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Hydrogen Sulfide Fact Sheet

What is Hydrogen Sulfide?

- Hydrogen Sulfide is a gas that smells similar to rotten eggs, and is a large component of gases that are released from confined animal feeding operations (CAFO).
- It is naturally released during the decay of organic materials such as human and animal wastes, and is a large part of the distinct odor that is released from CAFOs.

Exposure to Hydrogen Sulfide Gas

- Hydrogen Sulfide gas can be easily detected by the odor that always accompanies its presence, and people in other states have reported odor detection up to ten miles away from CAFOs
- People living downwind from a confinement hog factory often suffer a variety of problems, such as respiratory complications, frequent vomiting and depression.
- More than half of all people living within two miles of large hog facilities report an increase in allergies, sinus infections, nasal blockages, and a lack of energy.

Emission Standards

- At least 20 states have standards for hydrogen sulfide emissions. South Dakota has none!!
- A concentration of 0.07ppm* is an acceptable standard of emission for several states and the EPA. States generally allow a maximum of seven emissions per year, and public notification of any violations.
- Minnesota and North Dakota both require a standard of 0.05ppm* at the property line
- A citizen's test in Renville Co., Minnesota found that one-quarter of 32 tests taken near several manure lagoons exceeded Minnesota air quality standards for hydrogen sulfide.

SB4

- This bill would set standards for hydrogen sulfide emissions from CAFOs which are nearly identical to Minnesota laws.
- This bill would require a standard of 0.05ppm* which can not be violated more than two times per year, which offers more protection than most states, and protects citizens from high level exposures to hydrogen sulfide.
- Additionally, it would set an even stronger standard of 0.03ppm* which can only be violated twice in a five day period. This will help to protect families from constant low level exposure which can cause many of the health symptoms described above.

*ppm (parts per million) - a standard measurement used to determine how much of one specific gas is present in a sampling of 1 million particles of air.

