

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION**

**Attachment E to Order R5-2012-XXXX  
DEFINITIONS, ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS**

**WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS GENERAL ORDER  
FOR  
MEMBERS OF A THIRD-PARTY GROUP WITHIN THE TULARE LAKE BASIN,  
EXCLUDING THE AREA OF THE WESTLANDS STORM WATER COALITION**

The following definitions, acronyms and abbreviations apply to this Order as related to discharges of waste from irrigated lands. All other terms shall have the same definitions as prescribed by the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code Division 7), unless specified otherwise.

1. Anti-degradation Policy– The State Water Board Resolution 68-16, "*Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality Waters in California*," requires existing high quality water to be maintained until it has been demonstrated that any change will be consistent with maximum benefit to the people of the state, will not unreasonably affect present and anticipated beneficial use of water, and will not result in water quality less than that prescribed in Resolution 68-16. The Central Valley Water Board must require that discharges to high quality waters be subject to best practicable treatment or control of the discharge necessary to avoid pollution or nuisance and to maintain the highest water quality consistent with maximum benefit to the people of the state. Resolution 68-16 has been approved by the USEPA to be consistent with the federal anti-degradation policy.
2. Aquifer – A geologic formation, group of formations, or portion of a formation capable of yielding usable quantities of groundwater to wells or springs (40 CFR Part 257.3-4).
3. Back flow prevention devices – Back flow prevention devices are installed at the well or pump to prevent contamination of groundwater or surface water when fertilizers, pesticides, fumigants, or other chemicals are applied through an irrigation system. Back flow prevention devices used to comply with this Order must be those approved by USEPA, DPR, DPH, or the local public health or water agency.<sup>1</sup>
4. Basin Plan – The Basin Plan is the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Plan for the Tulare Lake Basin. The Basin Plan describes how the quality of the surface and groundwater in the Central Valley Region should be managed to ensure reasonable protection of beneficial uses. The Basin Plan includes beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and a program of implementation.
5. Certified Nutrient Management Specialist – Certified nutrient management plan specialists include Professional Soil Scientists, Professional Agronomists, Crop Advisors<sup>2</sup> certified by the American Society of Agronomy, or Technical Service Providers certified in nutrient management

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<sup>1</sup> California Department of Public Health, Approved Backflow Prevention Devices List at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/drinkingwater/pages/publications.aspx>. Requirements for backflow prevention for pesticide application are located in 6 CCR §6610.

<sup>2</sup> Should the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the California Certified Crop Adviser's establish a specific nutrient management certification, any Certified Crop Adviser who prepares a nutrient management plan must have a nutrient management certification.

in California by the National Resource Conservation Service; or other specialist approved by the Executive Officer.

6. Degradation – Any measurable adverse change in water quality.
7. Durov Diagrams – A graphical representation of water quality. The Durov diagram is an alternative to the Piper diagram. The Durov diagram plots the major ions as percentages of milli-equivalents in two base triangles. The total cations and the total anions are set equal to 100% and the data points in the two triangles are projected onto a square grid which lies perpendicular to the third axis in each triangle. This plot reveals useful properties and relationships for large sample groups. The main purpose of the Durov diagram is to show clustering of data points to indicate samples that have similar compositions.
8. Ephemeral Stream – A stream that flows for a short interval of time after precipitation or snow melt in the immediate area.
9. Exceedance – For the purposes of this Order, an exceedance is a reading using a field instrument or detection by a California state-certified analytical laboratory where the detected result indicates an impact to the beneficial use of the receiving water when compared to a water quality objective for the parameter or constituent. Exceedances will be determined based on available data and application of the appropriate averaging period. The appropriate averaging period may be defined in the Basin Plan, as part of the water quality criteria established by the USEPA, or as part of the water quality criteria being used to interpret a narrative water quality objective. If averaging periods are not defined as part of the water quality objective or the water quality criteria being used, then the Central Valley Water Board may use its best professional judgment to determine an appropriate period.
10. Fertigation - The process of applying fertilizer through an irrigation system by injecting the fertilizer into the irrigation water.
11. Final Annual Nitrogen Budget Worksheet – Worksheet that is prepared by the Member that describes the actual nitrogen budget for the previous crop year for the crop or farm.
12. Groundwater – Water in the ground that is in the zone of saturation. The upper surface of the saturate zone is called the water table.
13. High Quality Waters – Resolution 68-16 refers to “existing quality of water [that] is better than quality established in policies as of the date such policies become effective,”<sup>3</sup> and 40 CFR 131.12 refers to “quality of waters [that] exceed levels necessary to support propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife and recreation.” Such waters are “high quality waters” under the state and federal antidegradation policies. In other words, high quality waters are waters with a baseline background quality of better quality than that necessary to protect beneficial uses.<sup>4</sup>
14. Hydraulic conductivity – The volume of water that will move through a medium (generally soil) in a unit of time under a unit hydraulic gradient through a unit area measured perpendicular to the direction of flow (a measure of a soils ability to transmit water).

