



RODEO SANITARY DISTRICT

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JAN 18 2013

DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY

January 15, 2013

Russell Norman
SSO Reduction Program
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **Comments on Proposed Changes to Sanitary Sewer System (SSS) Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP)**

Dear Mr. Norman:

On behalf of the Rodeo Sanitary District, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the recently released proposed modifications to the Sanitary Sewer System (SSS) Waste Discharge requirements (WDRs) Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP). The Rodeo Sanitary District was established in 1939 to service the Town of Rodeo and the Village of Tormey in Western Contra Costa County. The District is a predominantly bedroom community consisting of approximately 8,000 residents and 100 businesses. The District collects and treats the sewage from these communities. There are approximately 25 miles of gravity sewers, two pump stations, and a 1.14 mgd sewage treatment plant.

Since the implementation of the original SSS WDR in 2006, the District has completed the sewer system management plan (SSMP) and directed efforts to improve the efficiency of the collection system. The District has performed smoke testing, conducted a comprehensive flow monitoring and modeling, implemented a sewer lateral condition program, and replaced dozens of manholes and thousands of feet of line to reduce weather related Sewer System Overflows (SSOs). Additionally, the District has nearly completed a Comprehensive Wastewater Master Plan that will establish a 20 year CIP, to in part, specifically address sewer system overflows.

We are committed to the effective and appropriate implementation of the SSS WDR, and through our membership in the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA), we have been an active partner with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) in facilitating understanding of, and compliance with, the order. The Rodeo Sanitary District supports CASA's comments on the proposed amendments to the MRP, and incorporates those comments by reference.

Our primary concern is that the proposed amendments constitute a broad and significant revision of the MRP, contrary to both State Water Board direction and prior representations to stakeholders regarding the cleanup nature of the amendment process. Though the current version of the MRP has been narrowed from the prior draft, the proposed revisions remain extensive. Many of the proposed changes do not fall within the limited scope of an MRP and create new policy or substantive requirements, which should only be imposed through amendments to the WDR itself. For example:

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- The amount of information required for the 2-hour reporting requirement is significant, and in most cases entirely impractical for reporting entities. With an agency the size of the Rodeo Sanitary District, seven full time employees, this would hinder the District's ability to effectively mitigate the in progress Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO). The State Water Board must be cognizant of limited agency staffing and be aware that if the SSO is significant, it is more important for the agency's staff to mitigate the SSO rather than report it;
- The new time limit of 120 days to amend a SSO report inhibits the ability of entities to report the most accurate spill volumes possible after a complete investigation into the facts and circumstances surrounding an SSO;
- The new technical report and monitoring program required for all SSOs greater than 50,000 gallons is incredibly burdensome and is a significant new requirement. Similar to the comment above, the agency size must be considered when establishing cumbersome reporting requirements that do not add any practical data, especially from weather related SSOs.;
- The new, extensive requirements in the revised MRP will result in agency staff devoting their limited time and resources to simply compiling more documentation, which does not achieve the intent of the SSS WDR and the MRP—to reduce SSOs.
- The new requirements will increase operating costs and place additional financial burdens on already limited and depleted budgets during the fiscal crises most agencies are experiencing. The agency's typical mind set to pass on costs will also impact the public by requiring higher sewer service fees in dreary economic times.

The Rodeo Sanitary District supports a number of the changes to the MRP originally proposed in early 2012. For example, we support the delineation of the two existing overflow categories into three, clarification of the event-based approach to reporting, and clarification that agencies should only contact CalEMA for immediate reporting. Nonetheless, the changes noted above, as well as many others, are outside the scope of the MRP amendment process and are inappropriate. We request that the proposed amendments to the MRP be revised consistent with the specific language recommendations submitted by CASA.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on proposed changes to the MRP, and look forward to working with State Water Board staff in the future on issues related to the SSS WDR. Please contact the undersigned if you would like additional information regarding our comments.

Sincerely,



Steven S. Beall, P.E.
District Manager
Rodeo Sanitary District