SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
2156 Sierra Way ● P.O. Box 1489 ● San Luis Obispo, California 93406
TELEPHONE (805) 781-5544 ● FAX (805) 781-4211

JUN 29 1995

Bill Moylan
1516 17th St.
Los Osos, CA. 93402

June 27, 1995

Dear Mr. Moylan,

Since March of 1995 we have received complaints of surfacing sewage at 1550 17th Street Los Osos. Until recently that property has been covered with standing water to the degree that it was impossible to determine the source of the water. Standing water has now receded and a meaningful investigation into the alleged surfacing sewage issue has been completed by this division.

Groundwater is still very shallow in the immediate vicinity of 1550 17th street. In most places it is approximately 1 foot below normal grade. A mound style on site sewage disposal system is present in the front yard and covers a surface area of approximately 20 feet by 30 feet. The mound is elevated approximately 2 feet above normal grade. Because of the exceptionally high groundwater, there is virtually no vertical movement of sewage effluent in the mound. Instead, there is significant seepage all along one side of the mound into an open trench along the driveway. The open trench drains into a pipe which empties into a sump in the back yard. This sump collects excess water from the back yard and pumps both the mound seepage and this back yard water out into the street.

Bacteriological samples were taken from the open trench along the driveway and in the street. Both samples showed gross contamination, greater than 16,000 fecal coliform organisms per milliliter of sample water.

In my opinion, the mound system is releasing inadequately treated domestic sewage to the surface of the immediate property and eventually to the public street, creating a potential public health hazard. The mound system is failing because it is being significantly over taxed by the 7 to 8 occupants living in the dwelling and severely hampered by the exceptionally high groundwater in the area.

To my knowledge, there is no feasible way to correct the problem through repair of the onsite sewage disposal system. Either the load on the system must be reduced or the high groundwater pumped down below 2 feet of normal grade. The tenant in the dwelling has reduced water consumption to a reasonable degree given the number of household occupants.

006006

The only immediate action that can be taken to alleviate this condition is (1) cease and desist order from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, (2) preemptory order from the local health officer requiring abatement, (3) extra ordinary voluntary measures by the tenant and landlord to reduce flow. I am currently working on all three options.

If you have any questions please call (805) 781-5544.

Jerry Le Moine

Jerry Le Moine, Director
Environmental Health

cc: Supervisor Laurent
RWQCB
Dr. Thomas
Leon Vanbeurden-Owner
Rose Spagnola-Tenant
John Garoogian-Social Services

JL/ltrs/Moylan.ltr
ls-6/95