



Media Release

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

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Central Valley Water Board Starts Public Comment Period for Draft General Order Requiring Environmental Rules for Marijuana Cultivation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 10, 2015

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SACRAMENTO – The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board has proposed draft rules that require cannabis grow operations to comply with regional board regulations intended to protect nearby waters from potential pollution. The Board will consider adoption of the rules Oct 1-2, following a public comment period that begins this week.

The [draft General Order](#) is intended to prevent water and waste created by medicinal cannabis cultivation activities on private lands from polluting surface water or creating other environmental hazards. There will be [three public workshops](#) conducted in August, prior to board consideration in October. The public comment period ends Sept. 7

Following public comment, the Central Valley Water Board plans to either develop a more comprehensive regulatory program specific to cannabis cultivation, or fully integrate cannabis cultivators into an existing regulatory program or programs as part of this draft general order.

The General Order would serve as a permit that would be issued to landowners and cultivators engaged in marijuana cultivation who meet specific conditions, including those imposed by local ordinances. The General Order will regulate discharges from medicinal cannabis cultivation operations to waters of the state, which includes both surface and ground waters. The General Order requires permittees to implement best management practices, and in some cases submit annual monitoring reports.

Cannabis cultivation in the Central Valley Region has increased exponentially in recent years, both in the number and the size of operations. The Central Valley Water Board has serious concerns about the water quality impacts from this dramatic increase in cannabis cultivation activity on both public and private land. The Central Valley Water Board is not interested in

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entering the debate over the legality of cannabis cultivation in California, other than to note that any such operation on public land is illegal regardless of the crop.

The Central Valley Water Board has jurisdiction over discharges of waste that could affect waters of the state, regardless of what activity is generating the waste. The Central Valley Water Board does not in any way authorize, endorse, sanction, permit or approve the cultivation, use, or sale of cannabis/marijuana.

For more information, view the Central Valley Water Board public [hearing notice](#).

To learn more about what the state water boards are doing relative to the environmental impacts of cannabis cultivation, visit our [resource page](#).

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board is a California state agency responsible for the preservation and enhancement of the quality of California's water resources. For more information, visit: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/>.

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