

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINT R5-2017-0511

MANDATORY PENALTY
IN THE MATTER OF

CITY OF GALT
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AND RECLAMATION FACILITY
SACRAMENTO COUNTY

This Complaint is issued to the City of Galt (hereafter Discharger) pursuant to California Water Code (Water Code) section 13385, which authorizes the imposition of Administrative Civil Liability and 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) Orders R5-2010-0099 and R5-2015-0123 (NPDES CA0081434).

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 the City of Galt Wastewater Treatment Plant and Reclamation Facility (Facility), a wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system, which provides sewerage service for the City of Galt. Treated wastewater is discharged to Laguna Creek, tributary to the Consumes River, a water of the United States.
2. In order to regulate discharges from the Facility, on 23 September 2010, the Central Valley Water Board issued WDRs Order R5- 2010-0099, which became effective on 12 November 2010. On 11 December 2015, WDRs Order R5-2010-0099 was rescinded, except for enforcement purposes, and replaced by WDRs Order R5-2015-0123 for surface water discharges and WDRs Order R5-2015-0125 for land application discharges. WDRs Order R5-2015-0123 for surface water discharges became effective on 1 February 2016.
3. On 11 December 2015, the Central Valley Water Board adopted TSO R5-2015-0124, which provided a time schedule to comply with final effluent limitations contained in WDRs Order R5-2015-0123 for nitrate plus nitrite by 1 September 2016, arsenic by 1 September 2018, and zinc by 1 December 2020.
4. On 28 March 2016, the Assistant Executive Officer of the Central Valley Water Board issued Administrative Civil Liability Complaint (ACLC) R5-2016-0516 for mandatory minimum penalties (MMPs) for effluent violations from 1 May 2013 through 31 December 2015. The Discharger settled by payment and the completion of a supplemental environmental project, and the Board considers those effluent violations specifically listed in Attachment A to ACLC R5-2016-0516 to be resolved.
5. On 27 January 2017, staff issued the Discharger a Notice of Violation (NOV) and draft Record of Violations (ROV) for effluent limitation violations that occurred between 1 January 2016 and 30 November 2016. On 24 February 2017 the Discharger responded to the ROV and acknowledged the exceedances of the effluent limitations. However, the Discharger stated that all of the violations that occurred in January 2016 are attributed to the startup of the Facility's secondary processes (oxidation ditch and clarifiers) and therefore the Discharger should have protection from MMPs for these violations as provided by Water Code section 13385(j)(D)(i). The

Discharger stated they submitted a Startup Operations Plan (Startup Plan) for Board staff approval in August 2015. However, Board staff has no record of receiving the Plan and the Discharger could not provide documentation showing that the Startup Plan was submitted. In addition, the Discharger had a comment regarding the mass-based ammonia violation which occurred on 26 January 2016 being defined as a "Serious Violation." Board staff concurs and have corrected the remark to show the violation as "Non-serious violation subject to mandatory minimum penalties" as there were more than three violations which occurred within the previous 180 day period.

On 1 March 2016, Board staff and the Discharger had a conference call to discuss the concerns stated in the Discharger's ROV response letter. The result of the meeting was that the Discharger agreed that protection from MMPs was not established 30 days in advance of the startup of the new biological process and therefore MMPs will be assessed. This Complaint extends the ROV period through 31 January 2017; one additional violation was found for January 2016 consisting of a mass-based, monthly average ammonia violation which was inadvertently left off of the ROV.

6. This Complaint addresses administrative civil liability for effluent violations that occurred between 1 January 2016 and 31 January 2017. 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.
7. Water Code section 13385(h) and (i) require assessment of mandatory penalties and state, in part, the following:

Water Code section 13385(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 (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.

8. 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.

