

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION**

**CEASE AND DESIST ORDER No. R2-2018-0034**

**CITY OF EAST PALO ALTO**

**WHEREAS** the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region (Water Board), finds the following:

**Background**

1. The Water Board adopted the Municipal Regional NPDES Stormwater Permit, Order No. R2-2015-0049 (Permit) on November 19, 2015, issuing waste discharge requirements as NPDES Permit No. CAS612008. The Permit contains prohibitions, limitations, and provisions regulating the stormwater and non-stormwater discharges from each permittee's municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4).
2. The City of East Palo Alto (Permittee) is permitted under the Permit and, as such, is subject to the Permit's requirements, including Provision C.10, which requires the Permittee to achieve certain reductions in trash discharges through the Permittee's MS4 to receiving waters.
3. Permit Provision C.10 states: "Permittees shall demonstrate compliance with Discharge Prohibition A.1, for trash discharges, Discharge Prohibition A.2, and trash-related Receiving Water Limitations through the timely implementation of control measures and other actions to reduce trash loads from municipal separate storm sewer systems in accordance with the requirements of this provision."
  - a. Discharge Prohibition A.1 states, in part: "The Permittees shall, within their respective jurisdictions, effectively prohibit the discharge of non-stormwater (materials other than stormwater) into storm drain systems and watercourses."
  - b. Discharge Prohibition A.2 states: "It shall be prohibited to discharge rubbish, refuse, bark, sawdust, or other solid wastes into surface waters or at any place where they would contact or where they would be eventually transported to surface waters, including flood plain areas."
  - c. Receiving Water Limitation B.1 states: "The discharge shall not cause the following conditions to create a condition of nuisance or to adversely affect beneficial uses of waters of the State:
    - a. Floating, suspended, or deposited macroscopic particulate matter, or foam;
    - b. Bottom deposits or aquatic growths;
    - c. Alteration of temperature, turbidity, or apparent color beyond present natural background levels;
    - d. Visible, floating, suspended, or deposited oil or other products of petroleum origin;and

- e. Substances present in concentrations or quantities that would cause deleterious effects on aquatic biota, wildlife, or waterfowl, or that render any of these unfit for human consumption.”
4. Permit Provision C.10.a.i states: “Permittees shall reduce trash discharges from 2009 levels, described below, to receiving waters in accordance with the following schedule:
  - a. 70 percent by July 1, 2017; and
  - b. 80 percent by July 1, 2019.”
5. Trash reduction requirements have been included in the Permit since its initial adoption on October 14, 2009, as Order No. R2-2009-0074.
6. On September 29, 2017, the Permittee submitted its Annual Report for fiscal year 2016-2017 (Annual Report), which documented the Permittee’s progress in complying with Permit Provision C.10. The Permittee reported a 60 percent trash load reduction.
7. The Permittee is in violation of the Permit because the Permittee failed to meet the required 70 percent trash load reduction by July 1, 2017, relative to 2009 baseline conditions, as required by Permit Provision C.10.a.i.a.
8. In the Annual Report, the Permittee proposed a preliminary schedule for the design, contracting and installation of a full trash capture device at the O’Connor Pump Station. This was revised in a March 9, 2018, letter to the Water Board, in which the Permittee submitted an updated detailed plan of actions and deadlines for completing those actions to correct the violation of the Permit requirements.
9. The Permittee intends to complete construction of a full trash capture device at the Permittee’s O’Connor Pump Station by January 2019. When appropriately operated and maintained, this device will increase the Permittee’s trash load reduction to an estimated 94 percent. Under the Permittee’s proposed schedule, the Permittee would achieve a trash load reduction greater than the 80 percent reduction requirement before the July 1, 2019, deadline. That would be in compliance with Permit Provision C.10.a.i.b. Because of this strategy to build one large trash capture device, the Permittee will attain or exceed the 70 percent and 80 percent trash reduction requirements simultaneously when the device is operational.
10. The Permittee stated in its letter of March 9, 2018, that if delayed, construction of the O’Conner Pump Station full trash capture device would still be completed by not later than December 27, 2019. This would delay achievement of the 80 percent required reduction past the Permit’s deadline of July 1, 2019, which would violate Permit Provision C.10.a.i.b.

