous oxide, nitrate, nitrogen oxide and urea are produced by farming activities, such as manure spreading, and by energy production, including simply driving around in a gasoline or diesel-fueled vehicle.

[Fresno Bee commentary, Sat., May 25, 2013:](#)

### **Viewpoints: AB 8 will help state's businesses abide by clean air rules, save jobs**

By Matt Rexroad

California businesses face the strictest air quality regulations in the country. Every few years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency tightens its air pollution standards even further, waving the threat of fines and revoked highway funding if California can't comply.

Even though California businesses have made incredible sacrifices over the last four decades to drastically reduce emissions, leading to massive improvement in air quality, the EPA continues to squeeze harder.

Our local businesses are being battered by these regulations. Assembly Bill 8, authored by Henry Perea of Fresno, extends a helping hand. Many anti-tax advocates are viewing this bill in simple terms and ignoring the complicated regulatory scheme that we have for air quality in California.

AB 8 extends useful, locally administered incentive programs for the California businesses hit hardest by regulation. The Moyer Program, for example, helps farmers, truckers and other commercial users of heavy diesel equipment replace and retrofit units so that they meet new and increasingly harsh standards demanded by the EPA. AB 8 presents no new regulations; it helps our businesses meet established ones. In addition, AB 8 would delay until 2024 an existing, heavy-handed regulation requiring gas station owners to install costly alternative fuel outlets at their sites. The Sierra Club opposes AB 8 because it delays this regulation.

To pay for the programs, some existing fees on vehicle registrations and smog checks will be extended. The funds raised then go toward retrofit and replacement projects for local businesses. These businesses are facing tight deadlines for compliance, with the threat of job-crushing fines looming.

Without AB 8, mandated replacement and retrofit projects will be too costly for many of them, and they'll be forced to close up shop or get fined out of existence. Many of the truckers and farmers who do manage to afford new equipment will have to lay off workers and shrink their businesses to stay afloat. California can't afford that.

While I oppose most fees, AB 8 is necessary to protect California's business community from the federal government. Opposing AB 8 doesn't make draconian regulations go away. It just puts California businesses at a bigger disadvantage. Those of us who believe that regulations and fees drag down our economy should work to change the trajectory of tightening environmental burdens in Washington, D.C. Until that is accomplished, we owe it to our local businesses and their hard-working employees to protect them from the heavy hand of the federal government. AB 8 extends programs that have been proven to do just that.

It is easy to vote no. What is harder to do is understand the existing regulatory framework that we find ourselves in. Conservatives in the Legislature who want to deal with the issues contained in Assemblyman Perea's bill should be urging their local members of Congress to make major changes in federal law regarding clean air standards. Until that happens, they need to understand that governing California's dynamic economy requires legislation like AB 8.

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