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<sup>3</sup> Such policies would include policies such as SWRCB Resolution No. 88-63, Sources of Drinking Water Policy, establishing beneficial uses, and water quality control plans.

<sup>4</sup> US EPA Water Quality Handbook, Chapter 4 Antidegradation (40 CFR 131.12) , defines “high quality waters” as “those whose quality exceeds that necessary to protect the section 101(a)(2) goals of the Act [Clean Water Act], regardless of use designation.”

15. Hydraulic gradient – The change in total hydraulic head per unit distance in a given direction yielding a maximum rate of decrease in hydraulic head.
16. Hydraulic Head - The height relative to a datum plane (generally sea level) of a column of water that can be supported by the hydraulic pressure at a given point in a groundwater system. For a well, the hydraulic head is equal to the distance between the water level in the well and the datum plane (sea level).
17. Impaired water body – A surface water body that is not attaining water quality standards and is identified on the State Water Board’s Clean Water Act section 303(d) list.
18. Intermittent Stream – A stream that goes dry at certain times of the year. Intermittent streams flow during seasons of the year when runoff and/or groundwater contributions sustain the flow in the stream and stop following when precipitation is low and/or the water table drops below the bed of the stream.
19. Irrigated lands – Land irrigated to produce crops or pasture for commercial purposes<sup>5</sup>; nurseries; and privately and publicly managed wetlands.
20. Irrigation return flow/runoff – Surface and subsurface water which leaves the field following application of irrigation water.
21. Kriging – A group of geostatistical techniques to interpolate the value of a random field (e.g., contaminant level in groundwater) at an unobserved location from observations of its value at nearby locations.
22. Management practices to protect water quality – A practice or combination of practices that is the most effective and practicable (including technological, economic, and institutional considerations) means of controlling nonpoint pollutant sources at levels protective of water quality.
23. Member –owners and/or operators of irrigated lands within the Tulare Lake Basin (excluding the area of the Westlands Stormwater Coalition) that are members of the third-party group implementing this Order.
24. Monitoring – Monitoring undertaken in connection with assessing water quality conditions, and factors that may affect water quality conditions. Monitoring includes, but is not limited to, water quality monitoring undertaken in connection with agricultural activities, monitoring to identify short and long-term trends in water quality, nutrient monitoring, active inspections of operations, and management practice implementation and effectiveness monitoring. The purposes of monitoring include, but are not limited to, verifying the adequacy and effectiveness of the Order’s requirements, and evaluating each Member’s compliance with the requirements of the Order.

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<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of this Order, commercial irrigated lands are irrigated lands that have one or more of the following characteristics:

- The landowner or operator holds a current Operator Identification Number/ Permit Number for pesticide use reporting;
- The crop is sold to a third party including, but not limited to, (1) an industry cooperative, (2) harvest crew/company, or (3) a direct marketing location, such as farmers’ markets;
- The landowner or operator files federal taxes using federal Department of Treasury Internal Revenue Service Form 1040, Schedule F *Profit or Loss from Farming*.

