

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINT R5-2015-0534
MANDATORY PENALTY
IN THE MATTER OF

CITY OF SACRAMENTO
COMBINED WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TREATMENT SYSTEM
SACRAMENTO COUNTY

This Complaint is issued to the City of Sacramento (hereafter Discharger) pursuant to California Water Code (Water Code) section 13385, which authorizes the imposition of Administrative Civil Liability, Water Code section 13323, which authorizes the Executive Officer to issue this Complaint and Water Code section 7, which authorizes the delegation of the Executive Officer's authority to a deputy, in this case the Assistant Executive Officer. This Complaint is based on allegations that the Discharger violated provisions of Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) Order R5-2010-0004 and R5-2015-0045 (NPDES CA0079111).

The Assistant Executive Officer of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board or Board) alleges the following:

1. The Discharger owns and operates a combined sewer system that serves 7,510 acres in the downtown, East Sacramento, and Land Park areas of Sacramento. An additional 3,690 acres with separate sewers contributes sanitary sewage to the combined system. The combined sewer system conveys domestic wastewater, industrial wastewater, and stormwater runoff to sumps and/or a reservoir. Depending on flows, the waste is pumped to the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's wastewater treatment plant or to the City of Sacramento's Combined Wastewater Treatment System (Facility). In either case, treated waste is discharged to the Sacramento River, a water of the United States.
2. In order to regulate discharges from the Facility, on 28 January 2010, the Central Valley Water Board issued WDRs Order R5-2010-0004. On 17 April 2015, the Board then issued Order R5-2015-0045, which rescinded WDRs R5-2010-0004, except for enforcement purposes.
3. On 10 September 2013, the Executive Officer of the Central Valley Water Board issued Administrative Civil Liability Complaint (ACLC) R5-2013-0562 for mandatory minimum penalties (MMPs) for effluent violations (identified in Attachment A to ACLC R5-2013-0562) that occurred from 1 July 2008 through 30 April 2013. The Discharger paid the civil liability and the Board considers those effluent violations specifically listed in Attachment A to ACLC R5-2013-0562 to be resolved.
4. This Complaint addresses administrative civil liability for effluent violations that occurred during the period from 1 May 2013 through 30 June 2015. These violations are specifically identified in Attachment A to this Complaint as subject to MMPs. Attachment A to this Complaint is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.
5. On 12 June 2015, Central Valley Water Board staff issued the Discharger a Notice of Violation and draft Record of Violations for effluent limitation violations occurring between 1 May 2013 and 30 April 2015. On 29 July 2015, the Discharger agreed with the pH violations, but contested the settleable solids violation. The Discharger stated the WDRs settleable solids limit is only applicable to Discharge Point 006 (Pioneer Reservoir) for flows of 250 million gallons per day (MGD) or less. Board staff has reviewed the February 2015 self-monitoring report and determined

the average daily flow during the discharge event to be 312 MGD. Furthermore, the instantaneous flow measurements before and after sample collection were 405 MGD and 417 MGD, respectively. Board staff agrees with the Discharger and has dismissed the 8 February 2015 settleable solids violation. This Complaint has been extended through 30 June 2015; no additional violations have been found.

6. Water Code section 13385, subdivisions (h) and (i), require assessment of mandatory penalties and state, in part, the following:

Water Code section 13385, subdivision (h)(1), states:

Notwithstanding any other provision of this division, and except as provided in subdivisions (j), (k), and (l), a mandatory minimum penalty of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) shall be assessed for each serious violation.

Water Code section 13385, subdivision (h)(2), states:

For the purposes of this section, a "serious violation" means any waste discharge that violates the effluent limitations contained in the applicable waste discharge requirements for a Group II pollutant, as specified in Appendix A to Section 123.45 of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, by 20 percent or more or for a Group I pollutant, as specified in Appendix A to Section 123.45 of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, by 40 percent or more.

Water Code section 13385, subdivision (i)(1), states, in part:

Notwithstanding any other provision of this division, and except as provided in subdivisions (j), (k), and (l), a mandatory minimum penalty of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) shall be assessed for each violation whenever the person does any of the following four or more times in any period of six consecutive months, except that the requirement to assess the mandatory minimum penalty shall not be applicable to the first three violations:

- A) Violates a waste discharge requirement effluent limitation.
- B) Fails to file a report pursuant to Section 13260.
- C) Files an incomplete report pursuant to Section 13260.
- D) Violates a toxicity effluent limitation contained in the applicable waste discharge requirements where the waste discharge requirements do not contain pollutant-specific effluent limitations for toxic pollutants.

