

# California Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region

---

2501 Lake Tahoe Boulevard, South Lake Tahoe, California 96150  
(530) 542-5400 • Fax (530) 544-2271  
<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Scott Ferguson  
530-542-5432

## **LAHONTAN WATER BOARD LEVIES \$500,000 FINE AGAINST VICTOR VALLEY WASTEWATER RECLAMATION AUTHORITY**

*8.72 million gallon discharge of un-disinfected, wastewater flowed to the Mojave River*

**VICTORVILLE**--The Lahontan Water Board levied one of its largest fines ever against Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority on November 9 at its meeting in Adelanto.

The \$500,000 administrative civil liability was imposed in response to the April 12, 2005 8.72 million-gallon discharge of un-disinfected, secondary-treated wastewater to the Mojave River. The discharge was a result of inadequate management oversight causing a wastewater infiltration pond to be overfilled and the pond levee failing.

Lahontan Water Board Chairwoman, Dr. Amy Horne said, "Imposing the \$500,000 liability will send dischargers a strong message that poor management resulting in unauthorized discharges and other violations is unacceptable, and will have significant consequences. Because Victor Valley Wastewater Reclamation Authority significantly improved its operations after the complaint was filed, the Water Board used its discretionary authority and decided not to impose a larger fine" she added.

Approximately \$118,000 of the \$500,000 liability will be paid to the state's Cleanup and Abatement Account. The remaining \$382,000 need not be paid, provided the Authority carries out the Water Board-approved supplemental environmental improvement project (SEP). If the Authority fails to complete the SEP, the \$382,000 will be due and payable to the state's Cleanup and Abatement Account.

The SEP, titled, the *Mojave River Characterization Study* covers a section of the Mojave River from the Upper Narrows to the Helendale Fault. The SEP includes an 18-month study period with monthly water quality sampling, bioassessment monitoring, and surveys on past, current, and potential beneficial uses for this section of the river. Data and analysis will be provided in technical memoranda and a final report.

The study's results will be made available to the public, and the Water Board anticipates that the results will provide useful information for planning and resource protection agencies.

###