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Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Issues Cleanup and Abatement Order to Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

Requires Immediate Cleanup of Beaches, Independent Audit of Waste Collection Systems and On-Going Assessment of Sewage Cleanup Efforts

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board has issued a Cleanup and Abatement Order to the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County following the January 15-16, 2006 release of raw sewage in Hermosa Beach and Manhattan Beach.

The Order requires the District to

- Take immediate action to remove all spill-related contamination;
- Provide the Board with detailed technical reports and weekly updates on all work to restore the area contaminated by the spill; and
- Submit to the Board a workplan for an external audit of the District's alarm and backup systems and to identify conditions that could contribute to future spills.

The order follows the failure of the District's 27th Street Pump Station, which resulted in raw sewage being released in the cities of Hermosa Beach and Manhattan Beach.

"This release of raw sewage poses a significant threat to human health and the environment as well as to our multi-billion dollar coastal economy," said David Nahai, Chair of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. "It is absolutely unacceptable to have sewage flowing down our streets, soiling our beaches, harming aquatic habitat and threatening the health of swimmers, surfers and other beach enthusiasts. I look forward to working closely with the District to correct the environmental harm done and to eliminate for the future, the causes of this catastrophe."

The Los Angeles Water Board is one of nine regional boards in the State. Among its principal duties, the Board sets region-wide water quality standards and activity-specific waste discharge requirements, enforces both federal and state clean water statutes, regulates cleanup of sites which pose an immediate or potential threat to water quality and educates the public on water quality issues. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board is comprised of nine individuals, each of whom is appointed by the Governor, and a small professional staff, comprised mostly of scientists, engineers and geologists. (END)