
PUBLIC COMMENTOR 254 - ANN MAURICE, SEPTEMBER 24, 1996

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My name is Ann Maurice, ad hoc committee on clean water. Yes, I'd like you to listen to the department of health services. What does the department of health services have to say? They say that in order to do some of the things that you're planning to do and are continuing to do with the wastewater, you're not supposed to have more than 2.2 coliforms per milliliter. And no more than 23 coliform per milliliter in a month. Okay? E. Coli -- that's coliform -- that's a fecal contaminant. It's becoming an everyday word now because of the outbreak in Japan and because of what happened in Seattle. What is the quality of your wastewater? Are you matching the department of health's standards? Are you meeting it as you claim you do?

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For 12 million dollars, I think that this community deserves to have had a health risk assessment worthy of that amount of money. The health -- the health risk assessment that you have put out to the public, that your consultants have given to you as a City Council isn't worth the paper it is written on. I don't practice science for a living. But that's my background. And I am insulted and offended that such a ridiculous report was given to the public so that elderly citizens and other people actually believe that the wastewater that is being distributed for irrigation is reaching this contaminant level that the department of health services says is necessary.

There's a little play on words going on. You're distributing tertiary treated water, emphasis on treated. It was treated, all right, to this tertiary level, so when they tested it right at the effluent pipe, you had 2.2 coliform per liter. Then what happened to the wastewater? It went off to delta pond.

What happens to it in delta pond? Before it goes to the farmers to feed to the cows? Before it gets spray irrigated, so that when I drive down occidental road and you drive down Guerneville road it's sprayed all over you. The aerosols are in the air. What happens to that water in delta pond? Well, your consultants know. Your consultants who prepared this risk assessment know.

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For 12 million dollars, you who are convinced that this wastewater is of such excellent quality, tell me what research was done. Find it in the appendix. And I want to tell everybody, don't read Santa Rosa's conclusions. I learned a long time ago don't read the conclusions. Go to the back of the book and read the appendixes and figure out what they do to get there. Because you'll be shocked.

All the data on risk assessment? What's it based on? You got a table here that says studies done, research done between 1991 and 1995.

Do you know how many samples they took? Four. October -- want me to tell you the dates? 27th of October, 1994, 8th of November, 1994, 30th of November, 1994, 14th of December, 1994. Hey -- they didn't find anything, it's all right. What have they done since 1995? I don't see any evidence of anything.

Between 1991 and 1994 -- that's one thousand four hundred and some days. Four samples. Think of the billions of gallons of wastewater that went through the plant during that time.

How many effluent samples did they take from delta pond? I got an irrigation map someplace here that somebody gave me from Graton showing all the areas around Graton that they're planning to send this wastewater, okay? Where is this wastewater coming from? Direct from the plant? No. The pipeline comes from delta pond. What are they trying to put into -- what are you planning to put into the Atascadero and Green Valley Creek watersheds? How many samples did they take from delta pond? For 12 million dollars, this community deserved to have some sampling done at delta pond. What did they do? One sample.

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Everything that we're talking about here, about the safety of this water, the people who are talking for the chamber of commerce and so forth who are in support of this EIR, this is what they're giving you. One sample. The famous sample, the famous day, the 30th of November, 1994. That was a day to remember. That was the day that the water in delta pond was tested. Congratulations. That's what we got for 12 million dollars? That's what you're basing your whole assessment on what to do with this matter? That's what you're basing your assessment of the quality of it on, okay?

Guess what they found? Remember what I said about 23 in one month? That's the maximum level. And 2.2 is what they're all telling you is in the water. Guess what they found in delta pond? There was 280. That's 100 times the permissible count. And you're going around talking about this tertiary treated effluent. It was treated, all right, but by the time it goes out for distribution it's not at that standard anymore. Then there's something else -- I'm sorry, but it's very difficult to summarize my comments on 8,000 pages in five minutes.

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Mayor Wright:

Everyone has the same rules. You can submit all of your comments.

ANN MAURICE:

And as far as I'm concerned, you should be paying every single member of this community. For 12 million dollars, I think there's some subsidy that could go to all of us who spent hours poring over all of this stuff.

Mayor Wright:

Thank you, you need to conclude.

ANN MAURICE:

12 million for your consultants.

Mayor Wright:

Your time is up.

ANN MAURICE:

Well, I would like to conclude by saying I think it's illegal what you are doing with the wastewater. I think it's illegal, and I would like you to tell me whether it's legal to discharge that water from delta pond into the river.

Mayor Wright:

Your time is up.

ANN MAURICE:

And whether it's legal to discharge that for agricultural – |

Mayor Wright:

We're going to continue with this hearing. If you want to carry on, you can carry on outside the room. We are going to continue this public hearing. I'd ask to you keep your comments to yourselves. The next speaker is Kathleen Kirkland. Hi, Kathleen.