



# Enforcement News

## **Dairy Operator Agrees to \$57,024 Settlement for Dumping Dairy Wastewater on Cropland and Poor Waste Management Practices**

### ***Diamond B Dairy Violations Posed Threat to Groundwater Quality***

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Contact: Robert Busby  
[Robert.Busby@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Robert.Busby@waterboards.ca.gov)

**SACRAMENTO** – The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board has reached a [\\$57,024 settlement](#) with a Ceres dairy operator for allegedly dumping more than 200,000 gallons of dairy wastewater onto cropland last winter and for poor waste management practices. Both actions posed a threat to groundwater quality.

These February 2019 violations were found when regional board staff conducted an inspection in response to a complaint. Staff noticed manure slurry and wastewater had been dumped onto a portion of the dairy cropland, inundating the winter crop. The dairy wastewater dumped was later determined to be 216,000 gallons.

Because this application was not driven by crop needs, it was a violation of the dairy's nutrient management plan.

In addition, rainwater was ponding in corrals, and rainwater mixed with silage and manure was draining from the dairy onto a neighbor's property and into dairy cropland.

The \$57,024 penalty will be deposited into the State Water Board's Cleanup and Abatement Account. That account provides grants for the cleanup and abatement of pollution when no viable responsible parties are available to undertake the cleanup work.

Waste discharge requirements that regulate dairies stipulate that dairy wastewater only be applied to cropland in compliance with nutrient management plans. Such plans are written to address certain risks.

Manure and dairy wastewater contain nitrates and other constituents that serve as nutrients for crops when properly applied. When not properly applied, however, they could be harmful to people. They should only be applied when the crop needs nutrients. The wastewater should not be overapplied or applied when soils are saturated because plants are unable to absorb the additional nutrients. Unabsorbed nutrients can pass through soil and adversely impact underlying groundwater, including well water used for



drinking. An excessive amount of nitrate in drinking water poses a threat to human health.

The [Central Valley Water Board](#) is a state agency responsible for protecting water quality and ensuring beneficial uses such as aquatic habitat and human health for 11,350 miles of streams, 579,110 acres of lakes, and the largest contiguous groundwater basin in California. It is the largest of nine regional boards, encompassing 60,000 square miles, or about 40 percent of the state. Thirty-eight of 58 counties are either completely or partially within the Board's boundaries, formed by the crests of the Sierra Nevada on the east, the Coast Ranges and Klamath Mountains on the west, the Oregon border on the north, and the Tehachapi Mountains on the south.