Item No. 7 **January 29, 2021**
Attachment 2

CENTRAL COAST WATER BOARD
DRINKING WATER WELL TESTING PROGRAM – STATUS UPDATE

Updated January 7, 2021

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SUMMARY

The purpose of Attachment 2 is to provide an update on the status of the Central Coast Water Board's Drinking Water Well Testing Program (Program). The Program began in October 2018 and to date has tested a total of 326 wells. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Central Coast Water Board suspended the Program's well testing activities in March 2020. Therefore, the ability to provide new information on the quality of drinking water from central coast domestic wells and small water systems is limited. With this caveat in mind, the results for the most recent well data are consistent with the findings of Program's overall dataset indicating that approximately 40% of wells tested have at least one exceedance of a Primary Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL), with the most common contaminants being nitrate and arsenic.

DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of the Program is to provide free well testing to domestic well users and provide data to help them make informed decisions about their drinking water. Participation in the program is both voluntary and free to anyone in the region who receives their drinking water from a private domestic well, a local small water system with two to four residential connections, or a state small water system with five to 14 residential connections. Consistent with the Central Coast Water Board's environmental justice (EJ) priorities and Human Right to Water (HRTW) Resolution[1], resources are prioritized to conduct outreach and testing to support disadvantaged communities (DACs), however all qualified participants are welcome.

All Program data is managed in the State Water Board's Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment Groundwater Information System (GAMA GIS). The well testing results are also provided to Program participants and data is shared with local environmental health agencies and community partners. The Program supports several of the Central Coast Water Board's EJ and HRTW objectives including providing data to inform regulatory priorities, providing data to assess drinking water quality, providing information to increase EJ capacity and support community engagement, providing data to inform need for short-term replacement water programs and development of long-

[1] Human Right to Water Resolution No. R3-2017-0004, https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_decisions/adopted_orders/2017/2017-0004_hrtw_fnl.pdf

term drinking water solutions, and providing data to support coordination and data-sharing with local environmental health and groundwater agencies.

The Program's first year of implementation resulted in 249 well samples collected between October 2018 and November 2019. Staff presented the results and interpretation of this first dataset to the Central Coast Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) in January 2020. Between November 2019 and the Program's suspension due to COVID-19 in March 2020, an additional 77 well samples have been added to the dataset.

During this unanticipated interruption in testing activities, Central Coast Water Board staff has remained in contact with program partners such as local and state agencies and organizations, the Community Water Center, Tetra Tech, Fruit Growers Laboratory, and the Bay Foundation of Morro Bay. Additionally, staff has focused this time on making administrative improvements to the Program, such as updating outreach materials and methods, updating the Quality Assurance Program Plan (QAPP), streamlining the well testing results transmittal package for participants, and extending the necessary contracts. All Program partners are eager to continue their participation when testing activities can resume safely.

Constituents Analyzed

Drinking water well samples are analyzed for 18 constituents. However, because of the known health impacts associated with drinking water contaminants, staff focus their attention on the following constituents (listed with their respective primary maximum contaminant level [MCL]).

- Arsenic – 10 micrograms per liter (ug/L)
- Nitrate as N – 10 milligrams per liter (mg/L)
- Perchlorate – 6 ug/L
- 1,2,3-TCP – 0.005 ug/L

Nitrate and arsenic are the most commonly detected contaminants in drinking water wells statewide. The program also focuses on chromium VI even though it does not currently have an MCL. In the interest of evaluating potential human health risks, Central Coast Water Board staff are using the previous MCL of 10 ug/L as an interim screening level while the State Water Board develops a new MCL for chromium VI.

Program Results

Since the last update to the Central Coast Water Board in January 2020, an additional 77 well samples have been added to the dataset between November 2019 and March 2020. Of these 77 additional samples, 30 wells or 39% show at least one exceedance of an MCL and/or the Program's interim screening level for chromium VI. These results are generally consistent with results from the initial dataset. The sample locations are shown below in Figure 1, and a data summary is presented in Table 1.

Including the 77 wells discussed above, a running total of 326 wells have been tested since the Program began in October 2018 and laboratory results are available for all wells. Of the total 326 wells tested, 125 wells (38%) show at least one exceedance of an MCL and/or the Program's interim screening level for chromium VI. Figure 2 shows all sample points and locations of exceedances. A summary table of all well test results, by county, is presented below in Table 2.

CONCLUSION

In March 2020, the Central Coast Water Board suspended the Program's well testing activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The results for the limited data collected most recently are consistent with the findings of Program's overall dataset indicating that approximately 38-39% of wells tested have at least one exceedance of an MCL, with the most common contaminants being nitrate and arsenic.

Protecting the health and safety of both the Program's participants and the testing technicians has been and will continue to be the Program's highest priority. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Program had a high level of community interest and participation rates were high. Central Coast Water Board staff and the Program partners are optimistic that testing will safely resume in Santa Cruz and Santa Barbara counties during the 2021 calendar year. Currently, interested parties can request to be placed on a waiting list by calling 1 (844) 613-5152 (English / Español) or by filling out an online and smartphone compatible application form via one of the following websites Central Coast Well Testing (www.centralcoastwelltesting.org) and Costa Central Analisis De Pozos (http://www.ccanalisisdepozos.org).

