



Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board

CERTIFIED MAIL: 7008 3230 0000 6670 5476

May 30, 2018

Joseph Glowitz, General Manager
Valley Sanitary District
45-500 Van Buren Street
Indio, CA 92201

Dear Mr. Glowitz:

SUBJECT: CONDITIONAL SETTLEMENT OFFER NO. R7-2018-0023: OFFER TO PARTICIPATE IN EXPEDITED PAYMENT PROGRAM RELATING TO ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF ORDER NO. R7-2010-0019, NPDES NO. CA0104477

This letter notifies the Valley Sanitary District (Discharger) of alleged violation(s) of effluent limitations and/or reporting requirements, and provides the Discharger the opportunity to settle the violation(s) through payment of **\$18,000** in mandatory minimum penalties pursuant to California Water Code (CWC) Sections 13385 and/or 13385.1. Please reply by **June 28, 2018**.

NOTICE OF VIOLATION

The Assistant Executive Officer alleges that the Discharger has violated the above-referenced National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit as identified in Exhibit A, enclosed hereto and incorporated by reference. The Discharger can resolve the alleged violations as discussed below.

STATUTORY LIABILITY

Water Code Section 13385, subdivisions (h) and (i), require the assessment of a \$3,000 mandatory minimum penalty for specified serious and chronic effluent limitation violations. The Discharger is also subject to discretionary administrative civil liability of up to \$10,000 per day for each violation, plus \$10 for each gallon discharged but not cleaned up in excess of 1,000 gallons. The Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) may assess mandatory minimum penalties and discretionary administrative civil liability beginning with the date on which the violations first occurred. The formal enforcement action that the Regional Water Board uses to assess such liability is an Administrative Civil Liability Complaint. Alternatively, the Regional Water Board may refer the matter to the Attorney General's Office for prosecution in the Superior Court. The Superior Court may assess up to \$25,000 per day for each violation, plus \$25 per gallon discharged but not cleaned up in excess of 1,000 gallons.

NANCY WRIGHT, CHAIR | JOSE L. ANGEL, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100, Palm Desert, CA 92260 | www.waterboards.ca.gov/coloradoriver

OFFER TO PARTICIPATE IN EXPEDITED PAYMENT PROGRAM

The Discharger can avoid the issuance of a formal enforcement action and settle the alleged violation(s) identified in Exhibit A by participating in the Regional Water Board's Expedited Payment Program. The Discharger may accept this Conditional Settlement Offer, waive its right to a hearing, and pay the mandatory minimum penalty of \$18,000 for the violation(s) described in Exhibit A. If the Discharger elects to do so, the Regional Water Board will execute the settlement offer subject to the conditions below. The Regional Water Board will accept the payment in settlement of any enforcement action that would otherwise arise out of the violation(s) identified in Exhibit A. Accordingly, the Regional Water Board will not issue a formal administrative civil liability complaint, will not refer the violation(s) to the Attorney General's Office, and will waive its right to seek additional discretionary civil liability for the violation(s) identified in Exhibit A.

This Conditional Settlement Offer does not address or resolve liability for any violation that is not specifically identified in Exhibit A.

DISCHARGER'S OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE TO OFFER

To accept this Conditional Settlement Offer, the Discharger must complete, sign, and return the enclosed "Acceptance of Conditional Resolution and Waiver of Right to Hearing" (Acceptance and Waiver) on or before **June 28, 2018 (30 days)**.

If the Discharger chooses to contest any of the violations alleged in Exhibit A, please identify the specific violation(s) and the basis for the challenge (factual error, affirmative defense, etc.) on or before the due date specified above. Regional Water Board staff will evaluate the contested violation and take one of two actions:

- 1) Determine that the violation warrants dismissal, dismiss the alleged violation(s) in the California Integrated Water Quality System (CIWQS) database, notify the Discharger of the dismissal, and take no further action against the Discharger for the alleged violation(s);
or
- 2) Determine that the alleged violation(s) is/are meritorious and notify the Discharger of that determination. The Discharger will then have 30 days from the date of the notice of determination to accept settlement for the violation by submitting a complete Acceptance and Waiver. If the Discharger chooses not to accept, or makes no reply to the determination within 30 days, the Discharger will be contacted by the Regional Water Board staff regarding a formal enforcement proceeding for the contested violation(s). Information received by Regional Water Board staff during any formal investigation and assessment of the violation(s), as well as staff costs associated with pursuing the enforcement, may increase the liability beyond that set forth in this Conditional Settlement Offer.

