

*Air pollution*  
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## SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL EDITORIALS

### Pollution And Controls

On December 7, the board of supervisors of Monterey county will hold a public hearing on a proposal to form an air pollution control district in the county.

While indirectly related to the controversial Humble Oil refinery project, the air pollution control district plan is essential to provide suitable controls and checking authority for the people of Monterey county.

The supervisors have given no indication as to how they feel on the measure although representatives of the Humble company have indicated they would be happy to cooperate in an air pollution control district.

Because air pollution pays little attention to political boundaries, a Monterey county control district is merely a step in the right direction should the supervisors decide to form the district.

Under existing state law, it is impossible to form a multi-county district without state legislation. It is possible, of course, for a county to join with other counties in forming a district after an initial district is approved.

Thus, if Monterey county did approve the formation of the district, it would be possible for counties such as Santa Cruz and San Benito to merge with the Monterey district in forming a two or three-county district.

Obviously, it would make much better sense to have a joint district than a single county authority although it appears that it might be more feasible to start with a single county district, then work toward expanding it into a facility which could handle the pollution problem in a wider area.

It might be possible, for example, to join with the San Francisco Bay Area Air Pollution Control district or perhaps to contract with that district for pollution monitoring and control investigation.

From a cost standpoint, it is difficult for a small county or even a county as large as Monterey, to provide their own equipment, or to form an adequate and qualified staff.

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large as Monterey, to provide their own equipment, or to form an adequate and qualified staff.

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Nevertheless, it appears that the need for air pollution control is more and more critical. The Monterey Bay area has been reknown for its clean air, but new industries and greater agricultural activities can create some pollution problems.

It was evident in a report before the Monterey board of supervisors only recently that firms and government agencies in that county have failed to comply with requests to eliminate pollution problems, including the burning of refuse and the operation of industrial plants containing some pollutants.

Without the proper supervisorial investigations, it is obvious that no one is going to do anything about the spread of pollution. It is actions such as these which should put us on guard. If violations are going to be ignored, we face a real problem in containing air pollution today and in the future.

With the increasing amount of automotive traffic in the area, we may not be far away from the day when trucks and automobiles contribute to smog conditions.

We feel that Santa Cruz county and Monterey county, both highly interested in agriculture, in recreation and in obtaining new industries, should take the lead in establishing a workable air pollution control district.

The time to do this is before the problem becomes acute, not when it gets so bad we can't do anything about it.

And for those who feel that smog is nothing to fret about, we suggest they take a good look at the Santa Clara valley and the San Francisco Bay area, much less Los Angeles.

In Los Angeles, smog has reached awful proportions. It not only irritates the eyes, but it harms crops, ruins tempers and makes living conditions intolerable.

The situation isn't quite so bad in the bay area, but it is getting worse.

We don't want these conditions to prevail in the Monterey Bay area. Perhaps, we will not be able to stop air pollution, but certainly if we take the proper steps immediately we have a better chance to preserve our clean air.

We are hopeful that the Monterey supervisors will take the first essential steps next month and if they do, we hope the Santa Cruz board of supervisors will act toward forming a joint district to safeguard the air in both counties.

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