

**REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN DIEGO REGION**

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT

December 13, 2023

ITEM NO. 5

SUBJECT

Consideration of Tentative Order No. R9-2023-0042, *An Order Rescinding Order No. 93-47, Waste Discharge Requirements for County of Orange, Joplin Youth Center, Orange County* (Tentative Order R9-2023-0042). (Mahsa Izadmehr)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of Tentative Order No. R9-2023-0042.

KEY ISSUES

Tentative Order No. R9-2023-0042 (**Supporting Document 1**), if adopted, rescinds Order No. 93-47, *Waste Discharge Requirements for County of Orange, Joplin Youth Center, Orange County* (Order No. 93-47). The onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) at Joplin Youth Center (Facility), owned and operated by Orange County Public Works (Discharger), will be regulated under State Water Resources Control Board Order WQ 2014-0153-DWQ, *General Waste Discharge Requirements for Small Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems* (General Order).¹

PRACTICAL VISION

Tentative Order No. R9-2023-0042 is consistent with the Strategize for Healthy Waters chapter of the *San Diego Water Board Practical Vision*.² The use of statewide permits, like the General Order, helps the San Diego Water Board focus staff resources on larger projects and facilities within the region that pose a greater threat to water quality. Additionally, enrolling dischargers in the General Order maintains consistent regulation of small domestic wastewater systems throughout the state.

¹ General Order:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2014/wq2014_0153_dwq.pdf

² Practical Vision:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sandiego/water_issues/programs/practical_vision/

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this item is to provide the Board with information to assist in its consideration of Tentative Order No. R9-2023-0042. If adopted, Tentative Order No. R9-2023-0042 will rescind Order No. 93-47 and activate the Facility's enrollment in the General Order.

The Facility is located at 19480 Rose Canyon Road, Trabuco Canyon in Orange County, California (**Supporting Document 2**). Board staff inspected the Facility's OWTS on December 6, 2022, and did not observe any violations of the requirements specified in Order No. 93-47 during the inspection.

Board staff reviewed the requirements specified in Order No. 93-47 with the Discharger's annual monitoring reports and determined the Facility's OWTS is eligible for enrollment in the General Order. Furthermore, Order No. 93-47 is not as protective of water quality as the requirements specified in the General Order. Implementation of the General Order provides a more appropriate, consistent, and streamlined statewide approach to regulating small domestic wastewater treatment systems. Discharges from small domestic wastewater treatment systems have certain common characteristics, such as similar constituents, concentrations of constituents, disposal techniques, and flow ranges, and require the same or similar treatment standards. While the Discharger may request to be regulated under individual waste discharge requirements, the Facility's enrollment in the General Order allows the Board to effectively and efficiently regulate discharges from small domestic wastewater treatment systems, while prioritizing the agency's limited resources.

Board staff prepared a Notice of Applicability (NOA) (**Supporting Document 3**) in accordance with the General Order, after determining the Facility's enrollment is appropriate. The NOA contains site-specific monitoring and reporting requirements for the Facility. Since this Facility is operating under individual waste discharge requirements, the Board's Executive Officer issued the NOA to the Facility's responsible parties, prior to the Board's consideration to rescind the Facility's existing individual waste discharge requirements. A draft copy of the NOA for Joplin Youth Center was posted to the San Diego Water Board's website on September 15, 2023.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

The significant differences between the General Order and Order No. 93-47 are:

1. Order No. 93-47 includes specific individual waste discharge requirements for the Facility, whereas the General Order regulates OWTS consistently statewide.
2. The monitoring required by the General Order is less stringent than the monitoring required by Order No. 93-47. The monitoring and reporting program required by the General Order, however, is more appropriate because it is consistent with the monitoring and reporting requirements for facilities of similar size and discharge across the state.

COMPLIANCE RECORD

The San Diego Water Board issued five Staff Enforcement Letters to the Discharger for the following violations:

- Failure to submit annual monitoring reports in 1993 and 1994.
- Failure to have backup power to operate plant during a power failure in 1997 and 1998.
- Failure to record effluent flow rate in 1995, 2001 and 2002.
- Failure to comply with sulfate effluent limitations in 1992, 1994, 2002, 2007 and 2009.
- Failure to pay the annual fee in 1999 and 2010.

The Discharger corrected these violations following receipt of the Staff Enforcement Letters.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Board staff notified the Discharger and known interested parties of this action on December 13, 2023 (**Supporting Documents 4 and 5**). Additionally, Board staff posted Tentative Order No. R9-2023-0042 on its website along with a draft of the Facility's NOA, on September 15, 2023. The Board did not receive any comments during the public comment period. These actions satisfy the 30-day public notification and comment period requirements of Water Code section 13167.5.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. Tentative Order No. R9-2023-0042
2. Joplin Youth Center Vicinity and Facility Map
3. Notice of Applicability for Joplin Youth Center
4. Tentative Order No. R9-2023-0042 Transmittal Letter
5. Notice of Public Hearing and Comment Period