

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION**

ORDER NO. R7-2008-0003

**WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR  
RIVERSIDE COUNTY WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT, LAND OWNER  
AGRI SERVICE, INC., FACILITY OWNER/OPERATOR  
COACHELLA VALLEY COMPOST FACILITY  
North of Coachella - Riverside County**

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region, finds that:

1. Agri Service Inc., located at 380 South Melrose Drive, Suite 203, Vista, California 92081, owns and operates the Coachella Valley Composting Facility (CVCF) located at 87-011 Landfill Road, Coachella, California 92236. CVCF is a green waste composting facility that began operating in 2000.
2. CVCF is located on land that Agri Service, Inc. leases from the Riverside County Waste Management Department (RCWMD) located at 14310 Frederick Street, Moreno Valley 92553. This leased land is part of a 640-acre parcel owned by the RCWMD that also contains the closed Coachella Sanitary Landfill, and the existing Coachella Valley Transfer Station (CVTS).
3. The 640-acre parcel (hereinafter, CSL property) is located in Section 22, Township 5 South, Range 8 East, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian (SBB&M) and includes Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 601-340-017, 601-340-018, and 601-340-019, as shown on Attachment 1, location map, incorporated herein and made a part of this Order.
4. CVCF is located on approximately 35 acres in the southern portion of the CSL property, south of the Landfill footprint and transfer station, in an area previously excavated for borrow soil for landfill cover as shown on Attachment 2, Site Map, incorporated herein and made a part of this Order.

**Board Orders**

5. Agri Service Inc., facility owner/operator, and RCWMD, land owner, (hereinafter collectively referred to as the Discharger), submitted a Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) dated April 25, 2006 to revise Board Order No. R7-2000-0045 to allow acceptance of grease trap waste from local restaurants and food service facilities.
6. CVCF is currently regulated by Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) adopted on May 10, 2000 by the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) in Board Order No. R7-2000-0045.
7. A Change of Name and/or Ownership of Facilities having WDRs was adopted by the Regional Board on May 8, 2002 (Board Order No. R7-2002-0116) to amend the ownership of CVCF from Salido Creek Enterprises, P.O. Box 10810, Indio, CA 92202, to Agri Service, Inc.

8. The closed Coachella Landfill is regulated by Closure/Post Closure Maintenance WDRs prescribed in Board Order No. R7-2001-0098, adopted by the Regional Board on June 27, 2001. The Landfill is unlined, and operated from 1972 to the late 1990's. Monitoring systems exist for groundwater and gas, as well as a gas extraction/flare system. Final cover was completed on August 23, 1999.

## Definitions

9. Definition of terms used in this order:
  - a. Additives – Waste or products including recycled drywall and chemicals approved by the Regional Board Executive Officer for mixing with feedstock or treated wastes to adjust the moisture level, carbon to nitrogen ratio, and/or porosity, to generate conditions favorable for composting.
  - b. Agricultural Waste – Plant wastes originating directly from an agricultural commodity, which are products of a farm or ranch, or by-products resulting from agricultural processes. Agricultural waste includes agricultural, floricultural, silvicultural, and vermicultural wastes.
  - c. Compost – A mixture of decaying organic matter used to amend and condition soil.
  - d. Composting Management Facility (CMF) – The entire parcel of property on which composting operations or related activities are conducted.
  - e. Composting Management Unit (CMU) – An area of land, or a portion of a composting management facility in which compost, additives, or raw materials are discharged, treated, or stored. The term includes ancillary features including containment, drainage control, and monitoring appurtenances.
  - f. Discharger – Any person who discharges waste that could affect the quality of the waters of the State including any person who owns a waste management unit or who is responsible for the operation of a waste management unit (Title 27, California Code of Regulations).
  - g. Feedstock – A comprehensive term that includes green waste, food processing waste, agriculture waste, paper waste, recycle waste, and additives.
  - h. Food Processing Waste – Waste consisting of or containing only pre-processed and post-processed produce or food from restaurants, food service facilities, and food distributors.
  - i. Grease Trap Waste – Waste that is removed by liquid waste haulers from restaurant and food service facility grease traps, that consists of water, oil, grease, bits of food, and cleaning products.
  - j. Green waste – Waste from plants including leaves, clippings, cuttings, grass trimmings, weeds, shrubbery, bushes, trees, residential or community garden wastes, and untreated wood wastes.

