

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINT NO. R5-2008-0633

MANDATORY PENALTY  
IN THE MATTER OF

CITY OF PORTOLA  
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT  
PLUMAS COUNTY

This Administrative Civil Liability Complaint is issued to the City of Portola (hereafter Discharger) pursuant to California Water Code (CWC) section 13385, which authorizes the imposition of Administrative Civil Liability, CWC section 13323, which authorizes the Executive Officer to issue this complaint, and CWC section 7, which authorizes the delegation of the Executive Officer's authority to a deputy, in this case the Assistant Executive Officer. This Complaint is based on findings that the Discharger violated provisions of Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) Order R5-2003-0110 (NPDES No. CA0077844).

The Assistant Executive Officer of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region (Central Valley Water Board) finds the following:

1. The Discharger owns and operates a wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal system, and provides sewerage service to the town of Portola. Treated municipal wastewater may be discharged to the Middle Fork of the Feather River, a water of the United States, from 1 November to 15 May.
2. On 23 April 2004, the Central Valley Water Board issued Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R5-2003-0110 (NPDES No. CA0077844), for the City of Portola, to regulate the discharge of treated municipal wastewater.
3. CWC section 13385(i) requires the assessment of mandatory penalties and states, in part, the following:

Notwithstanding any other provision of this division, and except as provided in subdivisions (j), (k), and (l), a mandatory minimum penalty of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) shall be assessed for each violation whenever the person does any of the following four or more times in any period of six consecutive months, except that the requirement to assess the mandatory minimum penalty shall not be applicable to the first three violations:

- A) Violates a waste discharge requirement effluent limitation.
- B) Fails to file a report pursuant to Section 13260.
- C) Files an incomplete report pursuant to Section 13260.
- D) Violates a toxicity effluent limitation contained in the applicable waste discharge requirements where the waste discharge requirements do not contain pollutant-specific effluent limitations for toxic pollutants.

4. CWC section 13323 states, in part:

Any executive officer of a regional board may issue a complaint to any person on whom administrative civil liability may be imposed pursuant to this article. The complaint shall allege the act or failure to act that constitutes a violation of law, the provision authorizing civil liability to be imposed pursuant to this article, and the proposed civil liability.

5. Order R5-2003-0110 includes the following effluent limitations:

**B. Effluent Limitations**

5. The discharge shall not have a pH less than 6.0 nor greater than 9.0.

6. According to the Discharger's self-monitoring reports, the Discharger committed 24 non-serious violations of the effluent pH limitation contained in Order R5-2003-0110 from 15 March 15<sup>th</sup> 2004 to April 13<sup>th</sup> 2004 (all pH measurements were greater than 9.0). Twenty one of the non-serious violations are subject to mandatory penalties under CWC section 13385(i)(1) because these violations were preceded by three similar violations within a six-month period. The mandatory minimum penalty for these non-serious violations is **sixty-three thousand dollars (\$63,000)**. A detailed list of the cited violations is included as Attachment A, a part of this Complaint.

7. Issuance of this Administrative Civil Liability Complaint to enforce CWC Division 7, Chapter 5.5 is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code section 21000 et seq.), in accordance with California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15321(a)(2).

**THE CITY OF PORTOLA IS HEREBY GIVEN NOTICE THAT:**

1. The Assistant Executive Officer of the Regional Water Board proposes that the Discharger be assessed Administrative Civil Liability in the amount of **sixty-three thousand dollars (\$63,000)**.
2. A hearing on this matter will be held at the Central Valley Water Board meeting scheduled on **5/6 February 2009**, unless the Discharger does either of the following by **8 January 2009**:
  - a) Waives the hearing by completing the attached form (checking off the box next to item #4) and returning it to the Central Valley Water Board, along with payment for the proposed civil liability of **sixty-three thousand dollars (\$63,000)**; or
  - b) Agree to enter into settlement discussions with the Central Valley Water Board and requests that any hearing on the matter be delayed by signing the enclosed waiver (checking off the box next to item #5) and returning it to the Central Valley Water Board along with a letter describing issues to be discussed in settlement negotiations, including compliance project proposals.

3. If a hearing on this matter is held, the Central Valley Water Board will consider whether to affirm, reject, or modify the proposed Administrative Civil Liability, or whether to refer the matter to the Attorney General for recovery of judicial civil liability.

