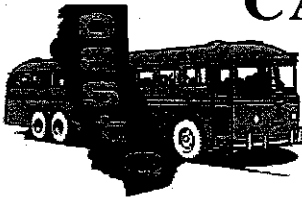


CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION

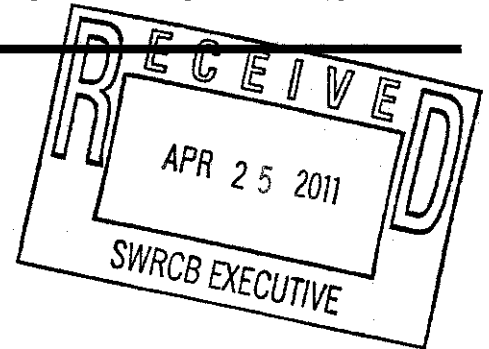


OF

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

April 20, 2011

Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95812



Comments To The Proposed Industrial Storm Water General Permit

Dear Ms. Townsend:

The Draft Industrial General Permit issued by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) will cause severe financial and staff resources problems for all school districts in California that have a school transportation operations and maintenance facility, and will take away funds reserved to educate children in our schools. Because the permit is an unfunded mandate from the SWRCB, the permit essentially forces school district administrators to fund for the implementation of the Industrial Permit at the expense of educational programs.

Approximately 960 school districts in California operate a school transportation facility or contract for the service and transport nearly one million students using our buses annually. We have over 26,000 buses and most of our school districts strictly adhere to your current requirements.

School Districts in California hve many concerns with the proposed permit that were voiced at the March 29, 2011 SWRCB hearing. Our most immediate concerns are as follows:

- 1. The permit would require over 300 new or revised inspections and recordation of the inspections annually.** School districts are already overburdened with federal and state compliance requirements. This permit is overly burdensome and does not consider the effort required by the district for compliance. We recommend that the number of inspections be reduced.
- 2. The cost to implement the permit is estimated to cost from \$29,400 to over \$100,000 if advanced treatment for exceeding numeric effluent limits occur.** Education has taken the largest budget reductions from the State since 2007-08 and is projected to take an additional reduction for 2011-12 if the current temporary tax

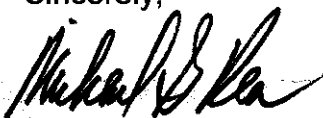
extensions are not approved by voters. The cost to implement the permit is not commensurate with the benefits. School district bus yards are not major polluters. We recommend that the SWRCB consider the cost of implementing the permit and where applicable, provide exemptions for school bus yards.

3. **The permit incorporates the use of Numeric Action Limits (NALs) and Numeric Effluent Limits (NELs) in an improper utilization of these processes.** According to the California Stormwater Quality Association, the SWRCB proposed utilization of the NALs and NELs to set performance standards and remediation follow up for possible mandatory fines is improper and an incorrect adaptation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency processes into a storm water permit. We recommend that the NALs and NELs requirements be deleted.
4. **The permit mandates that district staff must receive training from a State sponsored Qualified Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan Practitioner training program and as a result would eliminate the need for group monitoring.** We do not agree with this conclusion. The primary mission of district bus maintenance yard staff is to provide safe, reliable and available buses to transport students. Under "group monitoring" a monitor provides annual and as needed training as problems arise, reminds districts to conduct inspections and fill out reports, reviews reports for compliance, analyzes water samples, and answers questions. Elimination of group monitoring eliminates a vital source of information and expertise and would result in less compliance. We recommend that group monitoring be retained and if a district utilizes group monitoring, that district staff be exempted from the training requirement.

We believe that school district bus yards are different than truck yards servicing interstate commerce, salvage yards, and land fill sites, and recommend that the SWRCB recognize our difference. School district bus maintenance yards are not major polluters. School districts should not be put into a situation to divert funds intended for educating children to promoting water quality.

CASTO on behalf of all California School Districts who operate a pupil transportation facility requests that you consider our recommendations and respond to our concerns.

Sincerely,



Michael G. Rea
Government Relations Chair

cc: Mr. Charles R. Hoppin, Chair, SWRCB
Ms. Frances Spivy-Weber, Vice Chair, SWRCB
Ms. Tam M. Doduc, Member, SWRCB
Mr. Roger Chang, Los Angeles County Office of Education
(9300 Imperial Highway, Downey, CA 90242)