



Media Release

Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Acts to Improve Salinas Storm Water Management

Salinas – The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) voted unanimously Thursday to renew a City of Salinas storm water permit intended to prevent rainwater and other runoff from becoming polluted and being transported to local rivers, estuaries and Monterey Bay.

The Central Coast Water Board's action updated a 2005 permit by requiring Salinas to implement best practices to reduce the amount of harmful pollutants such as fertilizers, trash, sediment and bacteria from entering storm drains which transport the pollutants into local water bodies.

The goal of the permit is to protect water quality in these water bodies that receive storm water from Salinas so they are healthy for use by people and fish and other wildlife.

"This permit renewal is significant in that it encourages the Central Coast's largest city to make the logical next step toward protections of surface water quality in the region," said Board Chair Jeffrey Young. "This renewal is largely similar to Salinas's existing permit, with some important improvements that reflect an evolution in storm water management within Salinas and statewide that offer greater protection to the region's most ecologically sensitive water bodies."

Both federal and state environmental regulations require that communities implement best practices to reduce the amount of pollutants in their storm water runoff.

Urban storm water is recognized as a leading source of water quality degradation on the Central Coast, as well as other areas in California. The Central Coast Water Board has found that storm water runoff from Salinas contributes to the water quality problems found in the Salinas River and Tembladero Slough.

At risk for increased pollution is Monterey Bay, which is a federally recognized marine sanctuary, as well as Moss Landing Harbor and Elkhorn Slough. The state recognizes Elkhorn Slough as an ecological preserve.

Key components of the updated permit include: controlling pollutants generated by municipal, commercial and industrial activities; finding and eliminating prohibited discharges (like sewage)

into the storm water transport system; and educating the public on actions they can take to help reduce pollutants in storm water (like picking up dog waste and using less fertilizer).

In addition, the updated permit also addresses: oversight of water quality protection at construction sites (like implementing erosion and sediment control measures); how storm water will be handled in new construction and areas facing redevelopment construction (such as allowing storm water to infiltrate back into the ground instead of running into storm drains); and reducing trash and other contaminations in the storm water transport system that carries storm water to local water bodies.

To see a copy of the draft City of Salinas Municipal Storm Water Permit, adopted by the Central Coast Board, please visit this link:

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb3/water_issues/programs/stormwater/salinas.shtml

The Central Coast Water Board is responsible for protecting and restoring water quality in the 300-mile-long coastal region from southern San Mateo and Santa Clara counties to the northern part of Ventura County. To learn more, please visit their home page at:

<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/>