

## **Air pollution from CAFOs and Public Health - 11/28/06**

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### **Summary of physical, mental/emotional symptoms reported or observed in Hillsdale and Lenawee Counties, Michigan from exposure to CAFO emissions from 2000-2006.**

CAFO Air emissions are described and dismissed by Michigan Department of Agriculture and others as farm “odor”.

People breathing air and dust from CAFOs may be breathing: hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, volatile organic compounds, particulate and other airborne substances.

People in Lenawee and Hillsdale (and other communities) are suffering from involuntary exposure to CAFO and liquid manure emissions. These are not always young, healthy individuals. Many neighbors of CAFOs are the elderly or children, and others are suffering from chronic disease (such as emphysema) or cancer, the most vulnerable citizens in a community.

Air emissions from CAFOs or liquid manure applications (sprayed in the air, injected in the soil, spread or irrigated on fields,) can last **for hours, overnight or hang in the air for days**. There can be strong bursts of bad air or intermittent, chronic bad air. In our community bad air happens every month of the year but it is worse in spring, summer and fall. People have been exposed for 6 years. It is getting worse as **all 12 CAFOs are expanding**. There is **long term acute and chronic exposure** to CAFO emissions.

In Hillsdale and Lenawee Counties since 2000, people living next to CAFOs or near fields where liquid manure has been applied have experienced symptoms from the air pollution. Some of the documented symptoms are: **Breathing problems**, an asthma attack requiring hospitalization, shortness of breath, bronchitis, decreased lung function documented on spirometry. At least 2 cases of breathing difficulties were documented near CAFOs where individuals, one a child and one an adult **required inhalers**.

**Headaches**, multiple reports of headaches, some severe, others chronic, occurred on days when the wind was blowing towards residences from CAFOs or from liquid manure applications.

**Nausea**, multiple reports of nausea lasting from minutes to an hour or longer, reported by neighbors and people in the vicinity of CAFO manure applications.

**Dizziness**, multiple reports of dizziness, or lightheadedness reported particularly by residents in close proximity to hog CAFO and when lagoons are emptied in high heat and humidity.

**Other, frequently reported symptoms: Cough, burning eyes, watering eyes, diarrhea, nose bleeds, loss of voice, loss of appetite, sore throat, hoarseness, one documented case of a fever, “burning sinuses”, tiredness, “gut ache”, not hungry, can’t sleep, “suffocates you”, “chokes you”, “we’re dying down here”.**

**Frequent fly outbreaks. Massive amount of flies, documented in pictures and fly traps.**

**Mental/ Emotional Symptoms:** People next to CAFOs or liquid manure on fields in Lenawee/Hillsdale reported feelings of, **anger, rage, helplessness, hopelessness, depression, “feeling devastated” “feeling betrayed”**. **An elderly woman became confused and stayed in her room refusing to come out because of stench from dairy liquid manure application near her home.**

**Daily Activities that had to be changed from stench or emissions from CAFOs:** People have **closed windows in high heat and humidity**, even without air conditioning, left their homes sometimes from several hours to several days to get away from the stench. Parents kept children indoors and in one instance kept them home from school. Family gatherings are disrupted because relatives and friends refuse to visit or left a visit early due to stench and flies.

Taken together, these are descriptions of health problems from CAFO emissions. They have **immediate and long term effects on individuals and families**.