

Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Poultry Operations (Poultry General Order)



What is the Poultry General Order?

The Poultry General Order regulates how poultry operations can manage wastes generated by poultry facilities.

What laws form the basis of the Poultry General Order?

The Poultry General Order derives its authority from the California Water Code, which requires persons to obtain a permit before discharging waste where it could affect water quality. Waste from a poultry facility could include manure, wash water, or storm water runoff that has contacted feed or manure.

How was the Poultry General Order developed?

The Poultry General Order was prepared over a period of more than a year with input from representatives of the poultry industry,

community representatives, and environmental justice organizations. A 30-day public comment period of the draft order was provided for the public prior to the Order being finalized.

Which poultry operators/operations will be regulated under the Poultry General Order?

Commercial operations involving more than two animal units (equivalent to 2,000 pounds of live poultry) for more than twelve weeks in any twelve-month period will be regulated.

What operations *do not* need to enroll in the Poultry General Order?

Small back yard operations and facilities that operate for less than twelve weeks during a twelve-month period or for no more than three consecutive weeks per event do not need to enroll.

What activities does the Poultry General Order require?

The Poultry General Order requires regular sampling and monitoring of wastes created by confined animal operations, groundwater quality monitoring, record-keeping for waste management activities, and submittal of annual reports.

Does the Poultry General Order regulate all facilities the same way?

No, the Poultry General Order has two tiers of requirements based on the potential threat to water quality. Facilities that primarily conduct their operations indoors, do not generate process wastewater, and do not store uncovered manure outdoors are considered Low Threat Operations. Some pasture poultry operations may also be considered Low Threat Operations. Facilities that generate wastewater or that have a significant amount of manure

exposed to the elements are considered Full Coverage Operations and must comply with the full range of requirements in the Poultry General Order. Low Threat Operations have significantly fewer monitoring and reporting requirements.

What do I need to do if I own, operate, or have control of a poultry operation that must be regulated by the Poultry General Order?

It is your responsibility to complete and submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) with appropriate filing fee for the poultry operation. The NOI form is Attachment A of the Poultry General Order and can be found at:

www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board/decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2016-0087.pdf.

If you need assistance, you can call Charlene Herbst in our Sacramento office at (916) 464-3291 or Dale Essary in our Fresno office at (559) 445-5116.

Does the Poultry General Order also regulate composting operations at poultry facilities?

Requirements for composting operations are included in the Poultry General Order.





Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

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Our Mission...

To preserve and enhance the quality of California's water resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Who we are

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVWB) is one of nine Regional Water Boards in California. The CVWB is a regulatory Board appointed by the Governor

and tasked with establishing policies and regulations to protect the quality of surface and ground waters throughout the Central Valley. The CVWB does this through issuing permits and other orders to businesses, industries, public agencies, and districts that conduct activities or practices that may impact or harm water quality.



Water in the Central Valley

The Central Valley is the largest and most diverse region in California, stretching from the Oregon border to the tip of Los Angeles County – about 60,000 square miles or nearly 40 percent of the State. It includes all or part of 38 of California's 58 counties, about 75 percent of the State's irrigated agricultural land, and the entire watersheds for the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and the Tulare Lake Basin. Nearly all of the legal Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta is within the CVWB jurisdictional area.

Water from the Central Valley provides more than 50% of the State's total water supply, providing drinking water for 2/3 of the State and irrigation for millions of acres of farms in and out of the valley. Many of the waterways within the Central Valley, especially those on the valley floor, are impacted or polluted by pollutants that pose a risk to drinking water

supplies, water for agricultural uses, and fish and wildlife. These pollutants include pesticides, metals, salts, pathogens, fertilizers, and industrial chemicals.

Protecting Water Quality

To protect the quality of our waterways and ground waters, the CVWB issues permits to individuals, businesses, industries, cities, counties, and local districts where their practices or activities could impact water quality. The CVWB has various programs that focus on specific types of practices and activities at confined animal operations such as poultry farms, wastewater and sewage treatment, forest activities, landfills, cannabis, mining and dredging, underground storage tanks, discharges from agricultural land and industrial facilities, and storm water discharges.

Confined Animal Facilities

Commercial poultry operations are regulated under the Water Boards' Confined Animal Facilities program since they are operations where animals are fed or maintained and sold with the intent to make a profit. The Water Boards' goal of issuing waste discharge requirements for poultry facilities is to minimize water quality impacts by nutrients and salts from wastewater ponds, manure storage areas, or cropland where manure is recycled.

