



Media Release

Central Valley Laboratory Fined for Delayed Reporting of Drinking Water Test Results

BC Laboratories, Inc. ordered to pay after repeatedly failing to notify water systems of acute contaminants

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Contact: Blair Robertson

Blair.Robertson@Waterboards.ca.gov

SACRAMENTO - A Central Valley environmental testing laboratory accused of failing to notify water systems of drinking water samples that exceeded crucial maximum contamination levels has been fined \$18,000 by the State Water Resources Control Board's Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP).

Bakersfield-based BC Laboratories, Inc. (BCL) has been the recipient of multiple prior enforcement actions for this type of violation.

The latest case stems from an ELAP investigation that found two separate instances of failed notification. Laboratories are required to notify a water system and the State Water Board within 24 hours if acute contaminants, such as Coliform, E. Coli or nitrate cited in this probe, exceed the maximum safe level. These contaminants can cause harmful health effects within hours or days of exposure. Delayed reporting could result in a water system serving unsafe water to its customers.

On Oct. 16, BCL paid the citation and reported it had taken corrective action, retrained staff and conducted an internal audit. If BCL does not remain in compliance, ELAP may take further enforcement action.

Laboratories performing drinking water analyses play a critical role in the protection of public health and environment and are required to be ELAP-accredited to give regulators confidence in the data produced. The State Water Board recently adopted new regulations to improve laboratories and data quality. They are slated to go into effect Jan. 1, 2021.

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