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Palm Desert, CA 92260
(760) 346-7491

Public Notice No. 7-11-38
NPDES Permit No. CA0104248
August 19, 2011

CEASE AND DESIST ORDER NO. R7-2011-0044
IN THE MATTER OF
IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT, OWNER/OPERATOR
EL CENTRO GENERATING STATION
FOR DISCHARGES OF EFFLUENTS
COPPER, SELENIUM, AND FREE CYANIDE
OF BOARD ORDER NO. R7-2009-0020
NPDES PERMIT NO. CA0104248

Imperial Irrigation District (hereinafter, Discharger), P.O. Box 937, Imperial, California 92251, owns the El Centro Generating Station (hereafter referred to as Station), which is a gas and oil-fired power plant located at 485 E. Villa Avenue, El Centro, CA 92243. The Station has a total output of 240 Megawatts (MW) and consists of two (2) steam units and one (1) combined cycle unit. The steam units are rated at 77 MW and 46 MW, and the combined cycle unit is rated at 117 MW (85 MW gas turbine and 32 MW steam turbine). All units are cooled using water circulated through unit specific cooling towers.

The Station provides treatment and chlorination and dechlorination process units. Cooling tower supply water is treated with corrosion inhibitors, deposit control agents, microbial control agents and a coagulant and flocculent. In addition chlorination is used as an oxidizing biocide and sulfuric acid is added for pH control to protect cooling tower equipment. The effluent from the Station's cooling system is dechlorinated using a bisulfite based solution prior to discharge into receiving waters.

The Station is currently operates under Order No. R7-2009-0020 (NPDES Permit No. CA0104248), which allows discharge of industrial cooling water to Central Drain No. 5, which flows into the Alamo River then to the Salton Sea. The Central Drain No. 5, the Alamo River and the Salton Sea are waters of the United States. Because the Discharger cannot comply with its permit effluent limits, the Regional Water Board adopted Cease and Desist Order No. R7-2009-0049, which requested the Discharger implement a series of tasks to bring its discharge in compliance with its permit. The Cease and Desist Order must be updated based on current information regarding the Discharger's proposal to comply with the Regional Water Board's orders.

On June 1, 2011, Regional Board received a letter from the Discharger indicating that the Discharger has conducted pilot studies to evaluate treatment technologies to reduce the levels of constituents of concern in the Station's effluent and has identified deep well injection disposal as an alternative to treatment technology that will eliminate the discharge of wastewater from the Station to surface waters. Therefore, in its June letter, the Discharger requested additional time to complete a deep well injection project and come into compliance with Regional Water Board orders.

Pursuant to California Water Code Section 13301, proposed Cease and Desist Order No. R7-2011-0044 rescinds the previous Cease and Desist Order and sets forth actions that the Discharger must take to correct or prevent discharges of waste that are in violation of Board Order No. R7-2009-0020 with respect to the effluent discharge limitations for copper, selenium, and free cyanide.

A public hearing on this matter will be held as follows:

Date: September 15, 2011
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: City of La Quinta
City Council Chambers
78-495 Calle Tempico
La Quinta, CA 92253

During the hearing, the public and any other person interested in this matter can provide the Regional Board with comments on the draft Order.

Persons wishing to file written comments on, or objections to, the draft Cease and Desist Order are requested to do so by September 12, 2011, so that the Regional Board may consider the comments.

Comments must be mailed to the following address:

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Colorado River Basin Region
73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100
Palm Desert, CA 92260

A copy of the draft Cease and Desist Order may be obtained from the Regional Board Office. Please contact Doug Wylie at (760) 346-6585 for any questions regarding this matter. Please bring this notice to the attention of anyone you think would be interested in this matter.

For any person who is disabled and requires special accommodations to participate in this Regional Board hearing, please contact Hilda Vasquez at (760) 346-7491 no later than 10 days before the scheduled hearing date.