

**GROUP:** STATE WATER BOARD  
POLICIES AND PERMITS

*KEY STATISTICS FOR FY 2009-10*

**MEASURE:** STATEWIDE POLICIES  
RELEVANT TO WATER  
BOARDS’ “ENFORCE”  
FUNCTION

NUMBER OF STATEWIDE POLICIES: 18

NUMBER OF STATEWIDE POLICIES  
ADOPTED IN FY 2009-10 3

**MESSAGE:** *One of three State Water Board policies adopted in FY 2009-10 focused on enforcement.*

**MEASUREMENTS:**

**Statewide Policy**

Water Quality Enforcement Policy

**WHY THIS MEASURE IS IMPORTANT:**

While California’s diverse geography, landscape, population, social, cultural, and economic conditions and issues are mostly addressed by the Regional Water Boards’ individual water quality protection efforts, such as through basin planning and permitting, there is also a need for policy and permitting on a statewide basis. Statewide policies and permits adopted by the State Water Board address concerns and issues for surface waters and groundwaters that overlap Regional Water Board boundaries, are statewide in scope, or are otherwise considered significant on a statewide level. By adopting statewide policies and permits to address specific issues, in lieu of each Regional Water Board taking action individually, the State Water Board helps to promote effectiveness, efficiency, and appropriate consistency. Consistency in policies and permits helps to ensure that stakeholders receive equitable treatment, clearly understand requirements, and work towards common water quality and water rights goals.

**Statewide Policies**

The State Water Board adopts overarching policies to provide guidance and a framework from which the Regional Water Boards can appropriately tailor their actions for their regions. The State Water Board has developed and adopted a number of statewide policies to help guide the Water Boards planning and permitting processes. Statewide plans, adopted by the State Water Board, and regional water quality control plans (basin plans), adopted by the Regional Water Boards, must adhere to statewide policies. Policies have the force and effect of regulation, and are subject to approval by the Office of Administrative Law. In addition, state policies that implement water quality standards must be approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**FY 2009-10 STATEWIDE POLICY RELEVANT TO ENFORCE FUNCTION OF WATER BOARDS****Water Quality Enforcement Policy**

On November 17, 2009, the State Water Board adopted a revised *Water Quality Enforcement Policy*. The policy, among other things: targets limited enforcement resources to address the most serious violators; includes a methodology to calculate penalties; acknowledges specific needs and limitations of small communities; clarifies the use of projects to offset penalty amounts; requires timeframes for recording data on violations and enforcement actions, and for issuance of mandatory minimum penalties; and ensures that the public is informed of the Water Boards' enforcement activities. For more information:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/enforcement/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/enforcement/).