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- k. Paper Waste – Waste that consists primarily of paper, and is an accessory waste to curbside green waste, food processing waste, and organic waste from re-sort source separation programs.
- l. Recycled Drywall – New drywall waste from construction activities that is crushed and added to soil or compost as an amendment.

**The Facility**

- 10. CVCF has an estimated maximum design capacity of 75,000 tons per year or 250 tons per day (tpd).
- 11. All active (first stage) composting takes place in an area lined with a 40-mil high density polyethylene (HDPE) liner installed 18 inches below the ground surface.
- 12. The composting facility is designed to promote lateral drainage of free liquids, including compost leachate, wastewater from cleaning operations, and precipitation. Off-site runoff enters a natural channel north of CVCF where it is directed around the site to avoid contact with active compost piles. Liquids within the facility are conveyed to a 40-mil lined sump (35 feet in diameter and 10 feet deep) situated at the southwest corner of the lined compost footprint. A 1000-gallon plastic tank is located at the bottom of the sump to collect liquids and facilitate pumping.
- 13. Liquid collecting in the plastic tank located at the bottom of the sump (as described in Finding 12) is sampled and analyzed quarterly for constituents of concern typical of the compost waste stream.
- 14. To evaluate the integrity of the liner, two (2) moisture collection tubes located beneath the liner are inspected quarterly for evidence of moisture (i.e., vapor, condensation, or standing water). Observations are documented in a field log, and in monitoring reports provided to semiannually/annually to the Regional Board.
- 15. To determine if moisture is collecting on the liner, soil overlying the cover is potholed quarterly down-slope of active windrows or grids, to a depth of eighteen (18) inches. Pothole locations vary for each sampling event. Soil samples from potholes are evaluated for moisture (i.e. saturated, cohesive, moist, dry) at six (6) inch intervals, starting one (1) inch below the ground surface. The location of the pothole, and moisture content of soil samples is documented in a field log, and in monitoring reports provided to semiannually/annually to the Regional Board.
- 16. The Discharger reports that the current composting process uses approximately 12,500 gallons per day (gpd) of water. Water demand is dependent on ambient conditions and the moisture content of the incoming feedstock. Potable water is obtained from the City of Coachella.

**Composting Process**

- 17. The Discharger submitted a Report of Composting Site Information dated July 2007.

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18. The Discharger estimates compost wastes to consist of 90% municipal green waste, and up to 10% new drywall waste. The Grid/Windrow Process (G/WP) Method is used to compost waste. Active compost processing ranges from (4) four to eight (8) weeks.
19. The finished compost product contains additives such as gypsum from new recycled drywall waste from construction activities. New recycled drywall and green wastes are mixed at the tipping floor then ground directly into the green mix at approximately 10% by mass of the incoming material. Production of finished compost averages 150 to 250 tpd.
20. CVCF is allowed to accept the following wastes for composting:
  - a. agricultural waste (may contain agronomic levels of pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides);
  - b. non-treated wood;
  - c. paper waste;
  - d. residential or community garden green waste;
  - e. food and grocery waste;
  - f. restaurant and food service grease trap waste; and
  - g. recycled drywall from new construction.
21. CVCF is not allowed to accept, treat or compost the following wastes:
  - a. municipal solid waste;
  - b. sludge (including sewage sludge, water treatment sludge, and industrial sludge);
  - c. septage;
  - d. liquid waste, unless specifically approved by this Order or by the Regional Board Executive Officer;
  - e. animal waste, unless specifically approved by this Order or by the Regional Board Executive Officer;
  - f. oil and grease derived from petroleum products;
  - g. hazardous or designated waste, or other wastes determined by the Regional Board to pose a potential threat to water quality;
  - h. hot, burning waste materials or ash;
  - i. treated or painted wood; and
  - j. hazardous or designated waste paper.
22. All loads of feedstock materials are inspected for contaminants prior to grinding and composting. Undesirable materials commingled with the feedstock are removed, and stored in trash bins for later disposal.
23. The feedstock is ground within 96 hours of receipt. Moisture is added to bring the material to optimum moisture content (50 to 60 percent), and then materials are placed in windrows or grids to begin the Process to Further Reduce Pathogens (PFRP). A moisture content of 40 to 55 percent, aerobic conditions, and a temperature of at least 131 degrees Fahrenheit (55 degrees Celsius) is maintained during the PFRP, which typically lasts four (4) to six (6) weeks.
24. Following the PFRP phase, the compost is moved from the windrows or grids to the compost curing area where it remains for four (4) weeks to several months depending on user demand. Some compost is screened to remove larger particles as needed to meet user demand.

