



Enforcement News

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/>

City of Jackson Agrees to Settlement Over Sewage System Violation Allegations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 7, 2017

Contact: Wendy Wyels
Phone: (916) 464-4835

SACRAMENTO – The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and the city of Jackson have agreed to a \$148,950 settlement on allegations that the city failed to prepare and implement a Sewer System Management Plan, and failed to properly report all its sanitary sewer system overflows.

In response to an anonymous complaint that the city was not properly reporting all sanitary sewer overflows, Central Valley Regional Water Board staff conducted an investigation and found a number of violations. Regional Water Board staff alleged the city intentionally submitted falsified reports on a monthly basis, certifying there were no sanitary sewer system overflows when in fact there were. These alleged false reports threatened public health because the city did not notify appropriate agencies about the spills, and therefore the agencies were unable to issue any necessary public notifications and warnings.

“We expect all dischargers to follow the conditions of their permit, including maintaining their sewer systems and reporting all spills,” said Andrew Altevoigt, assistant executive officer for the Regional Water Board. “Failure to properly report spills impacts a cornerstone of our ability to protect water quality. Not submitting accurate sanitary sewer overflow reports prevents board staff from evaluating the city’s collection system operations, maintenance, and spills.”

Along with the raw sewage spills, the city failed to prepare a Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP), failed to conduct an audit of the plan every two years and failed to update the plan after five years. The city also failed to provide a communication plan for reporting sanitary sewer overflows to the appropriate agencies, as well as provide plans for preventative maintenance and rehabilitation. The city also lacked a capital improvement plan.

The goal of the SSMP is to provide a plan and schedule to properly manage, operate and maintain all parts of the sanitary sewer system. The plan helps the city to determine where maintenance is needed in the collection system to prevent and mitigate future sewer overflows. In addition, the SSMP shall include elements that will help the city develop a routine preventive

operation and maintenance program, a rehabilitation and replacement plan, a regular training program for staff and an inventory of replacement parts.

Any entity that owns or operates a sewage collection system that is longer than a mile is required to enroll in the Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Sanitary Sewer Systems. The city enrolled in this permit and is expected to follow its requirements to properly operate and maintain the sewer system to prevent spills, develop a detailed Sewer System Management Plan, and report all sanitary sewer overflows to a statewide database.

As a condition of the agreement, the city will pay the entire penalty to the State Water Board's Cleanup and Abatement Account. The funds in this account are used to provide public agencies, nonprofit organizations and tribal governments with grants to clean up pollution when there are no viable responsible parties.

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board is a California state agency responsible for the preservation and enhancement of water quality. For more information, visit the Central Valley Water Board's [website](#).

###