

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION

73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100
Palm Desert, California 92260
Phone: (760) 346-7491
Fax: (760) 341-6820

Comment Deadline:
April 20, 2026

Public Notice 7-26-10-1
Reissued April 23, 2026
Originally Issued on March 20, 2026

Staff Contact:
Julya Mestas
Julya.Mestas@WaterBoards.ca.gov
(760) 313-1294

REISSUED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

UPDATED MEETING TIME

TENTATIVE WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS ORDER R7-2026-XXXX
AND MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region (Colorado River Basin Water Board) is releasing, for public review and comment, Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements Order R7-2026-XXXX (Tentative Order), which includes a Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP), and concerns the following:

Discharger: Hi-Desert Memorial Health Care District and Joshua Basin Water District

Facility: Hi-Desert Medical Center Wastewater Treatment Facility
San Bernardino County

HEARING PARTICIPATION

The Colorado River Basin Water Board will hold a public hearing to consider adoption of the Tentative Order at the date, time and location specified below:

Date: May 12, 2026

Time: 9:00 am

Location: Colorado River Basin Water Board's Boardroom
73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Remote Participation Option Available
(See Instructions Below)

TENTATIVE WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS ORDER R7-2026-XXXX
HI-DESERT MEMORIAL HEALTH CARE DISTRICT AND JOSHUA BASIN WATER
DISTRICT
HI-DESERT MEDICAL CENTER WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
REISSUED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

2

Remote Participation Option

Although this public meeting will be conducted in-person, the public will also have the opportunity to participate remotely via the [ZOOM videoconferencing platform](https://zoom.us) (<https://zoom.us>), which is free to download. If you intend to speak, present oral comments or otherwise actively participate in this meeting, you will need to obtain ZOOM access prior to the meeting. For those who do NOT intend to actively participate, the meeting will be livestreamed via [Cal-Span](http://www.cal-span.org) (www.cal-span.org).

Please refer to the Colorado River Basin Water Board's [Remote Meetings](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/coloradoriver/board_info/remote_meeting) page (www.waterboards.ca.gov/coloradoriver/board_info/remote_meeting) for instructions on remote participation via ZOOM.

Oral Comments at Hearing

All persons interested in the Tentative Order and/or this proceeding will be provided the opportunity to orally present general policy statements and legal arguments during the hearing, provided that they have submitted **Speaker Request Cards** (or the equivalent for virtual participation). Such comments will be limited to three minutes, though the Board Chair may grant additional time on a case-by-case basis.

To ensure accuracy of the record, the Colorado River Basin Water Board requests that interested persons wishing to speak at the hearing provide a summary of their oral comments in writing before or during the hearing. However, interested persons do not need to submit written statements in order to speak.

If your comments will incorporate a short slideshow presentation or visual aids, please email these materials to mary.castaneda@waterboards.ca.gov no later than noon on the day before the meeting. These materials will not be admitted as evidence in the administrative record.

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

The Colorado River Basin Water Board will accept comments on the Tentative Order during a 30-day public comment period ending on **April 20, 2026**. All written comments must be received no later than **5:00 pm**. Comments received prior to this deadline will be included in the administrative record. Untimely written comments will not be accepted, absent a showing of good cause and lack of prejudice to the parties.

HEARING DATE
MAY 12, 2026

COMMENT DEADLINE
APRIL 20, 2026

TENTATIVE WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS ORDER R7-2026-XXXX
HI-DESERT MEMORIAL HEALTH CARE DISTRICT AND JOSHUA BASIN WATER
DISTRICT
HI-DESERT MEDICAL CENTER WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
REISSUED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

2

Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods:

By Mail: Colorado River Basin Water Board,
Attn: Julya Mestas
73-720 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 100
Palm Desert, California 92260

By Email: Julya.Mestas@WaterBoards.ca.gov

By Fax: (760) 341-6820

BACKGROUND

The Tentative Order prescribes Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for the wastewater treatment facility (Facility) that serves the Hi-Desert Medical Center (Medical Center) in the community of Joshua Tree. The Medical Center consists of a main hospital, an education center, and a continuing care center. The Facility treats all of the Medical Center's domestic wastewater.

Although the Joshua Basin Water District is responsible for operating the Facility, the Hi-Desert Memorial Health Care District owns the land. The Tentative Order designates both districts as the permitted "Discharger."

The Facility, which has a design capacity of 52,000 gallons per day (gpd), has been in operation since November 2013. It employs an upflow sludge blanket filtration (USBF) treatment process, manufactured by Ecofluid Systems. The process is a modification of an extended aeration process that incorporates an anoxic selector zone and an USBF clarifier in one integrated vessel. Treated effluent is sampled and metered as it transfers from the treatment process to 16 seepage pits for disposal.

HEARING DATE
MAY 12, 2026

COMMENT DEADLINE
APRIL 20, 2026

TENTATIVE WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS ORDER R7-2026-XXXX
HI-DESERT MEMORIAL HEALTH CARE DISTRICT AND JOSHUA BASIN WATER
DISTRICT
HI-DESERT MEDICAL CENTER WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
REISSUED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

2

HEARING PROCEDURE

Nature of Hearing

The Colorado River Basin Water Board's consideration of the Tentative Order is an adjudicative proceeding¹ conducted in accordance with California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 648 et seq. The administrative record shall consist of all Board files, exhibits, and related agenda material. The Tentative Order will be considered via an "informal hearing." (*Id.*, § 648.7; see also Gov. Code, § 11445.10 et seq.)

