MEMORANDUM

Date: October 19, 2021

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

Re: Response to Email Directed to the Board of Supervisors from Don’t Waste Arizona (DWAZ) Regarding the Proposed Becton, Dickinson and Company Sterilization Facility

District 1 Supervisor Rex Scott asked that a response be prepared related to the Don’t Waste Arizona (DWAZ) email directed to the Board regarding concerns about the County’s Air Quality Permit of the Becton Dickinson and Company sterilization facility.

The attached memorandum from Pima County Environmental Quality Director Ursula Nelson adequately responds to the concerns expressed in the DWAZ communication.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: Jan Lesher, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Francisco Garcia, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer, Health and Community Services
Ursula Nelson, Director, Pima County Department of Environmental Quality
MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 19, 2021

TO: C.H. Huckelberry
    County Administrator
FROM: Ursula K. Nelson, P.E.
      Director

RE: Becton, Dickinson and Company Air Quality Permit

This memorandum is in response to the email from Don’t Waste Arizona (DWAZ) regarding the proposed Becton, Dickinson sterilization facility.

PDEQ responds as follows to the specific items raised by DWAZ:

- The PDEQ air quality program cannot regulate ethylene oxide (EO) storage. The proposed permit only addresses air emissions of EO since that is the regulatory authority under which the permit is issued.
- The proposed permit includes specific limits on allowable EO emissions from the facility. The proposed permit also specifies recordkeeping and compliance requirements. The proposed air quality controls exceed those currently required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- PDEQ expanded the area for the environmental justice analysis to ensure that all nearby residents and businesses were provided with information about the proposed facility. In addition to expanding the geographic area, PDEQ also extended the public comment period from the required 30 days to 90 days to provide additional time to provide information and obtain public comment.
- PDEQ held a virtual open house meeting on October 6 to provide an opportunity for the public to hear about the proposed permit, ask questions and provide comment. In accordance with direction from the Clerk of the Board’s office (COB), PDEQ used WebEx, the same platform as that used for Board of Supervisors meetings. Also in accordance with COB procedures, the Q&A and chat features are disabled. The open house is not subject to open meetings laws since it was not a meeting of a public body although PDEQ made every effort to provide access to the public. In addition to the virtual open house, PDEQ is also hosting an in-person open house.
- Upon verification of compliance with EPA regulations for this type of facility, PDEQ will issue the permit in accordance with the applicable EPA regulations. Although not required by PDEQ regulations, modeling was performed by BD to evaluate potential impacts of EO at the facility’s property line and extending 5 kilometers from the facility in all directions. The model focused on the six nearest residential areas and the results were reviewed by
PDEQ and EPA. The modeled risk at the identified six residential receptors does not exceed the EPA-derived 100-in-a-million risk threshold level for an individual if that person were exposed to that concentration level continuously for a lifetime. The 100-in-a-million risk threshold level is the threshold level for determining an acceptable level of risk for annual EO exposure as part of EPA’s National Air Toxics Assessment.

• The proposed BD facility is located within the City of Tucson. PDEQ has no authority regarding zoning decisions or designation either in the City or any other jurisdiction. Questions and comments regarding zoning should be directed to the City of Tucson.

• PDEQ is aware of not only the history of BD in Georgia but also general concerns around the country regarding EO sterilization facilities. However, that history does not provide regulatory justification regarding permitting decisions.

More information regarding BD and the proposed air quality permit is on PDEQ’s website at https://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pagId=740735.

We are available to discuss this further at your convenience.

c: Carmine DeBonis Jr., Deputy County Administrator
    Barbara Escobar, PDEQ Deputy Director
    Rupesh Patel, PDEQ Air Program Manager