

Midwest Environmental ADVOCATES

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Contact:

Andrew Hanson, Staff Attorney
Midwest Environmental Advocates
Cell: (608) 628-2429

Melissa Scanlan, Executive Director
Midwest Environmental Advocates
Work: (608) 251-5047, ext. 3

Community Groups Call on Livestock Siting Committee to Protect Public Health

Madison, WI – Family farmers, town board members, and conservationists called on the Livestock Siting Technical Advisory Committee to protect public health and rural quality of life in comments submitted to the Committee yesterday. The Committee is currently establishing statewide standards to be used by local governments in granting or denying permits for large-scale livestock confinement facilities throughout the state.

The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection convened the Committee under the authority of Act 235, the Livestock Facility Siting Act. The Act was passed despite a large grassroots opposition by community members concerned that the Act would limit local control over land use – an area typically left to local governments.

These concerned community groups are now working to ensure the Committee's statewide siting standards protect public health and safety. The community groups' comments specifically ask that the standards include air and odor rules that are based on scientifically sound modeling. Currently, the Committee's air and odor standards are severely under-protective of public health and may do little to solve the odor problem generated by large livestock factories.

"It is the Committee's responsibility to ensure that the standards they adopt adequately address public health, air and odor issues," said Andrew Hanson, Staff Attorney with Midwest Environmental Advocates. "Standards that protect public health will not only protect Wisconsin residents, but also create predictability and certainty for producers and the local community."

Midwest Environmental Advocates submitted the comments on behalf of eight groups, many with members who will be directly impacted by the Committee's decision.

The comments also called on the Committee to require that local governments receive the information needed in a siting application to judge whether the statewide standards have been met by a livestock factory and to include that information in the public record.

"Without strong standards, neighbors to livestock factories will continue to live in fear that their homes will be turned into bunkers due to excessive odors," said Ann Zelinski, a member of Citizens for Responsible Agriculture and a Clean Environment. "All we are asking is that the Committee adopts standards that allow all of us to breathe a little easier."

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Fast Facts

- Midwest Environmental Advocates is Wisconsin's first and only non-profit, public interest environmental law center. Midwest Environmental Advocates provides legal representation and community organizing assistance to groups that are working to protect air and water resources. For more information, go to www.midwestadvocates.org.
- Midwest Environmental Advocates submitted comments to the Livestock Siting Technical Advisory Committee on behalf of the following organizations:
 - Centerville Citizens for Air, River and Environmental Solutions
 - Church's Center for Land and People
 - Citizens for Responsible Agriculture and a Clean Environment
 - Concerned Farmers and Neighbors of the Town of Hixton
 - Family Farm Defenders
 - Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter
 - Waupaca Citizens for Public Response
 - The Woodlands
- An electronic copy of the comments can be found on Midwest Environmental Advocates' website at www.midwestadvocates.org, under "New at MEA," or by clicking [here](#).
- The Livestock Siting Technical Advisory Committee is composed of the following members:
 - Bill Bland, University of Wisconsin – Madison, wlbland@facstaff.wisc.edu
 - Linda Bochert, lhbochert@mbf-law.com
 - Denny Caneff, River Alliance of Wisconsin, dcaneff@wisconsinrivers.org
 - Bruce Haukom, Jefferson County Zoning and Planning, mbruceh@co.jefferson.wi.us
 - Dick Hauser, neptune@mwt.net
 - Jim Holte, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Board, holtejge@ecol.net
 - Geral Jaeger, Wisconsin Farmers Union Board, mjeager@kmoraine.com
 - Pete Kappelman, pskapp@kaefield.net
 - Ed Larson, Dairy Business Association Board, ed@larsonacres.com
 - Pat Murphy, Natural Resources Conservation Service, pat.murphy@wi.usda.gov
 - Mark O'Connell, Wisconsin Counties Association, o'connell@wicounties.org
 - Bill Pielsticker, Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited, billpiel@merr.com
 - Keri Retallick, Wisconsin Pork Producers Association, retallick@wppa.org
 - Gary Rohde, University of Wisconsin–River Falls, grohde@presenter.com
 - John Rosenow, nrosenow@mwt.net
 - Al Shea, Department of Natural Resources, Allen.Shea@dnr.state.wi.us
 - Rick Stadelman, Wisconsin Towns Association, wtowns@frontiernet.net
 - Tom Ward, tomward@co.manitowoc.wi.us