Signed by  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JAMES C. PEDRI, Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
9 December 2008  
(Date)

RSD: sae

HEARING WAIVER

By signing this waiver, I affirm and acknowledge the following:

- 1. I am duly authorized to represent the City of Portola (hereinafter "Discharger") in connection with Administrative Civil Liability Complaint R5-2008-0633 (hereinafter the "Complaint");
- 2. I am informed that California Water Code section 13323, subdivision (b), states that, "a hearing before the regional board shall be conducted within 90 days after the party has been served" with the Complaint;
- 3. I hereby waive any right the Discharger may have to a hearing before the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) within ninety (90) days of service of the Complaint; and
- 4.  **(Check here if the Discharger will waive the hearing requirement and will pay the fine)**
  - a. I certify that the Discharger will remit payment for the proposed civil liability in the amount of **sixty-three thousand dollars (\$63,000)** by check, which will contain a reference to "ACL Complaint R5-2008-0633" and will be made payable to the "State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account." Payment must be received by the Central Valley Water Board by **8 January 2009** or this matter will be placed on the Central Valley Water Board's agenda for adoption at the **5/6 February 2009** Central Valley Water Board meeting.
  - b. I understand the payment of the above amount constitutes a settlement of the Complaint, and that any settlement will not become final until after the 30-day public notice and comment period mandated by Federal regulations (40 CFR 123.27) expires. Should the Central Valley Water Board receive new information or comments during this comment period, the Central Valley Water Board's Assistant Executive Officer may withdraw the complaint, return payment, and issue a new complaint. New information or comments include those submitted by personnel of the Central Valley Water Board who are not associated with the enforcement team's issuance of the Complaint.
  - c. I understand that payment of the above amount is not a substitute for compliance with applicable laws and that continuing violations of the type alleged in the Complaint may subject the Discharger to further enforcement, including additional civil liability.

-or-

- 5.  **(Check here if the Discharger will waive the 90-day hearing requirement, but will not pay at the current time. The Central Valley Water Board must receive information from the Discharger indicating a controversy regarding the assessed penalty at the time this waiver is submitted, or the waiver may not be accepted.)** I certify that the Discharger will promptly engage the Central Valley Water Board staff in discussions to resolve the outstanding violation(s). By checking this box, the Discharger is *not* waiving its right to a hearing on this matter. By checking this box, the Discharger requests that the Central Valley Water Board delay the hearing so that the Discharger and Central Valley Water Board staff can discuss settlement. It remains within the discretion of the Central Valley Water Board to agree to delay the hearing. A hearing on the matter may be held before the Central Valley Water Board if these discussions do not resolve the liability proposed in the Complaint. The Discharger agrees that this hearing may be held after the 90-day period referenced in California Water Code section 13323 has elapsed.
- 6. If a hearing on this matter is held, the Central Valley Water Board will consider whether to issue, reject, or modify the proposed Administrative Civil Liability Order, or whether to refer the matter to the Attorney General for recovery of judicial civil liability. Modification of the proposed Administrative Civil Liability Order may include increasing the dollar amount of the assessed civil liability.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name and Title)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**ATTACHMENT A  
ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINT NO. R5-2008-0633**

**City of Portola  
Wastewater Treatment Plant**

RECORD OF VIOLATIONS (15 March 2004 – 13 April 2004) MANDATORY PENALTIES  
(Data reported under Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R5-2003-0110)

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Violation Type</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Limit</u>	<u>Measured</u>	<u>Period Type</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
1	15-Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.1	Daily Max	1
2	16-Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.1	Daily Max	1
3	17-Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.5	Daily Max	1
4	18-Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.2	Daily Max	2
5	19-Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.2	Daily Max	2
6	20-Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.1	Daily Max	2
7	21-Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.1	Daily Max	2
8	25Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.6	Daily Max	2
9	26Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.8	Daily Max	2
10	30-Mar-04	pH	pH units	9	9.8	Daily Max	2
11	31-Mar -04	pH	pH units	9	9.8	Daily Max	2
12	1 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	9.6	Daily Max	2
13	2 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	9.7	Daily Max	2
14	3 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	9.6	Daily Max	2
15	4 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	9.7	Daily Max	2
16	5 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	9.9	Daily Max	2
17	6 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	9.9	Daily Max	2
18	7 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	9.9	Daily Max	2
19	8 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	10.2	Daily Max	2
20	9 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	10.5	Daily Max	2
21	10 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	11.3	Daily Max	2
22	11 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	11.6	Daily Max	2
23	12 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	11.6	Daily Max	2
24	13 Apr -04	pH	pH units	9	10.8	Daily Max	2

Remarks:

1. Non-serious violations falls within the first three violations in a six-month period, thus is exempt.
2. Non-serious violation subject to mandatory penalty.

**VIOLATIONS AS OF:**

**5/15/2008**

Non-Serious Exempt from MPs:

3

Non-serious Violations Subject to MPs:

21

**Total Violations Subject to MPs:**

**21**

**Mandatory Minimum Penalty = (21 Non-Serious Violations) x \$3,000 = \$63,000**