

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD  
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY  
DECEMBER 6, 2022**

**ITEM 10**

**SUBJECT**

CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF THE PROPOSED STATEWIDE SANITARY SEWER SYSTEMS GENERAL ORDER REISSUANCE.

**DISCUSSION**

In 2006, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted the first Statewide Sanitary Sewer System General Waste Discharge Requirements. Through this General Order, the State Water Board regulates sewage spills and system management of approximately 100,000 miles of publicly owned pipelines from over 1,100 systems. The General Order prohibits sewage spills to surface waters and spills that cause a nuisance. The Regional Water Boards, with the assistance of the Office of Enforcement staff, enforce the General Order.

In 2017, State Water Board staff initiated preliminary outreach to interested parties for the development of a draft Order reissuance to update the existing 16-year-old Order. In 2019, staff issued an informal draft Order, conducted public workshops, and held focused stakeholder meetings to gather preliminary public feedback. In January 2022, staff issued the draft Order for a 60-day public comment period and held two public workshops during the public comment period to explain the proposed requirements to interested parties. The State Water Board held a public workshop in March 2022 to receive stakeholder feedback on the draft Order.

On October 28, 2022, after considering all public comments received, staff issued the proposed statewide General Order reissuance, for State Water Board consideration of adoption at its December 6, 2022 board meeting. On November 14, 2022, staff held a public workshop to provide interested parties an overview of the proposed Order, including proposed revisions made to the previous draft Order in response to public comments received.

The proposed statewide General Order reissuance includes:

- Updated findings per Water Board priorities established through regulations and resolutions adopted since the 2006 adoption of the existing Order.
- Clarification that the statewide waste discharge requirements are applicable to waters of the State, and the prohibition of spills is applicable to surface waters and groundwater.
- The regulation of private sewer systems of any size and public systems less than one mile in length, per a Regional Water Quality Control Board's discretion.

- A new prohibition of any sewage discharge from a sanitary sewer system that has the potential to discharge to waters of the State unless promptly cleaned up.
- Expanded requirements for system-specific prioritization of local management, operations, maintenance, and repair to address system resilience from climate change and other impacts.
- Regulation of observed underground sewage exfiltration that may have a potential to discharge to a water of the State.
- Coordination of sewer system owners with stormwater, drinking water, and other utility agencies for collaborative planning and emergency spill responses.
- Reduced frequency of Sewer System Management Plan updates and local audits.
- Quarterly reporting of less-than-50-gallon spills for all enrollees.
- Annual submittal of the system performance graphs.
- Electronic submittal of sewer system service area boundary maps.
- Electronic submittal of all required reports including Sewer System Management Plans, Plan updates and audit reports, into the online California Integrated Water Quality System.

## **POLICY ISSUE**

Should the State Water Board adopt the statewide Sanitary Sewer Systems General Order reissuance?

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

None. The State Water Board will implement the statewide Order with existing resources.

## **REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT**

None. The Regional Water Boards will implement and enforce the Order with existing resources.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

State Water Board staff recommends that the State Water Board adopt the proposed statewide Sanitary Sewer Systems General Order reissuance.