

**Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region
Board Meeting – 24/25 April 2008**

**Response to Written Comments for
The Calaveras County Water District
Forest Meadows Wastewater Treatment Plant
Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements**

At a public hearing scheduled for 24/25 April 2008, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region (Regional Water Board) will consider adoption of a new National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to regulate the surface water discharge from the Calaveras County Water District's (hereinafter Discharger) Forest Meadows Wastewater Treatment Plant. The tentative order was previously distributed for public review and comments were due on 2 November 2007. Due to Discharger's late modifications to the effluent disposal system, minor changes to the tentative Order were necessary that required an additional 30-day public review period. Revised Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements were issued on 28 January 2008, and comments were limited to only the changes since the previous tentative Order. No written comments were received on the previously distributed tentative order, therefore, this document contains responses to only those comments received in response to the proposed revisions identified in the 28 January 2008 tentative Order. Written comments from interested persons were required to be received by the Regional Water Board by 5 March 2008 in order to be included in the record. Comments were received by the deadline from the Discharger and the Central Valley Clean Water Association (CVCWA).

Written comments from the Discharger and the CVCWA are summarized below, followed by the response of the Regional Water Board.

DISCHARGER'S COMMENTS

DISCHARGER COMMENT # 1: Requested Changes Regarding References to Hardness in the Fact Sheet. The Discharger identified some editorial errors in the Fact Sheet with regard to the minimum and maximum effluent and receiving water hardness, which were used for calculating hardness dependent CTR metals criteria.

RESPONSE: This comment is outside the scope for public comment for the 28 January 2008 tentative Order. However, the changes are only editorial, so the proposed permit has been modified accordingly.

DISCHARGER COMMENT # 2: Effluent Limitation for Aluminum. The Discharger contends that the permit incorrectly establishes effluent limitations for aluminum based on USEPA's National Ambient Water Quality Criteria (NAWQC) for aluminum, which recommends a chronic criterion of 87 µg/L. An Average Monthly Effluent Limitation (AMEL) and Maximum Daily Effluent Limitation (MDEL) of 373 µg/L and 750 µg/L, respectively, would be more appropriate based on the acute criterion recommended in USEPA's NAWQC for the protection of freshwater aquatic life. Furthermore, the

proposed Order should include an annual average effluent limitation of 200 µg/L, based on the Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for protection of the MUN beneficial use.

RESPONSE: This comment is outside the scope for public comment for the 28 January 2008 tentative Order. Staff disagrees with the Discharger's comment. The chronic criterion recommended in USEPA's NAWQC was developed under a condition of low pH and hardness. These conditions may occur in the Stanislaus River, therefore, the criterion is appropriate. Although the minimum receiving water pH (7.08) is slightly greater than the test conditions used to develop the chronic criterion, the minimum hardness of the receiving water is well within the limits (<10 mg/l) to justify the application of recommended chronic criterion of 87 µg/L for aluminum.

DISCHARGER COMMENT # 3: Additional Time for Compliance. The Discharger requests an extension to the timeline set forth in the Order for compliance with Aluminum, Copper, Lead, and Zinc. The Discharger contends that compliance by 18 May 2010 would not be feasible. Therefore, the Discharger requests an additional compliance schedule of three and half (3 ½) years from the effective date of the Tentative Permit adoption (to 31 December 2011) be provided in a separately issued Time Schedule Order pursuant to Water Code section 13300.

RESPONSE: This comment is outside the scope for public comment for the 28 January 2008 tentative Order. However, clarifying language has been provided in the Fact Sheet of the proposed Order that explains that the Discharger may need a TSO at a later date.

DISCHARGER COMMENT # 4: Section IV.C.7.a.i, page 25 - Request for Modifications to Compliance Schedule Plans/Studies. Similar comment as set forth in Comment # 3 above. However, the Discharger comments further that the requirements of the compliance schedules are excessive and redundant. The corrective action plan and treatment feasibility study are duplicative and the pollution prevention plan requirement is unnecessary. Finally, the Discharger notes that the Discharger will only have approximately 5 months to implement any recommended actions for compliance with the final effluent limits.

RESPONSE: This comment is outside the scope for public comment for the 28 January 2008 tentative Order. However, Regional Water Board staff agree that the corrective action plan is duplicative with the treatment feasibility study. Therefore, the corrective action plan requirement has been removed from the proposed Order. The deadlines for submitting a schedule and work plans for the pollution prevention plan and treatment feasibility study are appropriate. The final compliance date is based on maximum time allowed by the SIP, so the date cannot be extended. If after development of the treatment feasibility study it is

determined that additional time is needed, the Discharger may request a separate Time Schedule Order.

CENTRAL VALLEY CLEAN WATER ASSOCIATION (CVCWA) COMMENTS

CVCWA COMMENT #1: Page F-14 and F15, Hardness.

CVCWA requests that the text discussing general hardness of the receiving water be modified to reflect actual hardness used in the equation for calculating applicable effluent limitations. They further requests that the footnote in Table 4 be changed from “Maximum receiving water hardness...” to “Minimum receiving water hardness...”

RESPONSE: This comment is similar to the Discharger’s Comment #1. Staff agrees. The requested change has been incorporated into the proposed Order.