
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

February 23, 2023

Chris Lehman
Deputy Director, Utilities
City of San Luis Obispo
879 Morro Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Email: clehman@slocity.org

**Via Electronic Mail and Certified Mail
No. 7020 1810 0002 0768 1520**

Dear Mr. Lehman:

ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM: EXPEDITED PAYMENT LETTER (EPL) NO. R3-2023-0005, ACCEPTANCE OF CONDITIONAL OFFER AND WAIVER OF HEARING EXECUTED AS ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY ORDER FOR CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY EFFLUENT VIOLATIONS OF WDR ORDER NO. R3-2014-0033, SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, NPDES NO. CA0049224, WDID NO. 3 400107001

Enclosed is Acceptance of Conditional Offer and Waiver of Right to Hearing; Settlement Agreement and Stipulation for Entry of Administrative Civil Liability Order No. R3-2023-0005 (Order), countersigned by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) Executive Officer. The Order resolves mandatory minimum penalties for violations of effluent limitations contained in Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2014-0033, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. CA0049224, that occurred from May 31, 2021, through May 31, 2022, as shown in the attached Exhibit A, Notice of Violation. Central Coast Water Board staff publicly noticed the Order from January 18, 2023, through February 21, 2023, and received no comments.

As provided in the Order, the City of San Luis Obispo (City) is subject to a total expedited payment amount of \$30,000, which the City must pay to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account **by March 27, 2023**, as follows¹:

1. \$30,000 by check payable to “SWRCB Cleanup and Abatement Account”, noting “ACL Order No. R3-2023-0005” on the check, and mailed to:

¹ Please note that this due date supercedes any other due date that may be shown on invoices.

- a. Attn: ACL Payment
SWRCB Accounting Office
P.O. Box 1888
Sacramento, CA 95812-1888
2. A pdf copy of the above payment emailed to Todd Stanley at todd.stanley@waterboards.ca.gov, or mailed to:
 - a. Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
Enforcement Unit, Attention: Todd Stanley
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-7906

The SWRCB Division of Administrative Services Fee Branch [(916) 341-5247 or Fee_Branch@waterboards.ca.gov] will mail an invoice for the Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA) payment. The City may make the CAA payment before receiving the invoice as long as reference is made to the Order number as instructed above. If the City elects to pay before receiving the invoice, Central Coast Water Board staff advises the City to also follow up by contacting the Fee Branch to confirm the payment is posted appropriately.

If the City wishes to make the CAA payment by online electronic fund transfer, the City must first wait to receive the above invoice as the invoice number is needed for the transaction. The City may then go to [the Fee Branch's website](#) and select "*Pay your water quality program invoice online!*".

Payment will conclude the Central Coast Water Board's enforcement action for violations identified in Expedited Payment Letter No. R3-2023-0005, dated November 21, 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact Sarah Crable at (805) 549-3706 or sarah.crable@waterboards.ca.gov, or Thea Tryon at thea.tryon@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

for Matthew T. Keeling
Executive Officer

Enclosures:

1. Acceptance of Conditional Offer and Waiver of Right to Hearing; Settlement Agreement and Stipulation for Entry of Administrative Civil Liability Order No. R3-2023-0005

2. Exhibit A - Notice of Violation

cc via email:

Central Coast Water Board:

Thea Tryon
Tamara Anderson
Harvey Packard
Sarah Crable
Todd Stanley

File Location: R:\RB3\Shared\Enforcement\ACLs\2023-0005_SLO WWTP MMP ACLO\SLO MMP ACLO
23-0005 pkg.docx

ECM Primary Indexing # 255380

**ACCEPTANCE OF CONDITIONAL OFFER
AND WAIVER OF RIGHT TO HEARING;
SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND STIPULATION FOR ENTRY OF
ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY (ACL) ORDER NO. R3-2023-0005
(UPON EXECUTION)**

City of San Luis Obispo Wastewater Treatment Plant
EPL No. R3-2023-0005
Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2014-0033
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. CA0049224
WDID: 3 400107001

By signing below and returning this Acceptance of Conditional Offer and Waiver of Right to Hearing (Acceptance and Waiver) to the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board), the City of San Luis Obispo (Permittee) hereby accepts Expedited Payment Letter No. R3-2023-0005 (Conditional Offer) to participate in the expedited payment program relating to violations of the Permittee's NPDES permit for Wastewater Treatment Plant, and waives the right to a hearing before the Central Coast Water Board to dispute the alleged violations described in the notice of violation (NOV) attached to the Conditional Offer as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference.

The Permittee agrees that the NOV shall serve as a complaint pursuant to Division 7, Chapter 5, Article 2.5 of the California Water Code and that no separate complaint is required for the Central Coast Water Board to assert jurisdiction over the alleged violations through its enforcement staff. The Permittee agrees to pay the penalties authorized by California Water Code section 13385, as specified in the NOV (expedited payment amount), which shall be deemed payment in full of any civil liability pursuant to Water Code sections 13385 and 13385.1 that otherwise might be assessed for the violations described in the NOV.