7. Water Code section 13323 states, in part:

Any executive officer of a regional board may issue a complaint to any person on whom administrative civil liability may be imposed pursuant to this article. The complaint shall allege the act or failure to act that constitutes a violation of law, the provision authorizing civil liability to be imposed pursuant to this article, and the proposed civil liability.

8. WDRs Order R5-2010-0004 Effluent Limitations IV.A.1.a., include, in part, the following effluent limitations:

- a. The Discharger shall maintain compliance with the following effluent limitations at Discharge Point Nos. 002, 003, and 006...

Table 6. Effluent Limitations

| Constituent | Units | Effluent Limitation |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | | Instantaneous Minimum |
| pH | Standard units | 6.5 |

9. According to the Discharger’s self-monitoring reports, the Discharger committed six (6) non-serious violations of the above effluent limitation contained in Order R5-2010-0004. One of the non-serious violations is subject to mandatory penalty under Water Code section 13385 subdivision (i)(1) because the violation was preceded by three or more similar violations within a six-month period. The mandatory minimum penalty for this non-serious violation is **three thousand dollars (\$3,000)**.
10. The total amount of the mandatory penalties assessed for the alleged effluent violations is **three thousand dollars (\$3,000)**. As stated herein, a detailed list of the alleged effluent violations is included in Attachment A. This Complaint addresses administrative civil liability for violations that are specifically identified in Attachment A as subject to mandatory minimum penalties.
11. On 14 February 2014, the Executive Officer designated Andrew Altevogt, Assistant Executive Officer, as the Lead Prosecution Officer for all enforcement matters originating in the Central Valley Region. The 14 February 2014 Delegation of Authority also authorizes Andrew Altevogt to issue Administrative Civil Liability Complaints.
12. Issuance of this Administrative Civil Liability Complaint to enforce Water Code Division 7, Chapter 5.5 is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code section 21000 et seq.), in accordance with California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15321(a)(2).

THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO IS HEREBY GIVEN NOTICE THAT:

1. The Assistant Executive Officer of the Central Valley Water Board proposes that the Discharger be assessed an administrative civil liability in the amount of **three thousand dollars (\$3,000)**.
2. A hearing on this matter will be held at the Central Valley Water Board meeting scheduled for **10/11 December 2015**, unless the Discharger does one of the following by **14 October 2015**:
 - a) Waives the hearing by completing the attached form (checking off the box next to Option 1) and returning it to the Central Valley Water Board. In addition, submits payment for the proposed civil liability of **three thousand dollars (\$3,000)** to the State Water Board, with a copy of the check to the Central Valley Water Board; or
 - b) Requests to engage in settlement discussions by checking the box next to Option 2 on the attached form, and returning it to the Board along with a letter describing the issues to be discussed. The Central Valley Water Board must agree to the postponement; or
 - c) Requests to delay the hearing by checking off the box next to Option 3 on the attached form, and returning it to the Board along with a letter describing the proposed length of delay and the issues to be discussed. The Central Valley Water Board must agree to the postponement.

3. If a hearing on this matter is held, the Central Valley Water Board will consider whether to affirm, reject, or modify the proposed administrative civil liability, or whether to refer the matter to the Attorney General for recovery of judicial civil liability.
4. If this matter proceeds to hearing, the Assistant Executive Officer reserves the right to amend the proposed amount of civil liability to conform to the evidence presented, including but not limited to, increasing the proposed amount to account for the costs of enforcement (including staff, legal and expert witness costs) incurred after the date of the issuance of this Complaint through completion of the hearing.

Original signed by
ANDREW ALTEVOGT, Assistant Executive Officer

14 September 2015
DATE

Attachment A: Record of Violations

**WAIVER FORM
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINT**

By signing this waiver, I affirm and acknowledge the following:

I am duly authorized to represent the City of Sacramento (hereafter Discharger) in connection with Administrative Civil Liability Complaint R5-2015-0534 (hereafter Complaint). I am informed that California Water Code section 13323, subdivision (b), states that, "a hearing before the regional board shall be conducted within 90 days after the party has been served. The person who has been issued a complaint may waive the right to a hearing."

(OPTION 1: Check here if the Discharger waives the hearing requirement and will pay in full.)

