
Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board

SPILL REPORTING PROCEDURES

MANDATORY PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ADDRESSING SPILLS AND OTHER UNAUTHORIZED DISCHARGES FROM MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS

To protect the public and the environment, pursuant to California Water Code (CWC) Section 13267 and 13383, the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) has established mandatory procedures for handling spills from publicly owned wastewater treatment works (POTWs). These procedures are in addition to existing requirements of your National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and/or Waste Discharge Requirements, and do not preclude any emergency notification requirements mandated by other regulatory agencies or Federal/State law. Non-compliance with these reporting requirements is subject to potential civil liability according to CWC Section 13268.

These reporting requirements are necessary to ensure proper compliance with your waste discharge requirements and to collect needed information regarding discharges of sewage or other waste that could affect the quality of waters of the state. As the owner of a POTW, your agency is responsible for providing this information pursuant to Water Code sections 13267 and 13383.

WHAT IS A SPILL?

A spill is any spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, emptying, discharging, injecting, escaping, leaching, dumping, or disposing into surface waters or drainage channels that is not permitted or authorized by a regulatory agency. (A spill includes an unauthorized discharge to land that poses a public health threat.)

WHAT IS THE REQUIRED REPORTING?

In accordance with the requirements of Health and Safety Code section 5411.5, the discharger shall provide notification to the local health officer or the director of environmental health with jurisdiction over the affected water body of any unauthorized release of sewage or other waste that causes, or probably will cause, a discharge to any waters of the state.

In accordance with the requirements of Water Code section 13271, the discharger shall provide notification to the Office of Emergency Services of the release of reportable amounts of hazardous substances or sewage that causes, or probably will cause, a

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discharge to any waters of the state. The California Code of Regulations, Title 23, section 2250, defines a reportable amount of sewage as being 1,000 gallons. The phone number for reporting these releases to the Office of Emergency Services is (800) 852-7550.

POTWs that experience a spill must follow the reporting procedures listed below:

1. NOTIFICATION

Within **two (2) hours** after becoming aware of a spill, you must notify by telephone the Office of Emergency Services (OES) at (800) 852-7550, the local health department, and your Regional Water Board office at (760) 346-7491. The OES will provide you with a control number for further reference of the subject spill. If the telephone report is made to the Regional Water Board office after normal business hours, leave a message regarding the spill. OES will make any necessary after-hours contact with Regional Water Board staff.

At a minimum, the following information shall be provided to the Regional Water Board:

- (a) The location, date, and time of the release.
- (b) The water body that received or will receive the discharge.
- (c) An estimate of the amount of sewage or other waste released and the amount that reached a surface water at the time of notification.
- (d) If ongoing, the estimated flow rate of the release at the time of the notification.
- (e) The name, organization, phone number and email address of the reporting representative.

2. CERTIFICATION

As soon as possible, but not later than twenty four (24) hours after becoming aware of an unauthorized discharge of sewage or other waste from its wastewater treatment plant to a water of the state, the discharger shall submit a statement to the Regional Water Quality Control Board by email at spillreportRX@waterboards.ca.gov. If the discharge is 1,000 gallons or more, this statement shall certify that the State Office of Emergency Services has been notified of the discharge in accordance with Water Code section 13271. The statement shall also certify that the local health officer or director of environmental health with jurisdiction over the affected water bodies has been notified of the discharge in accordance with Health and Safety Code section 5411.5. The statement shall also include at a minimum the following information:

- (a) Agency, NPDES No., Order No., if applicable.

- (b) The location, date, and time of the discharge.
- (c) The water body that received the discharge.
- (d) A description of the level of treatment of the sewage or other waste discharged.
- (e) An initial estimate of the amount of sewage or other waste released and the amount that reached a surface water.
- (f) The Office of Emergency Services control number and the date and time that notification of the incident was provided to the Office of Emergency Services.
- (g) The name of the local health officer or director of environmental health representative notified (if contacted directly); the date and time of notification; and the method of notification (e.g., phone, fax, email)."

Should there be any conflict between the existing reporting requirements contained in the Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) or corresponding orders and this modification, the modification will prevail. All other provisions of your MRP remain in full force and effect.

3. REPORTING

Within five (5) business days, you must submit a written report to the Regional Water Board office documenting the above information. Your report must also include any additional details gathered and copies of reports submitted to other agencies.

SPILL REPORTING FACT SHEET

To be posted at facility

WHEN A SPILL OCCURS YOU MUST FOLLOW THE MANDATORY PROCEDURES IN THE TABLE BELOW:

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Required Communication	Agency to Contact (all are required)	Time Requirements	Contact Method
1. Notification	Office of Emergency Services (OES)	As soon as possible, but no later than 2 hours after becoming aware of the unauthorized discharge.	Telephone – (800) 852-7550 (obtain a control number from OES)
1. Notification	Local Health Department (LHD)	As soon as possible, but no later than 2 hours after becoming aware of the unauthorized discharge.	Telephone (call city or county Environmental Health Department) Fill in your local health Department Phone #s _____ () - _____ () -
1. Notification	Regional Water Board	As soon as possible, but no later than 2 hours after becoming aware of the unauthorized discharge.	Telephone (760) 346-7491
2. Certification	Regional Water Board	As soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours after becoming aware of the unauthorized discharger	Telephone – (760) 346-7491 (be prepared to provide detail information ¹)
3. Reporting	Regional Water Board	Within 5 Business days, submit written report	Mail or Hand Delivery

¹ See [Spill Reporting Procedure](#) Document