25. The Discharger reports that approximately two (2) acres are dedicated for storage of finished compost product. Finished product is stored on site an average of one (1) month. Approximately 1,500 cubic yards of finished product are stored on site at any time. Total site capacity is estimated at 20,000 cubic yards including incoming feedstock, active compost, and finished product using windrows. The capacity can be increased with the grid method.

### **Grease Trap Waste**

26. Grease traps are used by restaurants and food service facilities to prevent fat, oil, and grease from entering sewage treatment or collection systems. Kitchen wastes pass through the grease trap where oil and grease collect at the top of the tank due to their lower density and solids sink to the bottom. The “treated” effluent is then decanted from the middle of the tank, and routed to a wastewater treatment or collection system. As the trap tank fills, detention time is decreased resulting in less effective treatment. The trap must be emptied periodically by a liquid waste hauler who delivers wastes pumped from the trap to an appropriate disposal facility.
27. Grease trap wastes typically have high biological oxygen demand (BOD), and are therefore difficult for wastewater treatment facilities to process. Grease trap waste cannot be discharged to landfills given their high liquid content however they can be applied to land if readily incorporated into the soil where they may have value as a soil amendment. Grease trap waste can be beneficially used in the composting process as a moisture source, and as a feedstock.
28. Using grease trap waste as a moisture source for composting reduces the need for potable process water, and has no net effect on moisture used or leachate generated in the composting process. Grease trap waste accepted at the site will be applied directly to compost material, and shall be limited to the amount needed for processing. Grease trap waste will not be stored on site.

### **Zoning/Land Use**

29. The CVCF is located in an area zoned N-A (Natural Assets).
30. The areas west, northwest, north and northeast of CVCF are within an unincorporated area of Riverside County, zoned W-2-10 (Controlled Development, 10-acre minimum) and N-A. The areas east and south of CVCF are within the City of Coachella, zoned for residential land use.
31. Land use outside the CSL 640-acre parcel include vacant open space to the east and south, agriculture to the west, and sand and gravel mining operations to the north.

### **Other Regulatory Considerations**

32. The Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan), adopted on November 17, 1993, designates the beneficial uses of ground and surface waters in this Region.

33. The beneficial uses of groundwater in the Coachella Hydrologic Subunit are:
  - a. Municipal Supply (MUN)
  - b. Industrial Supply (IND)
  - c. Agriculture Supply (AGR)
34. Federal regulations for storm water discharges promulgated by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency on November 16, 1990 (40 CFR Parts 122, 123, and 124), require specific categories of facilities that discharge storm water associated with industrial activity to obtain NPDES permits, and to implement Best Conventional Pollutant Technology (BCPT) to reduce or eliminate industrial storm water pollution.
35. The State Water Resources Control Board adopted Order No. 97-03-DWQ (General Permit No. CAS000001), specifying WDRs for discharges of storm water associated with industrial activities, excluding construction activities, and requiring submittal of a Notice of Intent by industries to be covered under the Permit.
36. The CVCF currently operates under a tiered Solid Waste Facility Permit (SWFP) called a Standardized Permit issued by the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) of the Riverside County Environmental Health Department. In 2003, the regulatory requirements for Compostable Materials Handling Operations and Facilities changed, requiring CVCF to obtain a full, individual SWFP.

#### **The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

37. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors, as lead agency and in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the development of the CVCF on December 21, 1999. The determination to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration was based upon Riverside County's Environmental Assessment (EA) No. 37800 (State Clearinghouse Number 99111046), which satisfied the requirements of Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.) for an Initial Study.
38. RCWMD prepared EA No. 40808, dated March 27, 2007 (State Clearinghouse No. 2007031143), to address proposed revisions in CVCF operation, including the acceptance of liquid grease trap waste, and the issuance of a full SWFP. EA No. 40808 determined that no additional mitigation measures were necessary to avoid impacts to groundwater from the acceptance of grease trap waste.
39. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors, as lead agency and in accordance with CEQA, adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the proposed operational changes and the issuance of a full SWFP on June 19, 2007. The Regional Board has considered EA No. 40808 and the Mitigated Negative Declaration adopted by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. With compliance, these WDRs will prevent any significant adverse impacts to water quality.

#### **Legal Authorities**

40. This Board Order No. R7-2008-0003 serves as WDRs pursuant to Division 7, Chapter 4, Article 4 of the California Water Code for discharges that are not subject to regulation under Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 402 (33 U.S.C. § 1342).

