



Enforcement News

San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board

Pardee Homes Fined \$291,286 by San Diego Water Board for Allowing Sediment to Run Uncontrolled During Storms

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 7, 2018

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SAN DIEGO – The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board has fined Pardee Homes \$291,286 for violations at the 204-acre Castlerock Weston construction site near Santee that led to more than 70,000 gallons of sediment-laden stormwater being directed through the City of Santee’s municipal storm separate sewer system to Sycamore Canyon creek, an environmentally sensitive watershed.

“Pardee Homes, a significant developer with a long history of building homes in California, knows better and appeared to ignore both common sense and prudent sediment management practices by conducting significant grading during the 2016-2017 rainy season, resulting in catastrophic erosion and sediment run-off,” said Laurie Walsh, the San Diego Water Board’s storm water program manager. “This was in direct contradiction to a Storm Water Pollution Management Plan they had on file for this project.”

“When a developer grades a construction site that big all at once, they are assuming a higher risk of pollution because it becomes so much harder to implement sitewide pollution management practices,” said Chiara Clemente, the San Diego Water Board’s enforcement coordinator. “Taking a risk like that can end badly. In this case it resulted in discharges of sediment-laden water from the construction site on several occasions.”

Exposed dirt from construction activities poses a threat to local waters because it can wash off during a storm, Clemente explained. Excess sediment can alter or obstruct flows, resulting in flooding, and it can damage local ecosystems. Abnormally high levels of sediment in the water can smother aquatic animals and habitats, and it can reduce the clarity of water, which harms the ability of organisms to breath, find food and refuge and reproduce. Sediment can also act as a binder, carrying toxic constituents, such as metals, pesticides and other synthetic organic chemicals with it to our rivers, bays and ocean.

The San Diego Water Board’s enforcement action referenced multiple citations issued by the City of Santee and the City of San Diego and relied on their inspection reports and photographs as some of the evidence. This partnership demonstrates the synergy of the San Diego Water Board working in close collaboration with the local municipalities.



A copy of the San Diego Water Board's Settlement is available for review on its [website](#).

For more information on the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, construction storm water requirements, and information about drought resources, you can visit their [website](#).

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