



Enforcement News

LAHONTAN REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/>

DECEMBER 2010 SEWAGE SPILL INTO LAKE TAHOE RESULTS IN \$239,081 FINE FROM LAHONTAN BOARD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 16, 2012

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The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board has issued an Administrative Civil Liability (ACL) Order to the North Tahoe Public Utility District (NTPUD) in the amount of \$239,081. Water Board staff originally recommended imposing \$232,100 for the December 2010 spill, but the Water Board increased the liability based on the potential harm of the spill on public health and Lake Tahoe's extraordinary clarity.

The NTPUD spent approximately \$400,000 to upgrade the backup power system at its Dollar Hill Pump Station. Due to a number of factors, the backup power system failed to operate properly during an electrical power failure, resulting in the spill of approximately 129,500 gallons of untreated sewage and storm water into Lake Tahoe.

The NTPUD provided testimony attempting to place responsibility for the spill on its contractors that designed and installed the backup power system in June 2010. However, the Water Board found that NTPUD is ultimately responsible for the proper operation and maintenance of the pump station and for the actions of its contractors it hires, and therefore, solely subject to the liability.

"The Water Board takes seriously its responsibility to protect Lake Tahoe, and this liability order provides a message for others to comply with requirements intended to protect public health and water quality," stated Patty Z. Kouyoumdjian, the Lahontan Water Board's Executive Officer.

To find the order issued on July 12, please visit:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/board_decisions/adopted_orders/

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board is a State of California office within the State Water Resources Control Board, an agency of the California Environmental Protection Agency. For more information, visit their website at:

<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/>