

**State of California  
California Regional Water Quality Control  
Board Santa Ana Region**

**Staff Report**

September 11, 2020

ITEM: 10

**SUBJECT:** Presentation of the 2019 Sampling Results for Emerging Constituents in the Santa Ana Region

**SUMMARY:**

The term “Emerging Constituents” (ECs) is generally used to describe chemicals for which there are no regulatory limits and/or for which there are no standard analytical methods. ECs include a large number of pharmaceuticals, personal care products, food additives, pesticides and other common household chemicals. Over the past 10 years, there has been increasing awareness and concern that ECs may be present in the environment and may have adverse effects. It is only because of advances in analytical procedures that many chemicals previously undetected in water samples are now being detected. to

Recycled water discharge, reuse and recharge are an important component of water resource management throughout the Santa Ana Region. As more recycled water is put to reuse, there is concern about the presence of ECs in recycled water. In addition to recycled water, ECs presence in imported water used for recharge in the watershed is also a concern. As such, in 2009, an EC Workgroup, consisting of various water supply and wastewater agencies throughout the Region, voluntarily undertook a proactive approach to investigating the presence of ECs. The EC Workgroup developed a Sampling and Analysis plan that was endorsed by the Regional Water Board (Resolution No. R8-2009-0071). This work was sponsored and coordinated by the Emerging Constituents Program Task Force that is administered through the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA).

Commencing in June of 2010, samples were collected and analyzed each summer for four consecutive years. Results were summarized in annual reports to the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (Santa Ana Water Board). The purpose of this voluntary study project was to gather data needed to inform development of statewide EC monitoring requirements. The study was terminated in 2014 after the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) finalized its EC monitoring requirements for planned recycled water projects.

In October 2018, representatives from the Orange County Water District (OCWD) met with the Santa Ana River Dischargers Association (SARDA) and presented their initial findings regarding the occurrence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the Santa Ana River Watershed. OCWD and SARDA subsequently agreed that reconvening the Emerging Constituents Task Force to update the previous EC studies, would provide useful insights regarding PFAS occurrence in the watershed. In December of 2018, the State Water Board amended the Recycled Water Policy and revised the related EC monitoring requirements. Two months later, water and wastewater agencies in the Santa Ana River watershed reconvened the Task Force and elected to update their prior work accordingly. In the summer of 2019, 29 new samples were collected and analyzed for various ECs including several PFAS. In April 2020, EC Task Force consultants finalized the data summary report after review and comments by the EC Task Force members. The report, titled "Report for the 2019 Study of Emerging Constituents in the Santa Ana River Watershed" can be viewed using the following web link:

[https://sawpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Final-2019-EC-Sampling-Report\\_Linked.pdf](https://sawpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Final-2019-EC-Sampling-Report_Linked.pdf)

SAWPA and OCWD staff will make an oral presentation to the Regional Water Board on the 2019 ECs sampling results.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This is an Informational Item – no action is required. SAWPA and OCWD staff will present this item.