### **Financial Assurances**

41. The Discharger provided RCWMD a fifty thousand dollar (\$50,000) bond for closure costs at the composting site. A copy of this financial security bond was provided to this Regional Board office.

### **Notification of Interested Parties**

42. The Regional Board has notified the Discharger and all known interested agencies and persons of its intent to issue WDRs for this discharge, and has provided them with an opportunity for a public meeting, and an opportunity to submit written comments.
43. The Regional Board in a public meeting heard and considered all comments pertaining to this discharge.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that in order to meet the provisions contained in Division 7 of the California Water Code and regulations adopted thereunder, the Discharger shall comply with the following:

#### **A. Specifications**

1. The treatment or disposal of waste at this facility shall not cause pollution as defined in Section 13050 of Division 7 of the California Water Code.
2. Compost waste material shall be confined to CVCF as defined in Findings No. 1, 2, and 4, and described in the attached site map.
3. Composting and storage of untreated waste shall be limited to areas designated for such activity. Any revision or modification of the designated area, or proposed change in operation, must be submitted in writing to the Regional Board Executive Officer for review and approval before the proposed change in operation or modification in the designated area is implemented.
4. Any proposed increase or change in the annual average volume of material to be composted at the facility must be submitted in writing to the Regional Board Executive Officer for review and approval.
5. The Discharger shall remove and properly relocate any unacceptable waste received by the facility in violation of these requirements.
6. Water used for the composting process and site maintenance shall be limited to the amount necessary for optimal compost processing, and dust control.
7. Liquid grease trap waste accepted at this facility shall be applied to windrows or grids located in the lined area of the site, and only during the PFRP stage. Liquid grease trap waste shall be applied only as needed to achieve optimum moisture content (40 % – 55 %) of the material, and shall be well mixed with the windrow or grid materials to prevent leachate or odors.

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8. Any liquid collected in the plastic tank located at the bottom of the sump may be reapplied to the windrows or grids in the PFRP treatment phase.
9. Recycled drywall waste shall not be retained on site for more than ninety (90) days.
10. Surface drainage run-on from surface or subsurface tributary areas, shall not contact or percolate composting material, or amendment additives discharged at this facility.
11. CVCF shall be protected from washout, erosion, or inundation that may result from floods with a predicted frequency of once in 100 years.
12. For any area of the facility to be closed, the Discharger shall notify the Regional Board Executive Officer at least 180 days prior to beginning any partial or final closure activity.
13. Ninety (90) days prior to ceasing composting operations, the Discharger shall submit a workplan, subject to approval by the Regional Board Executive Officer, for assessing the extent (if any) of contamination to natural geological materials, and ground or surface waters, due to waste discharge and treatment at this facility. Within 120 days following workplan approval, the Discharger shall submit a technical report providing the results of the contamination assessment. The workplan and contamination assessment shall be completed by a California registered civil engineer or certified engineering geologist.
14. Upon ceasing composting operations at this facility, all waste, natural geologic material contaminated by waste, and surplus or unprocessed composting material, shall be removed from the site and disposed of in a manner approved by the Regional Board Executive Officer.

**B. Prohibitions**

1. The discharge or deposit of wastes at CVCF other than those listed below is prohibited:
  - a. Agricultural waste (may contain agronomic levels of pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides);
  - b. Non-treated wood;
  - c. Paper waste;
  - d. Residential or community garden green waste;
  - e. Food and grocery waste;
  - f. Restaurant and food service grease trap waste; and
  - g. Recycled drywall from new construction.
2. CVCF is prohibited from accepting, treating or composting the following wastes:
  - a. Municipal solid waste;
  - b. Sludge (including sewage sludge, water treatment sludge, and industrial sludge);
  - c. Septage;
  - d. Liquid waste, unless specifically approved by this Order or by the Regional Board Executive Officer;
  - e. Animal waste, unless specifically approved by this Order or by the Regional Board Executive Officer
  - f. Oil and grease derived from petroleum products;

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- g. Hazardous or designated wastes (as defined in Title 27), or other wastes determined by the Regional Board to pose a potential threat to water quality;
  - h. Hot, burning waste materials or ash;
  - i. Treated or painted wood; and
  - j. Hazardous or designated waste paper.
3. CVCF shall not accept liquid grease trap waste in excess of 12,500 gallons per day, or store liquid waste on site.
4. CVCF shall only accept liquid grease trap waste from liquid waste haulers with a current Riverside County Department of Environmental Health Liquid Waste Haulers Permit, and that display the Permit decal.
5. The discharge shall not cause degradation of any groundwater aquifer or water supply.
6. The discharge of waste to land not owned or controlled by the Discharger is prohibited.
7. The Discharger shall neither cause nor contribute to the contamination or pollution of groundwater via the release of waste constituents in either liquid or gaseous phase.
8. Direct discharge of any waste to any surface water or surface drainage course is prohibited.

