

Superior Accomplishment Award

August 2025

EMPLOYEE: Charles Cardenas

UNIT: Confined Animals

TITLE: Engineering Geologist

SUPERVISOR/TITLE: Dan Gamon, Senior Engineering Geologist



Charles has been working on a superior level by taking the initiative to provide excellent ideas and improvements to our Unit's work operations and efficiencies. The Confined Animal Facilities (CAF) Unit is historically prone to being overworked and under-resourced and staff must use outdated methods and technologies to complete our Unit's mission of regulatory compliance, facility inspections, enforcement, permit writing, project document management, and file retention. In that context Charles has excelled at finding ways to make things better, more

efficient, and assisted or led efforts to meet successful closures and deadlines. Some of these superior accomplishments are as follows:

1. Successfully issued and completed a Cleanup and Abatement Order against a dairy that had for years eluded compliance with their waste discharge permit requirements and avoided completion of corrective actions. Charles' steadfast and professional diligence got the Dischargers to understand and make the efforts they needed to clean up their dairy and stop non-compliant operations. Charles efforts and skills at getting these long-term recalcitrant Dischargers to come back into compliance helped them avoid an ACLC and potential massive fines. Charles' efforts reflected positively on the Central Valley Water Board;
2. After discussions with his supervisor about streamlining some of our repeated regulatory documents and letters such as Owner, Operator, and/or Name Change requests that are constantly being processed, he took the initiative and created an easy-to-use approval letter template and Work Order template and trained staff on how to use them. This has greatly increased the ease of writing these documents and has sped up the review and approval process. As a result, Executive signatures and mail outs are much more efficient, which has helped keep our project records more up to date. This effort alone has positive ripple effects in all our document and information management systems; and
3. Charles consistently provides technical support above and beyond in helping to find better ways to track data, manage data, and integrate information that cannot be stored in centralized databases or is attached to other unfunded mandates that require coordination with other regulatory programs.