25. Nonpoint source waste discharge – The Tulare Lake Basin Plan states that “A nonpoint source discharge usually refers to waste emanating from diffused locations.” Nonpoint source pollution generally results from land runoff, precipitation, atmospheric deposition, drainage, seepage or hydrologic modification. The term "nonpoint source" is defined to mean any source of water pollution that does not meet the legal definition of "point source" in section 502(14) of the Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Act (CWA) defines a point source as a discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance, such as a pipe, ditch, or channel. Irrigated agricultural return flows and agricultural storm water runoff are excluded from the CWA’s definition of point source. Nonpoint pollution sources generally are sources of water pollution that do not meet the definition of a point source as defined by the CWA.
26. Nuisance – “Nuisance” is defined at section 13050 of the Water Code as “...*anything which meets all of the following requirements:*
  - (1) *Is injurious to health, or is indecent or offensive to the senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property, so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property.*
  - (2) *Affects at the same time an entire community or neighborhood, or any considerable number of persons, although the extent of the annoyance or damage inflicted upon individuals may be unequal.*
  - (3) *Occur during, or as a result of, the treatment or disposal of wastes.”*
27. Nutrient – Any element taken in by an organism which is essential to its growth and which is used by the organism in its metabolic process.
28. Off-property discharge – The discharge or release of waste beyond the boundaries of the agricultural operation or to water bodies that run through the agricultural operation.
29. Operation – A distinct farming business, organized as a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, cooperative, or other business entity.
30. Operator – The person, including, but not limited to a farm/ranch manager, lessee or sub-lessee, responsible for or otherwise directing farming operations in decisions that may result in a discharge of waste to surface water or groundwater.
31. Perched groundwater – Groundwater separated from an underlying body of groundwater by an unsaturated zone.
32. Piper Diagram – A graphical representation of the chemistry of a water sample. The relative abundance of cations as percentages of milli-equivalents per liter (meq/L) of sodium, potassium, calcium, and magnesium are first plotted on the cation triangle. The relative abundance of chloride, sulfate, bicarbonate, and carbonate is then plotted on the anion triangle. The two data points on the cation and anion triangles are then combined into the quadrilateral field that shows the overall chemical property of the water sample.
33. Pollution – Defined in section 13050(l)(1) of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act as “...*an alteration of the quality of the waters of the state by waste to a degree which unreasonably affects either of the following: (A) The waters for beneficial uses. (B) Facilities which serve these beneficial uses.”*
34. Proposed Annual Nitrogen Budget Worksheet – Worksheet that is prepared by the Member that indicates the anticipated nitrogen budget for the upcoming crop year.

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35. Receiving waters – Surface water or groundwater that receives or has the potential to receive discharges of waste from irrigated lands.
36. Requirements of applicable water quality control plans – Water quality objectives, prohibitions, total maximum daily load implementation plans, or other requirements contained in water quality control plans adopted by the Central Valley Water Board and approved according to applicable law.
37. Rubbish, refuse, or other solid waste – Examples of this type of waste include, but are not limited to metal, plastic, glass, paper, tires, deceased animals, containers, garbage, and crop vegetative waste.
38. Salt – The products other than water of the reaction of an acid with a base. Salts commonly break up into cations (positively charged ions) such as sodium, calcium, etc. and anions (negatively charged ions) such as chloride, sulfate, etc. when dissolved in water. Total dissolved solids and electrical conductivity are used as general estimate of the amount of salts in a water or wastewater.
39. Stiff Diagram - A graphical representation of the chemistry of a water sample. A polygon shaped figure created from four parallel horizontal axes using the equivalent charge concentrations (meq/L) of cations and anions. Cations are plotted on the left of the vertical zero axis and anions are plotted on the right.
40. Stormwater runoff – The runoff of precipitation from irrigated lands.
41. Subsurface drainage – Water generated by installing and operating drainage systems to lower the water table below irrigated lands. Subsurface drainage systems, deep open drainage ditches, or drainage wells can generate this drainage.
42. Surface water – Water pooled or collected at or above ground level. Surface waters include, but are not limited to, natural streams, lakes, wetlands, creeks, constructed agricultural drains, agricultural dominated waterways, irrigation and flood control channels, or other non-stream tributaries. Surface waters include all waters of the United States and their tributaries, interstate waters and their tributaries, intrastate waters, and all impoundments of these waters. For the purposes of this Order, surface waters do not include water in agricultural fields.
43. Tailwater – The runoff of irrigation water from an irrigated field.
44. Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) - From the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 40 CFR 130.2(i), a TMDL is: “The sum of the individual WLAs [wasteload allocations] for point sources and LAs [load allocations] for nonpoint sources and natural background. ... TMDLs can be expressed in terms of either mass per time, toxicity, or other appropriate measure. ...”.
45. Toxicity – Refers to the toxic effect to aquatic organisms from waste contained in an ambient water quality sample.
46. Unsaturated Zone – The zone between the land surface and the deepest water table which includes the capillary fringe. Water in this zone is generally under less than atmospheric pressure, and some of the voids may contain air or other gases at atmospheric pressure. Beneath flooded areas or in perched water bodies the water pressure locally may be greater than atmospheric.

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