**C. Provisions**

1. The Discharger shall implement and comply with Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) No. R7-2008-0003, and future revisions thereto as specified by the Regional Board Executive Officer, to detect at the earliest opportunity, any unauthorized discharge of waste constituents from CVCF.
2. The size, operational condition, and location of windrows, grids, and curing piles, shall be managed pursuant to Riverside County Fire Department approval, or specified conditions.
3. The Discharger shall report any incidence of fire to the Regional Board by telephone within 48 hours, in accordance with MRP R7-2008-0003 Part C.3.b.
4. Prior to a change in ownership or management of this operation, the Discharger shall transmit a copy of this Board Order to the succeeding owner/operator, and forward a copy of the transmittal letter to the Regional Board.
5. Prior to a facility modification that results in a material change in the quality or quantity of discharge, or a material change in the location of discharge, the Discharger shall report all pertinent information in writing to the Regional Board, and obtain revised requirements before implementing the modification.
6. All containment structures and erosion and drainage control systems shall be designed and constructed under the direct supervision of a California Registered Civil Engineer or Certified Engineering Geologist, and shall be certified as meeting the prescriptive standards and performance goals.

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7. The Discharger shall ensure that all site-management personnel are familiar with the content of this Board Order, and shall maintain a copy of this Board Order at the site.
8. This Board Order does not authorize violation of any federal, state, or local law or regulation.
9. The Discharger shall allow the Regional Board, or an authorized representative upon presentation of credentials and other documents as may be required by law, to:
  - a. Enter the premises regulated by this Board Order, or the place where records must be kept under the conditions of this Board Order;
  - b. Have access to and copy, at reasonable times, any records that shall be kept under the conditions of this Board Order;
  - c. Inspect at reasonable times any facilities, equipment (including monitoring and control equipment), practices, or operations regulated or required under this Board Order; and
  - d. Sample or monitor at reasonable times, for the purpose of assuring compliance with this Board Order or as otherwise authorized by the California Water Code, any substances or parameters at this location.
10. The Discharger shall comply with all conditions of this Board Order. Any noncompliance with this Order constitutes a violation of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act and is grounds for enforcement action.
11. The Discharger shall at all times properly operate and maintain all facilities and systems of treatment and control (and related appurtenances) that are installed or used by the Discharger to achieve compliance with this Board Order. Proper operation and maintenance also includes adequate laboratory controls and appropriate quality assurance procedures.
12. This Board Order does not convey property rights of any sort, or any exclusive privileges, nor does it authorize injury to private property, invasion of personal rights, nor infringement of federal, state, or local laws or regulations.
13. The Discharger is responsible for compliance with the WDRs and the MRP for this facility. The Discharger shall comply with all conditions of these WDRs. Violations may result in enforcement action, including Regional Board or court orders requiring corrective action, imposing civil monetary liability, or modification or revocation of these WDRs.
14. The Discharger shall furnish, under penalty of perjury, technical monitoring program reports, submitted in accordance with the specifications provided by the Regional Board Executive Officer. Such specifications are subject to periodic revision as warranted.
15. The Discharger shall neither cause nor contribute to the contamination or pollution of groundwater through the release of waste constituents in either a liquid or gaseous phase.

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16. The Discharger shall not cause an increase in concentration of waste constituents in soil pore gas, soil-pore liquid, soil or other geological material outside CVCF if such waste constituents could migrate to waters of the State in either a liquid or gaseous phase, and cause a condition of contamination or pollution.
17. The procedure for preparing samples for analyses shall be consistent with Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R7-2008-0003, and revisions thereto. Monitoring reports shall be certified to be true and correct, and signed, under penalty of perjury, by an authorized official of the facility.
18. The Discharger shall submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the State Water Resources Control Board to be covered under the Statewide General NPDES Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Industrial Activities, Order No. 97-03-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000001.

I, Robert Purdue, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of an Order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region, on March 19, 2008.

  
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ROBERT PURDUE  
Executive Officer