

PUBLIC COMMENTOR 251 - MARTIN KERKVIET, SEPTEMBER 24, 1996

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Martin Kerkviet. I live in Sebastopol. Thank you, river friends, for not failing in your civic rudeness. I have been involved in this issue as an interested citizen for nearly five years. I've learned a great deal concerning this issue because the City of Santa Rosa has always kept me informed of upcoming meetings and has over these years, to my residence, at their own expense, sent me over 50 pounds of documents pertaining to the long-term resolution of the subregional systems reclaimed water.

This is not wastewater. Cloverdale produces wastewater. Healdsburg produces wastewater. Graton, Forestville, Occidental, Freestone, Camp Meeker, Rio Nido, Monte Rio and Guerneville produce wastewater.

Do these towns and cities treat their wastewater to a tertiary level? No. Will these towns and cities be ceasing their use of chlorine in their wastewater treatment systems? No. Santa Rosa is the lead agency of the subregional system, produces reclaimed water. Water which exceeds any federal or state standard.

Santa Rosa will be replacing chlorine treatment with ultraviolet light, not only for economic reasons, but also because the river friends kept bringing up estrogenic fears that were based on the chemical breakdown of chlorine. Do the towns of Cloverdale, Healdsburg, Graton, Forestville, Occidental, Camp Meeker, Rio Nido, Monte Rio, and Guerneville have more lenient discharge standards than Santa Rosa and its subregional partners? Yes, they do.

Do the above towns release water into streams which feed into the river or to the Russian River directly? Yes, they do. Are the river friends in an uproar over these circumstances? No, they are not.

"Don't look into our antienvironmental pollution," they tell us. "Santa Rosa is the main culprit of degradation."

River friends often say if it's so clean, let Santa Rosan's drink it. Alternative 5-b takes this symbolic stance into consideration. They say "we drink Russian River water." Sweetwater springs district well intakes the same depth, 80 to 100 feet, as the Sonoma County water agency intakes. They say "we swim in the river." But do they really swim in the middle of December, or after a heavy march rain? The document before the City counsel is adequate. I stop short of calling it brilliant and completely comprehensive, because I still believe building delta pond would be the quickest way for Sebastopol farmers to get a hold of this water. Yet I feel vindicated by the conclusion reached by the consultants.

The most environmentally sensitive alternatives are 5-a and 5-b. They are also the most economically reasonable. Santa Rosa Board of Public Utilities and City Council, I strongly urge you to find the courage to select either alternatives 5-A or 5-B.

Mayor Wright:

Thank you Martin. Eric Austensen. Is Eric here? Rob Levinsky?