

Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region Board Meeting
13/14 October 2022

Response to 2nd Set of Written Comments for the
Sierra Pacific Industries SPI-Martell Division Facility

Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements

At a public hearing scheduled for 13/14 October 2022, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, (Central Valley Water Board) will consider adoption of revised Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) (Discharger) in Amador County. This document contains responses to written comments received from interested persons regarding the tentative WDRs circulated on 11 February 2022. Written comments were required by public notice to be received by the Central Valley Water Board by 14 March 2022 to receive full consideration. The only comments received were from the Discharger, on 14 March 2022. Central Valley Water Board staff responses to the Discharger's comments were sent to the Discharger on 20 May 2022. On 8 June 2022 the Discharger formally requested that the tentative WDRs be withdrawn from the June 2022 Board meeting's uncontested calendar so that additional comments could be submitted. Based on the Discharger's request, the tentative WDRs were removed from the Central Valley Water Board's June 2022 agenda.

Following Central Valley Water Board discussions with the Discharger, the Discharger submitted additional comments on 9 August 2022, requesting that the tentative WDRs undergo additional changes prior to consideration for adoption by the Central Valley Water Board. These late comments are hereby incorporated into the record for this WDRs Order.

The Discharger's 9 August 2022 comments are summarized below, followed by responses from Central Valley Water Board staff and details of any changes made in response to the Discharger's comments. In addition, staff has made a few minor changes to the tentative WDRs to improve clarity and fix typographical errors.

SIERRA PACIFIC INDUSTRIES ADDITIONAL CONCERNS ON TENTATIVE WDRS

SPI COMMENT NO. 1: Requirement for analysis of PAHs and Dioxins and Furans in all monitoring wells and surface water samples annually.

SPI requests changes in the WDR Information Sheet Table 10 — Recent PAH, Dioxin, and Furan Monitoring Results (Information Sheet item 31) data that was added to the 11 February 2022 Tentative WDRs previously reviewed by SPI. Dioxin and Furan congener reporting limits listed in Table 10 do not appear to agree with the laboratory reports. The laboratory used the minimum levels (method limits for J flags) for dioxins and furans specified in EPA Method 1635B. The laboratory also indicates that "detection limits are only reported when an analyte is not present in the sample." SPI requests that the table

numerical values for reporting limits (RLs) and method detection limits (MDLs) be modified to reflect the laboratory values if they are to remain in the WDR.

SPI requests that the language in the WDR Findings/Site Conditions section be amended to include in Finding 30(g) a statement after the first sentence to the effect that “Since detections of PAH constituents and dioxin and furan congeners were sporadic and no concentrations were above the reporting limit (estimated concentrations reported below the reporting limits only) during sampling events from 2012 to 2015, analysis frequency for PAHs and dioxin and furans was changed from semiannual to every five years, as was provided for in Table 2 of the 2014 MRP; therefore, the discharger did not analyze laboratory samples for PAHs, dioxins, and furans in the years 2016 through 2019.”

During the time period between 2012 and 2014 (semiannual sampling and analysis) detections of dioxin and furan congeners (estimated values) were reported in only three wells other than well B-14 (one detection in upgradient well B-1, one detection in downgradient well B-13, and one detection in downgradient well LD-2A). Based on the Regional Board’s evaluation of the historical detections, the 2014 MRP changed sampling and analysis requirements for PAHs and dioxins and furans to only monitoring wells associated with the Ash Disposal Area (wells B-5, B-8, B-14, B-15, and B-16). Only samples collected from well B-14 (immediately downgradient from the leachate basin) between 2012 and 2020 were reported with consistent detections (estimated values) of three dioxin and furan congeners. Removal of wood waste material (disturbance of the material during clean closure efforts) has been conducted since approximately 1997 and existing monitoring well analysis results are representative of impacts to groundwater quality that may be related to disturbance of the materials. Considering these four historical dioxin and furan detections in only three wells’ samples (other than well B-14) between 2012 and 2014, and no detections of PAHs reported in the Ash Disposal Area wells during the 2nd semiannual 2015 or 1st semiannual 2020 monitoring events, SPI requests that language be included in both the WDR and the MRP that provides an allowance for modification of the number of wells sampled and frequency of sampling for PAHs and dioxins and furans following two years of annual sampling and analysis, should an evaluation of the analysis results indicate an absence of detections of the constituents of concern in certain wells’ or surface water samples.

