



Media Release

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/>

Central Valley Water Board Adopts Order Regulating Cannabis Cultivation to Protect Water Quality

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SACRAMENTO – The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board adopted a [General Order](#) today to protect the environment from discharges associated with cannabis cultivation activities. The Order serves as a permit that will be issued to landowners and cultivators engaged in growing medicinal cannabis as long as they meet specific conditions, including those imposed by local ordinances.

The Order will regulate discharges from medicinal cannabis cultivation operations to ensure that fertilizers and silt don't impact waters of the state, which includes both surface and ground waters. The General Order requires cultivators to implement [best management practices](#), and coverage and requirements in the Order are based on a site's threat to water quality, as determined by specific physical characteristics of the cultivation operations and proximity to wetlands or watercourses.

"Our goal is to protect water quality and the environment from the significant impacts that may occur from cannabis cultivation," said Pamela Creedon, Central Valley Water Board executive officer."

The order includes standard conditions to address erosion control and drainage features; stream and wetland buffers; water storage and use; irrigation runoff, fertilizers and pesticides; petroleum products and other chemicals and wastes. Enrollees are not exempted from the need to comply with applicable local ordinances or state and federal laws.

Cannabis cultivation in the Central Valley Region has increased significantly in recent years, both in the number and the size of operations. The Central Valley Water Board has serious concerns about the water quality impacts from this dramatic increase in cannabis cultivation activity on both public and private land.

The State Water Resources Control Board and regional boards are committed to helping educate both the public and cultivators about proper permitting and cultivation practices in their respective water board regions. The Central Valley Water Board held multiple public workshops throughout its region during August and September to receive input on the [Draft](#)



General Order. The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board adopted its [General Order](#) for cannabis cultivation on Aug. 13, 2015. For more information on its program, see the North Coast Regional Board's [website](#).

Additionally, local, state and federal agencies, including the State Water Board and regional boards, are working together in task forces to find illegal growing operations and enforce applicable laws.

To learn more about what the State Water Board and regional boards are doing relative to the environmental impacts of cannabis cultivation, visit the State Water Board [resource page](#).

The [Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board](#) is a California state agency responsible for the preservation and enhancement of the quality of California's water resources.

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