



# Media Release

## **San Diego Water Board Adopts Emergency Permit Waiver to Expedite Cleanup from San Diego County Wildfires**

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In an effort to speed the cleanup of dangerous debris, ashes and other wastes in the aftermath of devastating local wildfires, the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Diego Water Board) today took action in an emergency session to waive permits so cleanup can begin.

The Board's emergency waiver allows cities, the county, and their waste management contractors to quickly and efficiently manage and dispose of wastes from the wildfires without filing for and obtaining permits from the San Diego Water Board. The conditions imposed by the Board in the waiver will ensure that surface water and groundwater quality are protected during cleanup operations. This waiver affects all jurisdictions within San Diego County and the southern parts of Orange and Riverside counties that are in the regional water board's jurisdiction.

San Diego Water Board Chair Henry Abarbanel thanked the Board for moving quickly on this public safety issue.

"These areas are prone to wildfires and we must be able to coordinate with fire fighters and law enforcement during the cleanup phase, to clean up from devastating events as rapidly as possible," Abarbanel said. "To that end we have acted to provide an expedited path to waive permits allowing recovery from these fires while preserving water quality for California."

The first wildfire ignited on May 13 and within the next day, seven separate fires were burning in different parts of San Diego County, prompting Governor Brown to proclaim a state of emergency. Widespread damage to private and public property caused by the wildfires created the need to expedite the management and disposal of solid wastes in the devastated area. Please visit the [Regional Board](#) website for more information.

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