

jan Whitefoot

WE believe wildfires desperately need to be included with the total count for exceedences of bad air quality days in the Yakima Valley because we have had wildfires for 3 years and they are no longer exceptional. Today our families were prisoners in our homes because the air quality was labeled too hazardous to go outside. My neighbor has asthma so bad she lost her job as a nurse. We have had bad air quality for over 2 solid weeks because of wildfires. This situation has become a crisis because of Ecology's fear of offending industry. EPA needs to step in and declare Yakima County as a non compliance air shed. The toppenish air monitor's non compliant days also need to be counted towards noncompliance since it is considered in the same airshed and is at a federal level. Yakima regional clean air authority collects a fee from the city of Toppenish, therefore toppenish' non compliance days would tip the scales towards non compliance. The air monitors in toppenish and Sunnyside need to be monitored by trustworthy organizations who would not have non compliant days counted because air monitors were conveniently broken on additional bad air days. These " Broken monitors" days need to be reviewed by an unbiased EPA panel. Yakima valley, over 90 concentrated animal feeding operations pollute all year round. They contribute to the pollution during forest fires also. The CDC/ AStd is so concerned about Yakima Valley Cafos pollution, they just finished a study monitoring air pollution near factory farm dairies here locally. These results will be out shortly after Labor Day. The Yakima Valley Farmworker Clinic has supported a recent study of monitoring air quality in homes near Cafos in the lower Valley. John Hopkins's Dr. Deanna Williams did an air quality study in homes of the Yakima valley near dairy cafos. Pollution from dairies was found inside these homes. Per Yakima Herald article were Ecology spokeswoman said they wanted to support industry and we had pretty good air quality was criminal on Ecology's part. No where in the article did Ecology admit that Yakima County' s citizen's health should be protected. EPA needs to step in and declare Ecology incapable of fairly determining non compliance. When I called Ecology to have them explain the compliance non compliance issue, they couldn't. I was referred to one person after another until they admitted that only 2 people in their office in the state of Washington could calculate noncompliance. We do not trust Ecology's track record of bias towards polluting industries. They have shown they are incapable of and do not care about protecting the health of citizens within the Yakima airshed. please, intervene, EPA.

sincerely, Jan Whitefoot, CCYR