

## Web-Based Performance Report Tracks Water Boards' Water Quality and Water Rights Protection Actions

The Water Boards released its third Web-based *Performance Report* in September 2011. To improve transparency and accountability, a key priority for the Water Boards, the *Performance Report* is designed to provide information on the Water Boards' efforts to protect and allocate the state's waters for beneficial uses.



Mountain View Sanitation District Flushing Pond (Treated Wastewater)  
(Photo courtesy of State Water Resources Control Board)

This Web-based *Performance Report*, which covers July 1, 2010–June 30, 2011, relies mainly on information from databases used by the Water Boards. As with any effort, data availability limits the information reported. Over time, the information presented will better illustrate the work and effectiveness of the Water Boards, and the quality of the state's waters.

### Why You Need to Know

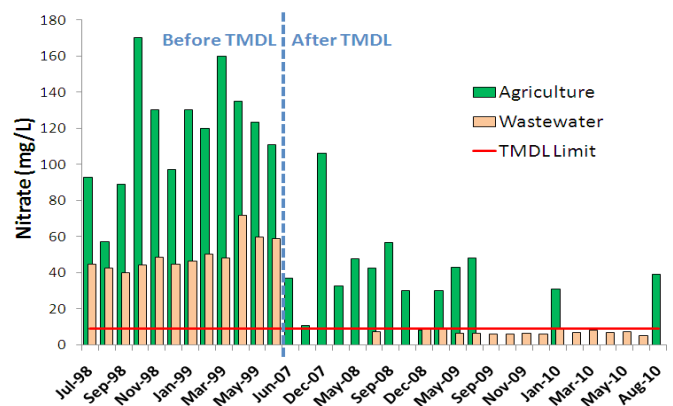
To protect our water resources, the Water Boards set water quality standards in plans and policies, monitor and assess the state's waters, regulate pollutant sources, enforce compliance with regulatory requirements, provide funding for water quality protection projects, and allocate water. The *Performance Report* is a way to learn about the efforts of California's regulatory agencies responsible for the quality of the state's rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, ocean, and groundwaters. More importantly, the report describes the performance of the Water Boards in implementing its programs.

## A Click Away: Web-Based Water Regulation Information Instantly

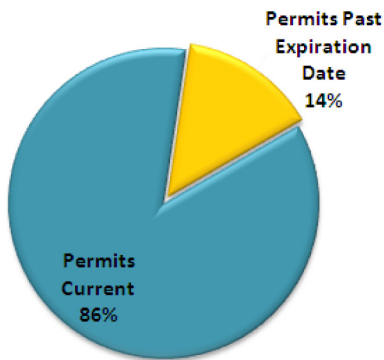
The report's Web pages provide data and information about Water Board actions to protect the state's waters. These Water Board activities are grouped into five categories: "Plan and Assess"; "Regulate"; "Enforce"; "Fund"; and "Allocate Water". The Web page for each category includes a summary of the Water Boards' work and data reports.

### Plan & Assess

The Water Boards adopt plans and policies to carry out federal and state water quality protection laws. The plans and policies contain water quality standards and regulations, including monitoring requirements to assess the condition of the waters. This part of the *Performance Report* presents data and information on surface water monitoring, sewage spills, coastal beach monitoring and availability, and actions to restore impaired waters through standards called Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). TMDLs are performance based water quality management plans that can take years to decades to implement depending on the type of pollution and complexity of the issues addressed. This year's *Performance Report* includes a new series of measures aimed at evaluating the water quality outcomes resulting from TMDL implementation. For example, the following graph shows the positive effects of implementing a TMDL in the Calleguas Creek watershed.



on water quality conditions, and the laws, regulations, plans, and policies designed to protect water quality. To be effective, the Water Boards must ensure that permit requirements are enforceable. Discharger compliance with permits is assessed through the review of waste discharge reports and inspections. This part of the *Performance Report* presents data and information on permits and inspections for many types of discharges to surface waters. For instance, the graph shows that 86 percent of permits for major wastewater facilities are current.



Where documented violations of permit requirements occur, the Water Boards are responsible for taking enforcement actions.

### Clean Up

The Water Boards are charged with cleaning up a broad universe of contaminated sites throughout the state. These cleanup programs have been addressing pollution from former industrial activities and leaking underground petroleum tanks for many years. This part of the *Performance Report* presents data and information on active and closed cleanup sites, as well as cleanup cases in active remediation.

### Enforce

The Water Boards enforce pollution control requirements that are established for discharges. Where violations of regulatory requirements are detected, enforcement actions of varying types and severity are taken. For the most serious violations, penalties are often imposed. In all cases, the goal of enforcement is to encourage compliance with requirements so that water quality is protected. This part of the *Performance Report* presents data and information on violations, enforcement actions, and penalties.

### Fund

The State Water Board provides financial assistance through various state and federal loan and grant programs to help local agencies, businesses, and individuals meet the costs of water pollution control, develop locally available sustainable water supplies, and cleanup. This funding is available for local and regional projects that can include construction of municipal sewage and water recycling facilities, remediation for underground storage tank releases, watershed protection, nonpoint source pollution control, and other water protection projects.

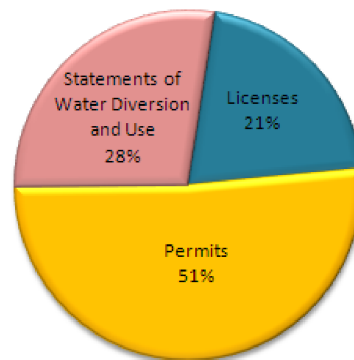


North Coast Regional Water Board staff monitoring water quality. (Photo courtesy of North Coast Regional Water Board)

### Allocate Water

The State Water Board establishes and maintains a system of water rights to ensure that the state's limited water resources are put to the best possible use and the public interest is served. A water right is legal permission to divert and use a reasonable and nonwasteful amount of surface water for a beneficial purpose, such as domestic, irrigation, industrial, or recreation uses. Water rights are allocated through a system of permits, licenses, and registrations. For instance, the graph shows that approximately 50 percent of water rights, by acre-feet, are allocated through permits.

Amount of Water Rights (acre-feet) by Type



In allocating water rights, the State Water Board works to ensure that vested rights, water quality, and the environment are protected.

### Feedback Welcome

The Web pages of the *Performance Report* encourage suggestions for continual improvement. This feedback, along with improvements to the Water Boards' data systems, will boost routine reporting and supplement the report information.

To view the Water Boards' Performance Report, see:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about\\_us/performance\\_report/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/performance_report/)