- a. I hereby waive any right the Discharger may have to a hearing before the Central Valley Water Board.
- b. I certify that the Discharger will remit payment for the proposed civil liability in the full amount of **three thousand dollars (\$3,000)** by check that references "ACL Complaint R5-2015-0534" made payable to the *State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account*. Payment must be received by the State Water Resources Control Board, Accounting Office, Attn: ACL Payment at PO Box 1888, Sacramento, California, 95812-1888 by **14 October 2015**. The waiver and a copy of the check must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board at 11020 Sun Center Drive #200, Rancho Cordova California, 95670 by **14 October 2015**.
- c. I understand the payment of the above amount constitutes a proposed settlement of the Complaint, and that any settlement will not become final until after a 30-day public notice and comment period. Should the Central Valley Water Board receive significant new information or comments during this comment period, the Central Valley Water Board's Assistant Executive Officer may withdraw the complaint, return payment, and issue a new complaint. I also understand that approval of the settlement will result in the Discharger having waived the right to contest the allegations in the Complaint and the imposition of civil liability.
- d. I understand that payment of the above amount is not a substitute for compliance with applicable laws and that continuing violations of the type alleged in the Complaint may subject the Discharger to further enforcement, including additional civil liability.

(OPTION 2: Check here if the Discharger waives the 90-day hearing requirement in order to engage in settlement discussions.) I hereby waive any right the Discharger may have to a hearing before the Central Valley Water Board within 90 days after service of the complaint, but I reserve the ability to request a hearing in the future. I certify that the Discharger will promptly engage the Central Valley Water Board Prosecution Team in settlement discussions to attempt to resolve the outstanding violation(s). By checking this box, the Discharger requests that the Central Valley Water Board delay the hearing so that the Discharger and the Prosecution Team can discuss settlement. It remains within the discretion of the Central Valley Water Board to agree to delay the hearing. Any proposed settlement is subject to the conditions described above under "Option 1."

(OPTION 3: Check here if the Discharger waives the 90-day hearing requirement in order to extend the hearing date and/or hearing deadlines. Attach a separate sheet with the amount of additional time requested and the rationale.) I hereby waive any right the Discharger may have to a hearing before the Central Valley Water Board within 90 days after service of the complaint. By checking this box, the Discharger requests that the Central Valley Water Board delay the hearing and/or hearing deadlines so that the Discharger may have additional time to prepare for the hearing. It remains within the discretion of the Central Valley Water Board to approve the extension.

(Print Name and Title)

(Signature)

(Date)

ATTACHMENT A TO ACLC R5-2015-0534

**CITY OF SACRAMENTO
 COMBINED WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TREATMENT SYSTEM
 RECORD OF VIOLATIONS (1 May 2013 through 30 June 2015) MANDATORY PENALTIES
 (Data reported under Monitoring and Reporting Program R5-2010-0004 and R5-2015-0045)**

| | <u>Date</u> | <u>Parameter</u> | <u>Units</u> | <u>6.5 – 8.5 Range Limit</u> | <u>Measured</u> | <u>Period</u> | <u>Remarks</u> | <u>CIWQS</u> |
|---|-------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| * | 12/1/2012 | pH | S.U. | 6.5 | 6.19 | Instantaneous minimum | 3 | 943006 |
| 1 | 2/8/2014 | pH | S.U. | 6.5 | 6.1 | Instantaneous minimum | 3 | 966262 |
| 2 | 2/9/2014 | pH | S.U. | 6.5 | 6.2 | Instantaneous minimum | 3 | 966264 |
| 3 | 12/3/2014 | pH | S.U. | 6.5 | 6.1 | Instantaneous minimum | 3 | 985692 |
| 4 | 12/16/2014 | pH | S.U. | 6.5 | 6.4 | Instantaneous minimum | 3 | 985693 |
| 5 | 2/6/2015 | pH | S.U. | 6.5 | 6.2 | Instantaneous minimum | 3 | 988395 |
| 6 | 2/8/2015 | pH | S.U. | 6.5 | 6.1 | Instantaneous minimum | 4 | 988366 |

* Violation addressed and settled in ACLC R5-2013-0562. Shown to provide context for Remark “3” for subsequent violations.

Remarks:

1. Serious Violation: For Group I pollutants that exceed the effluent limitation by 40 percent or more.
2. Serious Violation: For Group II pollutants that exceed the effluent limitation by 20 percent or more.
3. Non-serious violation falls within the first three violations in a 180-day period, thus is not subject to mandatory minimum penalties. Penalties that may be assessed for this violation are discretionary. This violation is not addressed or resolved in this ROV.
4. Non-serious violation subject to mandatory minimum penalties.

| | | |
|--|--|-------------------------|
| | <u>VIOLATIONS AS OF:</u> | <u>6/30/2015</u> |
| | Group I Serious Violations: | 0 |
| | Group II Serious Violations: | 0 |
| | Non-Serious Violations Not Subject to MMPs: | 5 |
| | <u>Non-serious Violations Subject to MMPs:</u> | <u>1</u> |
| | Total Violations Subject to MMPs: | 1 |

Mandatory Minimum Penalty = (1 Non-Serious Violations subject to MMPs) x \$3,000 = \$3,000