

## 2 Oregon dairy manure digesters cited for air quality violations

NEWS

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Two Oregon dairy manure digesters, both supported by taxpayers, have been fined a total of \$38,201 for violating their air quality permits.

Digesters, which break down manure and other organic material to create energy, are regulated by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

DEQ fined [WOF PNW Threemile Project](#) in Boardman \$19,500 for exceeding its limit for fine particulate matter emissions.

That happened because the facility was using more natural gas than projected to dry manure for animal bedding.

Fine particulate matter emitted in excess of permit limits can contribute to human health problems including chronic bronchitis, irregular heartbeat, decreased lung function and respiratory distress.

The violation began in June 2019, and continued through September 2020.

[WOF PNW](#) leases land from Threemile Canyon Farm and has a manure supply agreement with Columbia River Dairy, which supplies milk to Tillamook Creamery.

It received an Enterprise Zone Tax Abatement which made it exempt from property taxes during construction and for its first seven years of operation. And it received \$10 million in tax-exempt financing from Oregon Private Activity Bonds – tax-exempt financing for construction projects that benefit the public.

"Drying manure is an important step in the larger digester project which Threemile Canyon Farms developed to reduce methane discharge and generate a renewable energy source," said Jennifer Maleitzke, director of communications and external affairs for R.D. Offutt Company, which owns Threemile Canyon Farms.

"Threemile takes compliance obligations very seriously. When we were notified in August 2020, we took immediate action and completely fixed the problem by October 2020," she said.

DEQ fined [Farm Power Misty Meadow](#) in Tillamook \$18,701 for failing to operate a combustion flare, allowing air pollutants including volatile organic compounds and methane to be emitted at uncontrolled rates.

VOCs are ozone precursors that lead to the formation of smog. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.

The violation took place between July 3, 2019 and May 4, 2021. The company also was cited for failing to accurately report flare malfunctions to DEQ, and failing to install a warning signal connected to the flare.

Farm Power operates two digesters, and has a third under construction. In Tillamook County, its digester serves Misty Meadow dairy.

Farm Power received \$1 million in cash incentives from Energy Trust of Oregon.

Farm Power Misty Meadow did not respond to interview requests.

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