Figure 1. Drinking water wells tested between November 2019 and March 2020. Blue circles represent samples without an exceedance. Red crosses show locations with one or more exceedance.

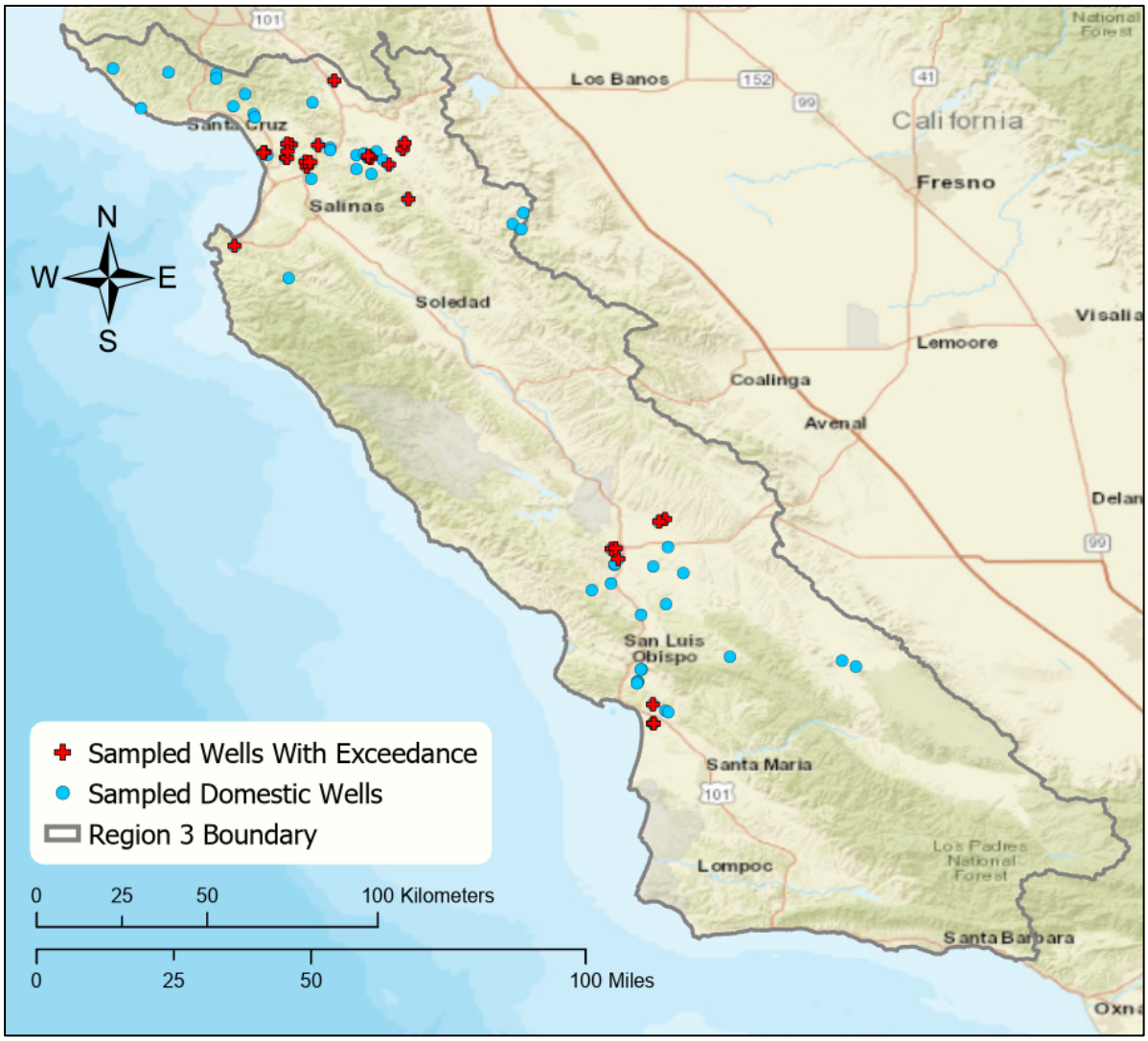

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Table 1. Summary results for wells tested between November 2019 and March 2020, including MCL exceedances by County (most recent dataset).

County	Number of Samples in County	Nitrate as N >= 10 mg/L	Arsenic >=10 ug/L	1,2,3-TCP >= 0.005 ug/L	Perchlorate >= 6 ug/L	Chromium VI >= 10 ug/L*
San Luis Obispo	**29**	3 (10%)	6 (21%)	0	0	0
Monterey	**15**	5 (33%)	1 (7%)	1 (7%)	0	5 (33%)
San Benito	**22**	3 (14%)	1 (5%)	3 (14%)	0	3 (14%)
Santa Cruz	**9**	0	0	0	0	0
Santa Clara	**2**	1	0	0	0	0
Santa Barbara	**0**	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	**77**	**12 (16%)**	**8 (10%)**	**4 (5%)**	**0**	**8 (10%)**

*Interim project screening level based on former MCL.

