

Biogas: The Dirty Truth

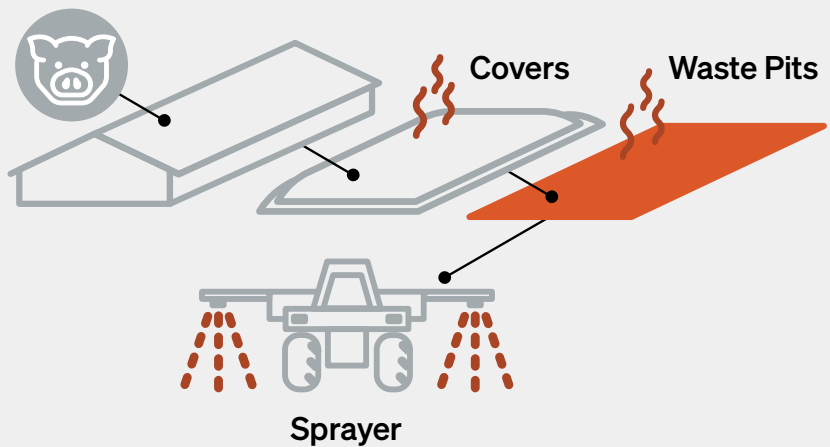


SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER

Biogas is dirty energy. Storing billions of gallons of untreated hog waste in lagoons, which are essentially pits of urine and feces, pollutes our rivers and streams, dirties our air, creates an unbearable stench, makes people sick, and can even lead to premature death. Black, Latino, and Native American families disproportionately bear the burden of this pollution. Biogas would lock in these injustices. Industry plans to cap some hog waste pits to capture gases and pipe gases offsite. But the serious pollution problems remain and will get even worse.

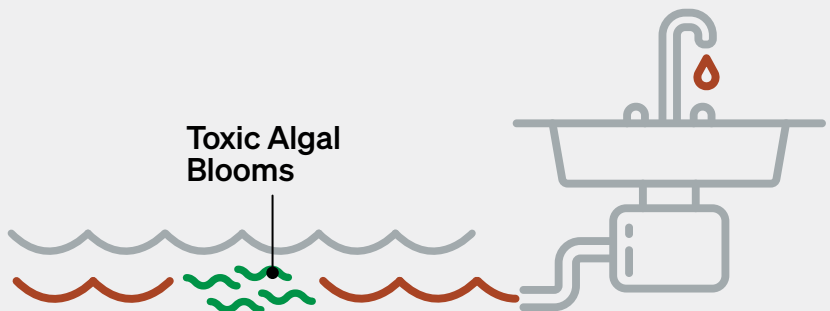
Hog Operations

Industrial hog operations store untreated feces and urine in football field-sized pits and spray it onto nearby fields—the cheapest, most harmful way possible to handle the billions of gallons hog waste produced at the 2,000+ industrial hog operations in N.C. Industry is doubling-down on this polluting system to make biogas. Capping one hog waste pit while leaving the others uncovered creates more air pollution and threatens our waterways even more.



Water Pollution

Untreated hog waste contains harmful nutrients, bacteria, and pathogens that contaminate drinking water and pollute our water ways, causing toxic algal blooms and fish kills. Biogas will make this water pollution even worse.



Harm to People and Communities

Families—disproportionately Black, Latino, and Native American families—who live nearby and downstream from waste pits and sprayfields suffer. The sprayed waste drifts onto properties and causes people to get sick. Covering just one lagoon doesn't solve the stench problem, and makes other air pollution even worse.



Flooding

During major rain events, uncovered lagoons can overflow and sprayfields can flood, sending untreated hog feces and urine into rivers and streams.