Expedited Payment Amount: \$30,000.

The Permittee understands that this Acceptance and Waiver does not address or resolve liability for any violation that is not specifically identified in the NOV.

Upon signature by the Permittee, the Permittee must return this Acceptance and Waiver to:

Thea Tryon
Assistant Executive Officer
Central Coast Water Board
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Expedited Payment Letter (EPL) No. R3-2023-0005
Settlement Agreement and Stipulation for Entry of
Administrative Civil Liability Order No. R3-2023-0005

The Permittee understands that federal regulations set forth in title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, section 123.27(d)(2)(iii) require the Central Coast Water Board to publish notice of any proposed settlement of this enforcement action and provide at least 30 days for public comment. Accordingly, Central Coast Water Board staff will publish this Acceptance and Waiver for public comment prior to execution by the Executive Officer of the Central Coast Water Board.

The Permittee understands that if significant comments are received in opposition to the Conditional Offer, then the Central Coast Water Board enforcement staff's offer to resolve the violations set forth in the NOV may be withdrawn. In that circumstance, Central Coast Water Board enforcement staff will advise the Permittee of the withdrawal, a revised offer or an administrative civil liability complaint may be issued, and the matter may be set for a hearing before the Central Coast Water Board. For such a liability hearing, the Permittee understands that this Acceptance and Waiver executed by the Permittee will be treated as a settlement communication and will not be used as evidence in that hearing.

If no comments are received within the notice period that cause the Executive Officer to reconsider the Conditional Offer, the Executive Officer will execute the Acceptance and Waiver as Settlement Agreement and Stipulation for Entry of Administrative Civil Liability Order No. R3-2023-0005 (Settlement and Order).

The Permittee understands that no payments are due at the time it returns the signed Acceptance and Waiver form to the Central Coast Water Board. The Permittee understands that after the signed Acceptance and Waiver is publicly noticed and executed by the Executive Officer of the Central Coast Water Board, Central Coast Water Board staff will transmit this Acceptance and Waiver as an executed Settlement and Order to the Permittee with payment instructions and due dates. Furthermore, the Permittee understands that full payment of the expedited payment amount by the hereby incorporated due date or dates specified in the transmittal letter and/or invoices associated with the executed Settlement and Order is a condition of this Acceptance and Waiver.

Expedited Payment Letter (EPL) No. R3-2023-0005
Settlement Agreement and Stipulation for Entry of
Administrative Civil Liability Order No. R3-2023-0005

I hereby affirm that I am duly authorized to act on behalf of and to bind the Permittee in the making and giving of this Acceptance and Waiver and the terms of the Settlement and Order.

By: DocuSigned by: Shelly Stanwyck 1/17/2023 | 11:32 AM PST
63182F5842C3448E (Signed Name) (Date)

Shelly Stanwyck

(Printed or typed name)

Assistant City Manager

(Title)

Expedited Payment Letter (EPL) No. R3-2023-0005
Settlement Agreement and Stipulation for Entry of
Administrative Civil Liability Order No. R3-2023-0005

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED pursuant to Water Code section 13323, Government Code section 11415.60, and Resolution No. R3-2014-0043, on behalf of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region.

By: _____

for Matthew T. Keeling
Executive Officer
Central Coast Water Board

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Exhibit A – Notice of Violation
City of San Luis Obispo Wastewater Treatment Plant
Mandatory Minimum Penalty Violations Requiring Enforcement
Alleged Violation Dates: May 31, 2021 – May 31, 2022

The enforcement staff of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region (Central Coast Water Board) reviewed information submitted by this facility to determine whether the discharger is subject to mandatory minimum penalties (MMPs) pursuant to subdivisions (h) and (i) of California Water Code section 13385. The following table lists this facility’s alleged violations of Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2014-0033, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit No. CA0049224 from May 31, 2021, through May 31, 2022, for which the Central Coast Water Board has not assessed MMPs. Final calculation of MMP amounts owed and definitions of some of the terms used in this document are listed below the table.

For additional information about the alleged violations listed in the table, please refer to [the State Water Resources Control Board CIWQS Public Reports webpage](#) and select the “Mandatory Minimum Penalty (MMP) Report” link located under the “Violations Reports” category. Once in the Mandatory Minimum Penalty Reports search page, select Region 3 along with the beginning and ending dates shown in this exhibit, select Run Report, and then select your facility to access the list of violations. Expand the “Effluent MMP Violations” section of the page by selecting the “+” icon to the left of the section title. To view details of a violation, select the “Violation ID” number. For chronic (non-serious) violations, select the “Chronic” link in the “MMP Type” column to see a list of the three or more violations preceding each chronic violation within 180 days and thus qualifying the chronic violation as an MMP.

