



Media Release

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Francisco Bay Region

City of Palo Alto Wins 2013 "WuHoo" Pollution Prevention Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bruce Wolfe, Executive Officer
(510) 622-2314

September 11, 2013

Oakland – The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board presented the City of Palo Alto with the Dr. Teng-chung Wu Pollution Prevention Award, affectionately known as the "WuHoo Award."

The WuHoo Award recognizes Palo Alto for its outstanding efforts in controlling emerging pollutants. Water quality monitoring studies indicate that chemicals from pharmaceuticals, personal care products, pesticides and other consumer products are being detected more frequently in waterways including the Bay. These chemicals are often referred to as "contaminants of emerging concern" (CECs) because their risk to human health and the environment is not well understood.

Such chemicals, if not sufficiently controlled, may become major drivers of future water quality problems. Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to remove them. Examples include triclosan (used in antibacterial soaps), flame retardants, perfluorinated hydrocarbons (used in stain-resistant products), hormone supplements, and nitro musks (used in fragrances).

Palo Alto has been a leader in the research, education and measurable reduction of emerging pollutants. Palo Alto has partnered with universities and the San Francisco Estuary Institute to conduct studies to understand the levels and fates of various CECs in the wastewater treatment process. These efforts have led to cutting-edge publications, in some instances authored by City staff, and fact sheets to inform region-wide pollution prevention efforts. Thanks to Palo Alto's efforts, more than 22 tons of pharmaceutical wastes have been kept out of the Region's waters.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 • 916-341-5254 • Mailing Address: P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-0100 • www.waterboards.ca.gov



Palo Alto continues to look ahead by leading a regional hospice education and outreach project through the Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group, engaging in extensive public outreach campaigns, and advocating alongside the California Product Stewardship Council and the Product Stewardship Institute for long-term solutions to controlling emerging pollutants including extended producer responsibility programs. These programs aim to require manufacturers to fund and manage the disposal of the products they produce.

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board presents its annual Pollution Prevention Award in memory of former Board employee Dr. Teng-chung Wu, an early advocate for pollution prevention. Dr. Wu believed the best way to keep San Francisco Bay clean was to keep pollutants from getting into wastewater, instead of constructing ever more expensive treatment works to remove them. The timing of the award coincides with National Pollution Prevention Week, September 16-22, and precedes the State of the Estuary Conference, to be held in Oakland in October, that will focus on emerging contaminants.

For additional information, please visit

www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/board_info/agenda.shtml

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board's mission is to preserve, protect, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources, and ensure their proper allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations.