

Letter to the Editor, Fresno Bee, December 24, 2002

'A little backbone'

By Gunter A. Redlin
Fresno

Your recent article, "Dairies face new EPA rules," made me laugh. I wrote to The Bee several years ago that the California dairy enforcement program is a joke. It still is. Now the Environmental Protection Agency is becoming part of that joke. Enforcement continues to cater to the industry. Neither the counties nor the state have the backbone to do what really needs to be done in terms of accountability. Now the EPA is joining them, with dairies preparing plans and reports.

Using an EPA grant, I recently conducted a groundwater quality investigation in a mid-San Joaquin Valley county involving some 14 or 15 dairies and feedlots. Only one of these sites had a groundwater monitoring program. Using private wells, I determined all of the dairy/feedlot sites to have adversely impacted groundwater quality with high nitrates and salts. A coincidence? I think not.

My draft engineering report was later reviewed by the various dairy regulators, including the EPA. Guess who questioned and criticized my report findings, conclusions, and recommendations the most? The dairies? No. The state regulators.

Is that not absurd? The so-called regulators also want us to believe that they are doing a good job in cleaning up hazardous waste sites and in cleaning up the Valley air we all breathe.

To do a good job is not difficult. All it takes is a little backbone and determination.

Letter to the Editor, Merced Sun-Star, December 21, 2002

'Green wave' works overseas

Editor: Thanks for raising the issue of synchronized signals for Merced in the Dec. 12 issue of the Sun-Star.

First, we should bag the idea that a "study" needs to be done before the traffic signals in Merced are synchronized. The idea that air pollution will be reduced is great, but the idea that road rage will be reduced is better. The "green wave" is working overseas.

Getting from Point A to Point B following the path of least resistance is a no-brainer. And along that line, it's also a no-brainer to put that study on the backside of this "green wave" theory that appears to be working so well overseas by synchronizing our traffic signals now, and then studying the effects afterwards. If the green wave proves not to reduce pollution and road rage, then we can switch back; but the burden of proof that it doesn't work should be put on the ones who seem to think that stop-and-go traffic is a good thing to reduce pollution and road rage.

Come on, we need to wake up and smell the coffee. In other words, if a study is needed, then a backside "study" about the effects of a green wave for Merced is the better choice — for life.

Jody K. George
Merced

Letter to the Editor, Bakersfield Californian, December 24, 2002

Use organic spray

There's a lot of ruckus being made about the quality of our air now, justifiably so.

But why blame only the "little" things we use? Leaf blowers, cars, chimneys, etc. -- all everyday facets of most of our lives. What about pesticide and herbicide spraying? If that isn't a major contaminant, I don't know what is!

I live in a rural area and unhappily was one of many directly involved victims of a pesticide incident in July, of which we've heard no resolution.

And yet the spraying continues to go on daily around us. Spray, plow, spray and spray again. It never ends.

Drive down off Bear Mountain someday and look at all the yuk in this valley. Talk about ruining the air. Get smart, Kern County. The word is organic, in case you haven't heard it. And it's better for all of us, to buy, to eat, to breathe air that hasn't been filled with garbage.

Make somebody stop spraying all the junk that is no doubt killing us in the name of money.

JOY KENNEDY, Arvin