### **Purpose of this Order**

11. This Cease and Desist Order (Order) sets deadlines for implementation of trash controls that will bring the Permittee into compliance with the 70 percent and 80 percent trash load reductions by July 1, 2019, relative to 2009 baseline conditions, as required by Permit Provision C.10.a.i.b.

**Cease and Desist Order Authority**

12. When the Water Board finds a discharge of waste is taking place that violates or will violate requirements prescribed by the Water Board, California Water Code (Water Code) section 13301 authorizes the Water Board to issue a Cease and Desist Order directing those persons not complying with the requirements or with discharge prohibitions to comply with them in accordance with deadlines set by the Water Board.
13. Because the Permittee's violation is ongoing and because the Permittee threatens to violate more stringent Permit requirements, this Order is necessary to ensure that the Permittee returns to compliance by setting benchmarks and prescribing actions with corresponding deadlines.
14. This Order is an enforcement action of existing requirements and, as such, is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq.) in accordance with Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15321.
15. Reports required under this Order are monitoring and reporting requirements pursuant to Water Code section 13383.
16. The Water Board notified the Permittee and interested persons of its intent to consider adoption of this Order, and provided an opportunity to submit written comments and appear at a public hearing. The Water Board, in a public hearing, heard and considered all comments.

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** in accordance with Water Code section 13301 that the Permittee shall cease and desist from discharging and threatening to discharge trash in violation of the Permit by complying with the following provisions:

1. **Trash Reduction Implementation Actions.** The Permittee shall implement trash load reduction control actions within all significant trash generating areas within its jurisdiction and prohibit trash discharge in a timely manner sufficient to reach 70 percent trash load reduction and 80 percent trash load reduction relative to the 2009 baseline condition by July 1, 2019, as specified in Permit Provision C.10.a.i.b.
2. **Track and Report on Trash Control Actions.** The Permittee shall submit with the 2017-2018 Annual Report by September 30, 2018, and subsequently by March 30, 2019 and by January 2, 2020, a brief narrative Supplemental Report that describes the Permittee's progress toward meeting the 70 percent and 80 percent trash load reduction requirements. The Supplemental Report due by January 2, 2020 is only required if compliance is delayed past July 1, 2019. The Supplemental Reports shall include the following:
  - a) For the proposed full trash capture unit installation at the O'Connor Pump Station:
    - i. The status of contracting
    - ii. The status of permitting

- iii. The status of construction
    - b) Progress toward meeting the trash reduction requirement by the deadline identified in 1. above, including the date(s) any measures were completed and operating effectively and the resulting total trash load reduction (percent).
3. **Force Majeure.**\* If the Permittee is delayed, interrupted, or prevented from meeting the provisions and deadlines of this Order due to a force majeure, the Permittee shall notify the Executive Officer in writing within ten days of the date the Permittee first knows of the force majeure. The Permittee shall demonstrate that timely compliance with the Order or any affected deadlines will be actually and necessarily delayed, and that it has taken measures to avoid or mitigate the delay by exercising all reasonable precautions and efforts, whether before or after the occurrence of the force majeure.
  4. **Consequences of Non-Compliance and Executive Officer Authority.** The Executive Officer is hereby authorized to take enforcement action or to request the Attorney General to take appropriate actions against the Permittee in accordance with Water Code sections 13331, 13350, 13385, and 13386. Such actions may include injunctive and civil remedies, if appropriate, or the issuance of an Administrative Civil Liability Complaint for Water Board consideration. The Water Board reserves the right to take any enforcement action authorized by law.
  5. **Effective Date.** This Order shall be effective on June 13, 2018.

I, Bruce H. Wolfe, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Cease and Desist Order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, on June 13, 2018.

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*for* Bruce H. Wolfe  
Executive Officer

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\* A “force majeure” is an event that could not have been anticipated by and is beyond the control of the Permittee, including an act of God; earthquake, flood, or other natural disaster; civil disturbance or strike; fire or explosion; declared war within the United States; embargo; or other event of similar import and character. “Force majeure” does not include delays caused by funding, contractor performance, equipment delivery and quality, weather, permitting, other construction-related issues, CEQA challenges, initiative litigation, adverse legislation, or legal matters (with the exception of an injunction issued by a court of law specifically preventing construction from occurring).