RESPONSE: Regarding dioxins and furans, the MDLs and RLs listed in Information Sheet Table 10 are the values obtained from the Discharger’s electronic data submittal into Geotracker database. However, upon review of the laboratory data submitted as part of the Discharger’s Self Monitoring and Reporting (SMR) reports, the laboratory results did not report MDLs and RLs for dioxins and furans where the constituent of concern was detected. Therefore, Table 10 has been updated to remove MDLs and RLs for detected dioxins and furans.

Regarding Finding 30(g), the language has been updated to reflect the Discharger’s proposed language concerning the Discharger’s discontinuation of monitoring of PAHs, dioxins, and furans in the years 2016 through 2019.

Regarding SPI’s request to add language to both the WDR and the MRP that provides an allowance for modification of the number of wells sampled and frequency of sampling for PAHs and dioxins and furans, the WDRs Section G.1 and MRP Section B have been updated to reflect the Discharger’s comments.

SPI COMMENT NO. 2: Limitation of TDS concentration at 500 mg/L in Wood Waste Landfill leachate.

Include a provision for use of field measurements of electrical conductivity according to the conversion factor submitted to the Regional Board on 2 December 2009, in place of laboratory reported TDS concentrations as was included in the 2014 WDR under section B. Discharge Specifications, No. 7.

RESPONSE: The concentration limit set for TDS in the tentative MRP Table 10a, based on the Discharger's 2020 Annual Report, is 696 mg/L in groundwater monitoring wells. In the tentative MRP Table 11, the concentration limit for TDS in surface waters at monitoring points SW-1 and SW-2 is 878 mg/L. Both concentrations are above the USEPA secondary maximum contaminant level (USEPA Secondary MCL) due to an existing release of waste to receiving waters. As corrective action for this release, the Discharger is clean closing its Wood Waste Landfill, Leachate Pond, and Ash Disposal Area Landfill. Concentration limits for TDS were temporarily set above the USEPA Secondary MCL in order to detect a new release of waste at the site. As a result, current conditions require that the last sentence of Finding 12 in the WDRs Information sheet be removed until clean closure is completed. Therefore, the concentration limit requirement of 500 mg/L has been removed from the Information Sheet. Upon clean closure of the Wood Waste Landfill, Leachate Pond, and Ash Disposal Area Landfill the concentration limits for TDS in groundwater and surface water shall return to a maximum contaminant level of 500 mg/L (USEPA Secondary MCL).

SPI COMMENT NO. 3: Piezometers are not differentiated from monitoring wells in Table 1, page 4 of the MRP, and item b. below the table indicates "groundwater samples shall be collected from each well and analyzed for Monitoring Parameters..." This could be misconstrued to indicate the piezometers are required to be sampled. The piezometers need to be differentiated from the monitoring wells in the table and text indicating the piezometers are to be gauged for water levels only.

RESPONSE: MRP Section 1(b) (sample collection and analysis) has been changed to read "Groundwater samples shall be collected from each well excluding piezometers (PZ-X designation) and analyzed for...."

SPI COMMENT NO. 4: Table 5, page 8 of the MRP indicates that groundwater conditions are to be reported annually, while the text preceding the table in item d. indicates they are to be reported semiannually. Table 5 and the preceding text need to be consistent.

RESPONSE: Table 5 has been changed to require reporting of Table 5 to be on a semiannual basis.

SPI COMMENT NO. 5: On pages 5, 6, and 19 of the WDR, the text indicates the Amended ROWD was submitted on 8 March 2022, 7 March 2022 and 8 March 2022 respectively. Revise the text to indicate the Amended ROWD was submitted to the Board on 7 March 2022.

RESPONSE: The tentative WDRs have been changed to indicate that the Amended ROWD was submitted on 7 March 2022 throughout the document.