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# EPA fines SoCal animal processing facility for Clean Air Act violations

## Over \$230,000 in penalties paid

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### Contact Information

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213-326-2033

Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a settlement with Smithfield Packaged Meats Corp. (Smithfield) and Clougherty Packing, LLC (Dba Farmer John) over alleged Clean Air Act violations at the Farmer John animal slaughtering and meatpacking facility in Vernon, Calif. Smithfield and Clougherty Packing, LLC will pay \$237,537 in civil penalties. In addition, both entities made safety improvements to the facility to ensure protection of their employees and the public.

“It is paramount that facilities properly manage regulated toxic substances and comply with federal requirements to protect employees, the environment, and the local community,” **said EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator Martha**

**Guzman.** “Failure to do so can result in significant penalties.”

Smithfield purchased Clougherty Packing, LLC (which owned the Farmer John facility), in January 2017. On September 21, 2017, EPA conducted an inspection of the facility and found violations of the Clean Air Act’s Risk Management Program requirements, including:

- Failure to identify hazards associated with the discharge of emergency exhaust pipes and pressure relief valves.
- Failure to repair a malfunctioning ammonia sensor and replace damaged or missing insulation, properly seal doors, protect electrical equipment, replace corroded piping and equipment, and properly label the facility’s process and emergency equipment.
- Failure to maintain adequate process safety information for the facility’s alarms, process equipment and emergency ventilation system.

In addition to Smithfield and Clougherty Packing, LLC paying the civil penalties, Smithfield and Clougherty Packing, LLC undertook numerous safety improvements to the facility to ensure protection of the public and first responders from dangerous chemicals. Such safety upgrades included repairing damaged refrigeration equipment, adding safety signage and labeling, and improving emergency ventilation systems. Thousands of facilities nationwide make, use, and store extremely hazardous substances, including anhydrous ammonia. Catastrophic accidents at these facilities result in fatalities and serious injuries, evacuations, and other harm to human health and the environment.

Learn more about Risk Management Plan <<https://epa.gov/rmp/>> requirements under the Clean Air Act.

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