Figure 2. Drinking water wells tested from October 2018 through March 2020, including all drinking water well locations. Blue circles represent samples without an exceedance. Red crosses show locations with one or more exceedance.

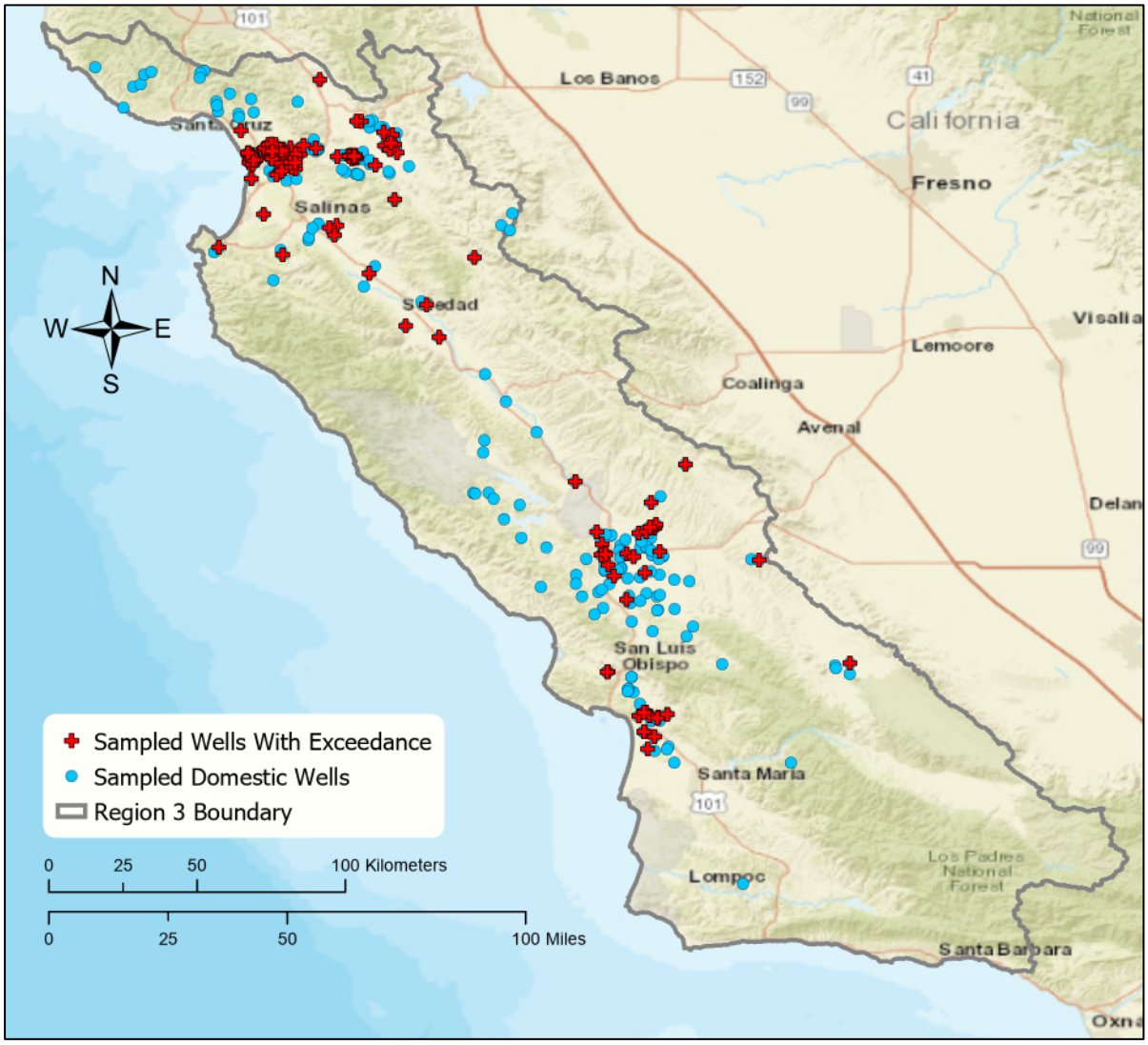

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Table 2. Summary results for all wells tested between October 2018 and March 2020, including MCL exceedances by County (entire dataset).

County	Number of Samples in County	Nitrate as N >= 10 mg/L	Arsenic >=10 ug/L	1,2,3-TCP >= 0.005 ug/L	Perchlorate >= 6 ug/L	Chromium VI >= 10 ug/L*
San Luis Obispo	**131**	13 (10%)	22 (17%)	0	0	1 (1%)
Monterey	**103**	41 (40%)	7 (7%)	18 (17%)	2 (2%)	16 (16%)
San Benito	**70**	10 (14%)	8 (11%)	3 (4%)	1	5 (7%)
Santa Cruz	**18**	0	0	0	0	1 (6%)
Santa Clara	**2**	1	0	0	0	0
Santa Barbara	**2**	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	**326**	**65 (20%)**	**37 (11%)**	**21 (6%)**	**3 (1%)**	**23 (7%)**

*Interim project screening level based on former MCL.