



Media Release

North Coast Water Board Adopts New Discharge Requirements for Wineries, Food Processors

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The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board today adopted general waste discharge requirements (WDRs) for wineries and beverage and food processors that updates 2002 general WDRs for wineries and expands permit coverage to beverage and food processors within the North Coast region.

In a separate action, the Board also adopted a “conditional waiver” that waives requirements for wineries and beverage and food processors discharging less than 1,500 gallons of process wastewater per day. The Board actions increase protection of groundwater quality, streamline the permitting process, improve consistency, and incentivize water conservation.

Small wineries and some types of beverage and food processing facilities, such as cheese and potato processors, were not regulated. The Board actions expand permit coverage to include the previously unregulated processors and small wineries.

“Updating the requirements and bringing in small wineries and food processors that weren’t a part of the regulation is critical to protecting our groundwater,” said Regional Water Board Executive Officer Matt St. John.

The updated general WDRs provide increased protection of the beneficial uses of groundwater by requiring wineries and beverage and food processors to address nutrients and salinity in their process wastewaters and solids. The updated general WDRs require wineries and processors to either meet end-of-pipe limitations or monitor groundwater to demonstrate compliance with groundwater water quality standards. Those facilities that qualify for a “conditional waiver” of requirements are required to employ best management practices such as minimizing the use of non-biodegradable and salt-containing cleaners to reduce impacts to groundwater quality.

Facilities are required to submit an application for coverage under the updated WDRs or conditional waiver as soon as possible. Wineries currently enrolled under the 2002 winery WDRs are required to submit an application by July 28, 2016.

Regional Water Board staff reached out to the general public, conducted public workshops and worked extensively with wine industry representatives to develop the new general WDRs and conditional waiver. The proposed requirements were modified in response to comments and input from the public and industry representatives.

For more information on the new WDRs and conditional waiver, visit

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/wine_beverage_food/

