

B. Kelley

SW



SAN DIEGO REGIONAL
WATER QUALITY
CONTROL BOARD

December 10, 2010

Mr. David Gibson, Executive Officer
San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
9174 Sky Park Ct., Ste. 100
San Diego, CA 92124

2010 DEC 13 A 9:34

Subject: Response to Tentative Order No. R9-2010-0124, NPDES No. CAG999002
General Waste Discharge Requirements for the Public Display of Fireworks

Dear Mr. Gibson:

The Laguna Beach City Council voted unanimously on November 16, 2010 to seek an exception to a potential prohibition of a municipal firework displays each Fourth of July over Heisler Park. Some of the key reasons that a once-a-year exception should be supported by the Regional Board are:

- **Facilitates fire safety.** The public fireworks display lasts about 20 minutes each year to celebrate Independence Day. The public event provides an alternative to private parties discharging fireworks elsewhere in the City.
- **Reduces the risk of more serious discharges.** Public fireworks displays reduce the risk of private events sparking fires that result in discharges to ocean waters. The runoff from a single structure fire or wildfire is much more problematic than a brief annual fireworks show.
- **No evidence of significant impacts.** There is no evidence to demonstrate that the 20 minute annual fireworks show has ever caused in any measureable or significant difference in ocean water quality.
- **Narrow Exception Requested.** Laguna Beach is a small coastal community that is surrounded by open space. In 1993, wildfires destroyed more than 360 homes in town. Although Heisler Park is near an Area of Special Biological Significance, it is also the only location in town that provides a safe venue for fireworks by providing a safe distance from homes, businesses, and more than 12,000 acres of open space. The City is only asking for a narrow exception, once-a-year, for Heisler Park.

The City of Laguna Beach fully supports the Regional Board and has worked consistently and diligently to improve coastal water quality. Fireworks have been launched annually at Heisler Park for more than 20 years, yet ocean water in Laguna Beach is among the highest quality in the State. For all of the aforementioned reasons, the City of Laguna Beach requests that the Regional Board develop an annual exception for public agencies to launch fireworks solely on the Fourth of July.

Sincerely,

Toni Iseman, Mayor

Doc Scanned On: 12/14/10
A. Ernst Time: 10:40