Parties to Proceeding

The parties to this proceeding are the Discharger (i.e., person to whom the Tentative Order is directed), and any additional persons that the Executive Officer, in consultation with the Board Chair, determines should be a "party." (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 648.1, subd. (a).) Such additional persons are referred to as **Designated Parties**.

Unless they are formally recognized as a Designated Party, **interested persons are NOT considered "parties" to the proceeding**. This means that interested persons will ordinarily not be permitted to present evidence (e.g., photos, eyewitness testimony, etc.) for entry into the administrative record; again, oral comments are limited to general policy and legal statements. Interested persons are also not subject to cross-examination but may be asked to respond to clarifying questions from the Board Members. (*Id.*, § 648.1, subd. (d).)

To request Designated Party status, send a written application via email to Julya.Mestas@WaterBoards.ca.gov as soon as possible, but no later than **April 20, 2026** (submitted concurrently with written comments and any proposed written evidence). The Executive Officer and Board staff will promptly respond to all timely applications and may request further information before the determination is made.

¹ An "adjudicative proceeding" is one in which the Board conducts an evidentiary hearing for determination of facts, resulting in the formulation of a decision in the form of an adopted order. (Gov. Code, § 11405.20; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 648, subd. (a).)

HEARING DATE
MAY 12, 2026

COMMENT DEADLINE
APRIL 20, 2026

TENTATIVE WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS ORDER R7-2026-XXXX
HI-DESERT MEMORIAL HEALTH CARE DISTRICT AND JOSHUA BASIN WATER
DISTRICT
HI-DESERT MEDICAL CENTER WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
REISSUED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

2

Designated Party status will only be granted if the applicant demonstrates that it is necessary and appropriate under the circumstances.² An application will not be granted if it appears that such designation will impair the interests of justice and the orderly and prompt conduct of the proceeding. Additionally, the Executive Officer, in consultation with the Board Chair, may impose restrictions on the requestor's hearing participation, including limiting or excluding the use of cross-examination and other procedures to promote the orderly and prompt conduct of the proceeding. (Gov. Code, § 11440.50, subd. (c).)

Order of Proceeding

Adjudicative proceedings are conducted in a manner deemed most suitable to the particular case with a view toward expeditiously securing relevant information without unnecessary delay and expense. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 648.5, subd. (a).)

This proceeding will be conducted in the following order: (1) opening statements by Board Chair, summarizing the subject matter and purpose of the hearing; (2) identification of all persons wishing to participate in the hearing; (3) administration of oath for all persons intending to speak at the hearing, including interested persons making oral comments; (4) presentations by staff; (5) comments and/or presentations by parties; (6) comments from interested persons; (7) Board Members' comments and discussion; (8) closure of hearing by Board Chair; and (9) voting by Board Members. In the event that the Tentative Order will be contested, the Executive Officer, in consultation with the Board Chair, will determine time allotments prior to the hearing.

Submission of Evidence

To avoid the introduction of surprise testimony and exhibits (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 648.4, subd. (a)), and to minimize the need for oral argument and testimony at the hearing, the parties shall submit all documentary evidence (*Id.*, § 648.4, subd. (c)),

² The Board's decision may include the following considerations: (1) whether the applicant will be substantially affected by issues addressed in the hearing; (2) whether the parties will adequately represent the applicant's interests; (3) whether the applicant would present their own written evidence or witness testimony at the hearing; and (4) whether the applicant will seek to cross-examine the other parties' witnesses.

HEARING DATE
MAY 12, 2026

COMMENT DEADLINE
APRIL 20, 2026

TENTATIVE WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS ORDER R7-2026-XXXX
HI-DESERT MEMORIAL HEALTH CARE DISTRICT AND JOSHUA BASIN WATER
DISTRICT
HI-DESERT MEDICAL CENTER WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
REISSUED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

2

witness information (*Id.*, § 648.4, subd. (b)), and legal/technical memoranda to staff prior to the hearing date.

As noted above, the administrative record will consist of materials in the Board file for the Facility (at time of hearing).

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

The Tentative Order is posted to the Board's [Tentative Orders](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/coloradoriver/board_decisions/tentative_orders/index.shtml) webpage (www.waterboards.ca.gov/coloradoriver/board_decisions/tentative_orders/index.shtml). To receive a physical copy by mail, contact either **Mary Castaneda** at (760) 776-8945 or Mary.Castaneda@waterboards.ca.gov.

ACCESSIBILITY AND LANGUAGE NEEDS

Individuals who require special accommodations or interpreter services to participate in this meeting, please contact **Mary Castaneda** via email at Mary.Castaneda@waterboards.ca.gov at least 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting to notify us that you will be utilizing these services. TTY users may contact the California Relay Service at 1-(800) 735- 2929 or voice line at 1-(800) 735-2922.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions concerning this matter, please contact Julya Mestas at (760) 313-1294 or Julya.Mestas@WaterBoards.ca.gov. Please bring the foregoing to the attention of anyone you believe may be interested in this matter.

HEARING DATE
MAY 12, 2026

COMMENT DEADLINE
APRIL 20, 2026