

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

In the Matter of the Petition of)
EUGENE SPROFERA)
for Review of Inaction of the)
California Regional Water Quality)
Control Board, San Diego Region.)
Our File No. A-352.)
_____)

ORDER NO. WQ 85-3

BY THE BOARD:

In September 1982 Eugene Sprofera (petitioner) appeared before the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region (Regional Board) to request that action be taken concerning a sewer trunk replacement line by San Diego County (County). He alleged that the sewer lines were undersized and would not solve the water quality problems stemming from the inadequately sized collection system in the Spring Valley area. The Regional Board concluded that issuance of a cease and desist order was not appropriate. Petitioner appealed this decision to the State Board. By letter dated February 7, 1983 we declined to review the matter because it did not raise a substantial issue. Petitioner again appeared before the Regional Board at its November 14, 1983 meeting requesting a cease and desist order to stop further discharges to what he alleged was an inadequate collection system. The matter was continued and the Regional Board heard additional testimony at its January, March and April 1984 meetings. At its March 5, 1984 meeting, the Regional Board voted not to issue a cease and desist order. On March 22, 1984 Eugene Sprofera appealed this inaction of the Regional Board.

I. BACKGROUND

The Spring Valley Sanitation District includes the Brookside community area of San Diego County. The County Board of Supervisors sits as directors of the District. The County of San Diego (County) provides services for the District. There is evidence in the record that the sewer system in the Brookside area has had some sewage flow problems and sewage overflows. With the Regional Board staff, petitioner developed a list of specific concerns which the County responded to. These concerns and responses were discussed at the January 1984 Regional Board meeting. The County admitted to some overflows due to lax maintenance and high levels of inflow and infiltration, particularly in wet weather. The County in its response to the Regional Board outlined a plan for increased maintenance already in effect, and described plans for future construction and replacement that is intended to eliminate the overflow potential. The Regional Board reviewed this response and concluded that the County is proceeding in a reasonable manner to address the problems in the Spring Valley system. The Regional Board concluded that the issuance of a cease and desist order, as requested by petitioner, would be inappropriate.

II. CONTENTION AND FINDINGS

Petitioner essentially makes three contentions.

1. Contention: Odors and surcharging have occurred at several locations within the collection system.

Finding: The County admits there has been surcharging¹ and overflows at four sites and surcharging at two other. Since surcharging constitutes only a rise of sewage in the manhole column, it alone does not constitute a problem. Surcharging by itself does not indicate that there is a

¹ Surcharging occurs when flow in the sewer line is under pressure.

threatened discharge unless supported by other documentation such as hydraulic analysis, flow estimates and rainfall correlation data. Collection and transport lines are commonly allowed to surcharge as an upstream, flow mediation device.

There were overflows in the Spring Valley collector system during storms of March 1983. Because of these storms, residents of the area had removed some manhole covers to drain lowlying areas. These manholes have since been sealed to prevent removal and subsequent inflow. Additionally, many lines have been cleaned, inspected and chemically grouted to aid in efficient transport and reduce inflow and infiltration.

Four capital improvement projects have also been scheduled by the County. These will relieve surcharging and greatly reduce the threat of overflows this coming year. We note that all projects scheduled for this fiscal year have been approved in this year's County's budget. The remaining projects are scheduled for the future.

2. Contention: Certain sewer lines are near capacity and constitute a threatened discharge.

Finding: As part of the County's continual program of repair, rehabilitation, replacement and expansion, flows are periodically checked in all main lines. With one exception, the La Presa trunkline, none of the identified sewer lines are estimated by the County to be at or near capacity. The petitioner provides no support for his claim that the lines are near capacity.

The County has presented to the Regional Board their plans to alleviate system overloading before it occurs. We have reviewed these plans and find them reasonable.

As noted above, the La Presa trunkline is close to its current design capacity of 0.8 mgd. The proposed "The Pointe, Phase I" development scheduled for 1985 will realign and enlarge the Jamacha Trunkline as part of the conditions of approval. This will relieve some of the back pressure from the La Presa Trunkline. Also, a bypass will be installed in a manhole at the intersection of Sweetwater Springs Boulevard and Jamacha Boulevard to connect with the realigned trunkline. This will serve to increase the capacity of the La Presa line.

Additionally, petitioner alleges some of the sewers which are already near capacity have recently had new tributary development approved for construction. Several subdivisions are in the planning approval process which, if built, could contribute wastewater flows to the La Presa trunkline. However, one of the subdivisions, Rancho San Diego, will be installing a trunkline that will be constructed prior to occupancy of most of these subdivisions. This new capacity will alleviate the potential excess flows in the La Presa line. We, therefore, find that the petitioner's claim of threatened overflows is not substantiated.

3. Contention: The planned increase flow due to Otay Water District's tie-in to the system will cause or threaten to cause overflows in the Spring Valley System.

Finding: Because of the regionalization of treatment plants, the sewage from Otay Water District will be coming into the County system. San Diego County has a long range plan to accommodate the Otay flow. In addition,

physical limitations and contractual obligations should prevent Otay's flow from adversely affecting the Spring Valley System.

The joint agreement between Otay and the Spring Valley Sanitation District specifies that the flow through the Case de Oro trunkline from Otay will be limited to 300,000 gpd. The pump at the connecting lift station has been sized to accommodate a maximum of 300,000 gpd. If necessary, to prevent overflows, the Spring Valley Sanitation District can divert flows from the Otay Water District to the Otay treatment facility. The petitioner provides no data to substantiate his claim that this tie-in will cause overflows.

III. CONCLUSIONS

1. The surcharging which has occurred is not itself a problem. The overflows which have occurred should not reoccur because of preventative maintenance by the County and scheduled improvement projects.

2. Only one sewer line appears to be approaching capacity. The County has a development plan scheduled for next year to alleviate this.

3. No overflows should result from the Otay Water District coming on line.

IV. ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the petition is denied. We do recommend that the Regional Board continue its practice of reviewing the situation to assure that overflows do not occur and that the County's plans and projects for the area continue to be implemented.

V. CERTIFICATION

The undersigned, Executive Director of the State Water Resources Control Board, does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an order duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the State Water Resources Control Board held on February 21, 1985.

Aye: Carole A. Onorato
Warren D. Noteware
Kenneth W. Willis
Edwin H. "Ted" Finster

No:

Absent: Darlene E. Ruiz

Abstain:



Michael A. Campos
Executive Director