CONDITIONS FOR REGIONAL WATER BOARD ACCEPTANCE OF RESOLUTION

Federal regulations require the Regional Water Board to publish and allow the public at least 30 days to comment on any settlement of an enforcement action addressing NPDES permit violations (40 C.F.R. Section 123.27(d)(2)(iii)). Upon receipt of the Discharger's Acceptance and Waiver, Regional Water Board staff will publish a notice of the proposed resolution of the violation(s).

Conditional Settlement Offer No. R7-2018-0023
Valley Sanitary District WWTP

If Regional Water Board staff do not receive comments within the 30-day comment period and no new material facts become available to the Regional Water Board, the Executive Officer will execute the Acceptance and Waiver as a stipulated order assessing the uncontested mandatory minimum penalty amount pursuant to Water Code Sections 13385 and/or 13385.1.

If, however, significant comments are received in opposition to the Settlement, the Offer may be withdrawn. In that case, the Discharger's Waiver pursuant to the Acceptance and Waiver will also be treated as withdrawn and the violation(s) will be addressed in a liability assessment proceeding. At the liability assessment hearing the Discharger will be free to make arguments as to any of the alleged violations, and the Discharger's agreement to accept this conditional settlement offer will not in any way be binding or used as evidence against the Discharger. The Discharger will be provided with further information on the liability assessment proceeding.

In the event the Executive Officer executes the Acceptance and Waiver, full payment of the assessed amount shall be due within 30 calendar days from the date of the Executive Officer's signature. Funds collected for violations under Water Code Sections 13385 and 13385.1 shall be deposited in the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account. Accordingly, the \$18,000 liability shall be paid by cashiers or certified check made out to the "State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account". Failure to pay the full penalty within the required time may subject the Discharger to further liability.

Please send your reply to the attention of Dr. Jeong-Hee Lim, either by email or U.S. mail. If you want to discuss or have questions regarding this Conditional Settlement Offer, please contact Dr. Lim at (760) 776-8940 or jeong-hee.lim@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Frank Gonzalez, P.E.
Assistant Executive Officer
Colorado River Basin
Regional Water Quality Control Board

JHL/tab

Enclosures: Exhibit A – Notice of Violation
Exhibit B – Acceptance of Conditional Resolution and Waiver of Right to Hearing

cc: Ian Wilson, Chief Plant Operator, iwilson@valley-sanitary.org

File: WDID No. 7A 33 0122 021, Valley Sanitary District WWTP
ECM: CW-270096

Conditional Settlement Offer No. R7-2018-0023
 Valley Sanitary District Wastewater Treatment Plant

Exhibit A
NOTICE OF VIOLATION

Discharger: Valley Sanitary District
 45-500 Van Buren Street
 Indio, CA 92201

The following table lists alleged violations of order No. R7-2010-0019, NPDES No. CA0104477, for which the Discharger is subject to civil liabilities pursuant to Water Code Sections 13385 and/or 13385.1. The table lists the mandatory minimum penalty (MMP) that applies.