9. WDRs Order R5-2010-0099 Effluent Limitations IV.A.1. Table 6 includes, in part, the following effluent limitations:

Table 6. Effluent Limitations:

Parameter	Units	Average Monthly	Maximum Daily
Ammonia Nitrogen, Total (as N)	mg/L	1.7	3.3
	lbs/day	64	124

10. According to the Discharger's self-monitoring reports, the Discharger committed four (4) serious Group I violations and one (1) non-serious violation of the above effluent limitations contained in WDRs Order R5-2010-0099 as shown in Attachment A. The non-serious violation is subject to MMPs under Water Code section 13385 subdivision (i)(1) because this violation was preceded by three or more effluent limit violations within a 180-day period. The four (4) serious Group 1 violations are defined as serious because measured concentrations of Group I constituents exceeded maximum prescribed levels in the WDRs by 40 percent or more. The mandatory minimum penalty for these five violations is **fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000)**.
11. The total amount of the mandatory penalties assessed for the alleged effluent violations is **fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000)**. A detailed list of all effluent violations is included in Attachment A, a part of this Complaint. This Complaint addresses administrative civil liability for violations that are specifically listed in Attachment A as subject to mandatory minimum penalties.
12. On 21 December 2015, 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 21 December 2015 Delegation of Authority also authorizes Andrew Altevogt to issue Administrative Civil Liability Complaints.
13. 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 GALT 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 **fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000)**.
2. A hearing on this matter will be held at the Central Valley Water Board meeting scheduled on **8/9 June 2017**, unless one of the following occurs by **10 April 2017**.

- 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 **fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000)** 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

13 March 2017

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 Galt (hereafter Discharger) in connection with Administrative Civil Liability Complaint R5-2017-0511 (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 **fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000)** by check that references "ACL Complaint R5-2017-0511" 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 **10 April 2017**. The waiver and a copy of the check must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board Attn: Wendy Wyels at 11020 Sun Center Drive #200, Rancho Cordova California, 95670 by **10 April 2017**.
- 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
ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINT R5-2017-0511**

**City of Galt
Wastewater Treatment Plant**

RECORD OF VIOLATIONS (1 January 2016 – 31 January 2017) MANDATORY PENALTIES
(Data reported under Monitoring and Reporting Program R5-2010-0099 and R5-2015-0123)

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Parameter</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>WDRs Limit</u>	<u>Measured</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Remarks</u>	<u>CIWQS</u>
*	6-Jan-15	Copper	µg/L	4.3	7.3	Daily Maximum	2	1001609
1 [†]	31-Dec-15	Lead, Total Recoverable	µg/L	0.6	0.7	Monthly Average	3	1011994
2	12-Jan-16	Ammonia, Total	mg/L	3.3	3.8	Daily Maximum	3	1004340
3	19-Jan-16	Ammonia, Total	mg/L	3.3	6.1	Daily Maximum	1	1004339
4	26-Jan-16	Ammonia, Total	mg/L	3.3	11	Daily Maximum	1	1004341
5	26-Jan-16	Ammonia Total	lb/day	124	172.5	Daily Maximum	4	1018357
6	31-Jan-16	Ammonia, Total	mg/L	1.7	5.9	Monthly Average	1	1011997
7	31-Jan-16	Ammonia, Total	lb/day	64	94.8	Monthly Average	1	1021122

* Supporting violation addressed in ACLC R5-2016-0516.

† The previous administrative civil liability complaint (ACLC) R5-2016-0566, which assessed violations during the period from 1 May 2013 through 31 December 2015 neglected to include this violation. Therefore, it is being assessed as part of this ACL.

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>1/31/17</u>
Group I Serious Violations:	4
Group II Serious Violations:	0
Non-Serious Violations Not Subject to MMPs:	1
<u>Non-serious Violations Subject to MMPs:</u>	<u>1</u>
Total Violations Subject to MMPs:	5

**Mandatory Minimum Penalty = (4 Group I Serious Violations) + (1 Non-Serious Violation Subject to MMPs)
x \$3,000 = \$15,000**