EPL No. R3-2023-0005 – Exhibit A
 Stipulated ACL Order No. R3-2023-0005
 City of San Luis Obispo Wastewater Treatment Plant

#	Violation Number	Violation Date	Pollutant	Pollutant Type	Limitation Period	Limit	Result	Units	% Over Limit	Serious or Non-Serious (Chronic) Violation	Date 180 Days Prior	No. of Viols within 180 days	Mandatory Minimum Penalty
1	1091389	5/31/21	Nitrate, Total (as N)	Group 1	Monthly Average	10*	43.7	mg/L	337%	S	12/2/20	N/A	\$ 3,000
2	1099144	10/5/21	Dichlorobromomethane	Group 2	Daily Maximum	1	10.8	µg/L	980%	S	4/8/21	N/A	\$ 3,000
3	1099146	10/5/21	Dibromochloromethane	Group 2	Daily Maximum	1	1.2	µg/L	20%	S	4/8/21	N/A	\$ 3,000
4	1099147	10/31/21	Dichlorobromomethane	Group 2	Monthly Average	0.56	10.8	µg/L	1829%	S	5/4/21	N/A	\$ 3,000
5	1099145	10/31/21	Dibromochloromethane	Group 2	Monthly Average	0.4	1.2	µg/L	200%	S	5/4/21	N/A	\$ 3,000
6	1097917	11/30/21	Nitrate, Total (as N)	Group 1	Monthly Average	10*	43.5	mg/L	335%	S	6/3/21	N/A	\$ 3,000
7	1102546	2/28/22	Nitrate, Total (as N)	Group 1	Monthly Average	10*	46.1	mg/L	361%	S	9/1/21	N/A	\$ 3,000

EPL No. R3-2023-0005 – Exhibit A
 Stipulated ACL Order No. R3-2023-0005
 City of San Luis Obispo Wastewater Treatment Plant

#	Violation Number	Violation Date	Pollutant	Pollutant Type	Limitation Period	Limit	Result	Units	% Over Limit	Serious or Non-Serious (Chronic) Violation	Date 180 Days Prior	No. of Viols within 180 days	Mandatory Minimum Penalty
8	1103059	3/31/22	Nitrate, Total (as N)	Group 1	Monthly Average	10*	46	mg/L	360%	S	10/2/21	N/A	\$ 3,000
9	1104606	4/30/22	Nitrate, Total (as N)	Group 1	Monthly Average	10*	45.9	mg/L	359%	S	11/1/21	N/A	\$ 3,000
10	1105844	5/31/22	Nitrate, Total (as N)	Group 1	Monthly Average	10*	47.1	mg/L	371%	S	12/2/21	N/A	\$ 3,000

Total Penalty: \$30,000

* The Central Coast Water Board issued Time Schedule Order No. R3-2019-0124 (TSO) on December 1, 2019. The TSO includes an interim effluent limit for Nitrate, Total (as N) of 42.6 mg/L. The City reported the above nitrate violations based on the interim effluent limit. However, because the City violated the TSO interim effluent limit, the TSO's shelter from mandatory minimum penalties is removed and those penalties are determined based on the NPDES permit's final effluent limit of 10 mg/L.

Total Mandatory Minimum Penalty Amount for Effluent Violations
 (10 Serious Violation + 0 Non-Serious Violations) × \$3,000 = \$30,000

For Group 1 pollutants, a violation is serious when the limit is exceeded by 40% or more, and non-serious (referred to as “chronic” in CIWQS) when the limit is exceeded by less than 40%.

For Group 2 pollutants, a violation is serious when the limit is exceeded by 20% or more, and non-serious when the limit is exceeded by less than 20%.

EPL No. R3-2023-0005 – Exhibit A
 Stipulated ACL Order No. R3-2023-0005
 City of San Luis Obispo Wastewater Treatment Plant

Serious violations are subject to a mandatory minimum penalty of \$3,000 each.

Term	Definition
Units	mg/L = milligrams per liter µg/L – micrograms per liter
N/A	Not Applicable
CIWQS	California Integrated Water Quality System database used by the Water Boards to manage violation and enforcement activities, as well as other data types relevant to water quality protection.
Violation Number	Identification number assigned to a violation in CIWQS.
Violation Date	Date that a violation actually occurred, with the exception that for some violation types, such as a monthly average, the last day of the reporting period is used. If the occurrence date is unknown, the date used is the day the violation was first discovered by staff, the Discharger, or a third party.
Pollutant Types: Group 1 & 2	Groups of pollutants defined in the State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Enforcement Policy. Also referred to as Category 1 or CAT1 and Category 2 or CAT2, respectively.

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