

## San Diego County Water Authority

**Operations Center** 

610 W. 5th Avenue • Escondido, California 92025 (760) 480-1991 FAX (760) 480-9867 www.sdcwa.org Item No. 13
Supporting Document No. 3

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July 17, 2009

MEMBER AGENCIES

Carlsbad Municipal Water District

City of Del Mar

City of Escandido

City of Oceanside

City of Poway

City of San Diego

Fallbrook Public Utility District

Helix Water District

Olivenhain Municipal Water District

Olay Water District

Padre Dam Municipal Water District

> Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base

Rainbow Municipal Water District

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Municipal Water District

Rincon del Diablo

San Dieguito Water District

Santa Fe Irrigation District

South Bay Irrigation District

Vallecitos Water District

Valley Center Municipal Water District

Vista Irrigation District

Yuima Municipal Water District

> OTHER REPRESENTATIVE

County of San Diego

Ms. Michelle Mata California Regional Water Quality Control Board San Diego Region 9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100

Re: Comments on Draft Tentative Order No. R9-2009-0094 NPDES Permit No. CAG679001

Dear Ms. Mata:

San Diego, CA 92123-4353

In response to the release of the above tentative order, the San Diego County Water Authority and its 24-member agencies formed a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to review and provide comments to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

The TAC is comprised of staff from the City of San Diego, Olivenhain Municipal Water District, Santa Fe Irrigation District, San Dieguito Water District, Vallecitos Water District, Vista Irrigation District, Carlsbad Water District, Sweetwater Authority, Rainbow Municipal Water District, City of Poway, Helix Water District, and the San Diego County Water Authority. These professionals are responsible for operating and maintaining public water systems in compliance with strict regulations established by the Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Public Health.

## Key issues with the Draft Tentative Order

On July 13, 2009, the TAC met to review the Draft Tentative Order. Listed below are several major points of concern that were raised:

- Adoption of the order is scheduled for August 12, 2009, with written comments due on August 5, 2009, and an effective date of September 1, 2009. This does not allow adequate time to resolve issues with respect to the changes from the prior permit.
- The Draft Tentative Order eliminates the minimum reporting level of discharges for 500,000 gallons/day or more. This will add thousands of discharges under 500,000 gallons/day that need to be reported and approved, will overwhelm administrative and compliance capability, and will increase the cost of service.

A public agency providing a safe and reliable water supply to the San Diego region





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- The Notice of Intent contains open-ended requirements for certification of alternate methods of disposal or re-use. Potable water systems are already required to operate under strict Best Management Practices (BMP's) to limit water loss due to leakage, upset, and maintenance discharges. No additional regulation is needed
- The requirement to obtain approval from each MS4 operator, prior to every discharge, places unreasonable burden on water agencies. The added complexity and cost is not justified for such low risk discharges, and the process could jeopardize projects that require dewatering operations.
- Hydrostatic testing of new oil and gas facilities and reclaimed water systems have been included in this permit. This adds unrelated groups with the potential of higher risk discharges to the permit.
- Discharge of water into water conveyance systems is no longer exempt under the new proposal. Water discharged into a potable water source poses no risk to the public or environment.

In additional to the major issues listed above, the committee has other items of concern that we feel should be addressed.

Adoption of the Order, in its present form, will severely impact the ability of public water agencies in San Diego County to properly operate and maintain our systems.

The Water Authority and its 24-member agencies respectfully request delaying adoption of the Draft Tentative Order, and request stakeholder advisory group meetings and/or workshops as part of the rule-making process. This will allow time for TAC members and RWQCB staff to work toward mutually acceptable solutions, prior to permit adoption. If you have any questions, please contact Joe Wegand, Operations and Maintenance Manager, at (760) 233-3264 (office) or (760) 644-1411 (cell).

Sincerely,

Gary Eaton

Director of Operations and Maintenance

JNW:sdw/cao

Cc: Joe Wegand, O&M Manager, Water Authority
Frank Belock, Deputy General Manager, Water Authority
Ken Weinberg, Director of Water Resources, Water Authority



<sup>\* 30</sup>M Depithily 1275 WaterQuality/RWQCB/RWQCB Permit Response Letter July 17 doc