| # | CIWQS ¹ Violation ID No. | Violation Date | Pollutant/Violation Description (Unit) | Effluent Limitation or Monitoring Report ² Due Date | Reported Value or Number of Days Overdue | Percent Group I or Group II Pollutant Exceeds Effluent Limitation | Violation Type (Chronic or Serious ³) | CWC Section 13385(h) and/or (i) Required MMP |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| 1 | 976162 | 08/14/2014 | Chlorine, Total Residual/ Instantaneous (mg/l) | 0.02 | 3.5 | Group 2 | S | \$3,000 |
| 2 | 984681 | 10/06/2014 | Heptachlor /Maximum Daily (lb/day) | 3.9E-05 | 4.7E-05 | Group 2 | S | \$3,000 |
| 3 | 984680 | 10/06/2014 | Heptachlor/ Maximum Daily (µg/l) | 0.00042 | 0.014 | Group 2 | S | \$3,000 |
| 4 | 984683 | 10/31/2014 | Heptachlor /Monthly Average (lb/day) | 1.9E-05 | 2.4E-05 | Group 2 | S | \$3,000 |
| 5 | 984682 | 10/31/2014 | Heptachlor /Monthly Average (µg/l) | 0.00021 | 0.014 | Group 2 | S | \$3,000 |
| 6 | 982870 | 11/29/2014 | Chlorine, Total Residual/ Instantaneous (mg/l) | 0.02 | 0.6 | Group 2 | S | \$3,000 |
| Total | | | | | | | | \$18,000 |

¹ CIWQS: California Integrated Water Quality System database that the Water Boards use to track violations and enforcement

² *Monitoring Report*: Water Code section 13385.1(a)(l) defines a "serious violation" to include any failure to file a discharge monitoring report required pursuant to section 13383 for 30 days following the deadline for submitting the report, if the report is designed to ensure compliance with limitations contained in waste discharge requirements that contain effluent limitations. Each complete 30-day period following the deadline is a separate serious violation.

³ *Serious Violation*: A penalty applies under Water Code section 13385 (h) whenever an effluent limitation is exceeded by 40 percent or more for a Group I pollutant or 20 percent or more for a Group II pollutant.

Exhibit B
ACCEPTANCE OF CONDITIONAL RESOLUTION
AND WAIVER OF RIGHT TO HEARING

Valley Sanitary District
Valley Sanitary District WWTP, 45-500 Van Buren St., Indio, CA 92201
WDR Order No. R7-2010-0019 (NPDES No. CA0104477)

By signing below and returning this Acceptance of Conditional Resolution and Waiver of Right to Hearing (Acceptance and Waiver) to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region (Regional Water Board), the Valley Sanitary District (Discharger) hereby accepts the conditional settlement offer to settle the alleged violation(s) through payment of mandatory minimum penalties and waives the right to a hearing before the Regional Water Board to dispute the alleged violation(s). The alleged violation(s) are attached to this Acceptance and Waiver as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference.

The Discharger agrees that Exhibit A shall serve as a complaint pursuant to Article 2.5 of the California Water Code and that no separate complaint is required for the Regional Water Board to assert jurisdiction over the alleged violation(s) through its Assistant Executive Officer. The Discharger agrees to pay the penalties required by California Water Code Sections 13385 and/or 13385.1, in the sum of **\$18,000** (Expedited Payment Amount), which shall be deemed payment in full of any civil liability pursuant to Water Code Section 13385 that otherwise might be assessed for the violation(s) described in Exhibit A. The Discharger understands that this Acceptance and Waiver waives its right to contest the allegations in Exhibit A and the amount of civil liability assessed for the violation(s).

The Discharger understands that this Acceptance and Waiver does not address or resolve liability for any violation that is not specifically identified in Exhibit A.

Upon execution by the Discharger, the completed Acceptance and Waiver shall be returned to:

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Attention: Jeong-Hee Lim
73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100
Palm Desert, CA 92260

The Discharger understands that federal regulations set forth at Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Section 123.27(d)(2)(iii) require the Regional Water Board to publish notice of and provide at least thirty (30) days for public comment on any proposed resolution of an enforcement action addressing NPDES permit violations. Accordingly, this Acceptance and Waiver will be published as required by law for public comment prior to the Executive Officer's execution.

The Discharger understands that if no comments are received within the public notice period that causes the Executive Officer to question the conditional settlement offer, the Executive Officer will execute this Acceptance and Waiver.

The Discharger understands that if significant comments are received in opposition to the conditional settlement offer, the offer may be withdrawn. In that circumstance, the Discharger will be advised of the withdrawal and an Administrative Civil Liability Complaint may be issued and the matter may be set for a hearing before the Regional Water Board. For such a liability hearing, the Discharger understands that its executed Acceptance and Waiver will be treated as a settlement communication and will not be used as evidence in that hearing.

