

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
26/27/28 May 2010 Board Meeting

Response to Comments for Calaveras County Water District
Copper Cove Wastewater Treatment Plant
Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements

The following are Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) staff responses to comments submitted by an interested party regarding the tentative Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for the Calaveras County Water District Copper Cove Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). The order was distributed for public comment on 11 March 2010. Comments were required to be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board by 5 p.m. on 12 April 2010. Comments were received from the Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) and Central Valley Clean Water Association (CVCWA) within the comment period. The comments were accepted into the record and are summarized below, followed by Central Valley Water Board staff responses.

CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT COMMENTS

CCWD Comment No. 1, WDRs, page 2, Finding 13, Prior to 2006, Pond #5 collected storm water and was released to the local creek. After 2006, due to the heavy rains, Pond #5 was used to store effluent on an emergency basis. Storage in Pond # 5 is pumped back to Pond #6 for reuse.

Response: Comment noted and text has been modified.

CCWD Comments No. 2, WDRs, page 4, Finding 23, The LAA is also used to draw down the remaining volume of effluent in Pond #6 to ensure an empty reservoir for the winter season.

Response: Comment noted and text has been modified.

CCWD Comments No. 3, WDRs, page 12, Finding 50. e, The District has various operation manuals for the plant. The District will be incorporating these manuals into an O&M plan.

Response: The District may and should include the various operation manuals as attachments to the Operations and Maintenance Plan (O&M Plan) for the facility. The O&M Plan is a best practicable treatment and control practice. The O&M Plan allows the Discharger to detail how facility staff will implement portions of the operation manual. Provision G. 1. c. of the Order details the information that similar facilities typically find necessary to operate and maintain the facility. This detail is also necessary for Central Valley Water Board enforcement staff to evaluate compliance with the Order.

CCWD Comments No. 4, WDRs, page 19, Discharge Specification B. 2, Second sentence has word missing 'exceed'?

Response: Comment noted and text has been modified.

CCWD Comments No. 5, WDRs, page 20, Discharge Specification B. 3, The LAA is also used to draw down the remaining volume of effluent in Pond #6 at the end of the irrigation season to ensure an empty reservoir for the winter season.

CCWD Comments No. 15, Information Sheet, page 3, Antidegradation, “The last paragraph; the LAA is for emergencies and is used to draw down the remaining effluent in the reservoir at the end of the season to ensure an empty reservoir for the winter.”

Response: Comment noted and text has been modified.

CCWD Comments No. 6, WDRs, page 20, Discharge Specification B. 10, What is the expectation of keeping the weeds, dead algae, and other vegetation from accumulating on the surface of the ponds? There is abundance of duckweed that cannot be reasonably controlled and removed. The District's current level of pond maintenance has been adequate.

Response: Comment noted and text has been modified to reflect that the requirements are management strategies for mosquito control.

CCWD Comments No. 7, WDRs, page 21, Land Application Area Specification C. 2, Does the agronomic rate need to be specified or is this an observation?

Response: The agronomic rate refers to soil management and crop production. The agronomic rate is the rate at which the wastewater can be applied which meets the nutrient requirements of the ground cover on the LAA while preventing groundwater pollution.

CCWD Comments No. 8, WDRs, page 24, Provisions G. 1. a, We believe that monitoring MW-3 does not provide additional value being that MW-4 is immediately downstream. We request that MW-3 no longer be monitored.

Response: Comment noted, MW-3 monitors the current configuration and has shown the degradation of groundwater. It is necessary to keep MW-3 for data comparison.

CCWD Comments No. 9, WDRs, page 24, Provisions G. 1. c. iii, The SCGC operates and controls the recycled water distribution system per the NPDES permit. A copy of the system can be included in the O&M Plan.

Response: Comment noted, the District may attachment the plan required by its NPDES permit to the O&M Plan or it may place a notation of the date and title of the Discharger submittal that specifically details this work.

CCWD Comments No. 10, WDRs, Attachment B, Change LAA to 35 acre.

CCWD Comments No. 14, Information Sheet, page 1, Background, Change LAA acreage to 35 ac.

CCWD Comments No. 11, WDRs, Attachment C, Show pond #5 after pond #4.?

Response: Comment noted and the text and figures have been modified.

CCWD Comments No. 12, MRP, page 3, pond inspections, Inspections of the ponds as described are very subjective and will not change weekly. Are there specific issues that these criteria are linked to, such as mosquito abatement? A performance based inspection may be more appropriate.

Response: Weekly or periodic pond inspections as well as weekly sampling are best management practices (BMPs). BMPs are intended to identify pending problems early enough to intervene.

CCWD Comments No. 13, MRP, page 4, [groundwater monitoring] table, This is not currently required. The LAA is not used often. This proposed type of monitoring appears to be more geared to a fulltime land application operation. The District requests that this be deleted from the permit and continue its current level of reporting.

Response: Groundwater monitoring is necessary to ensure compliance with the Order, these requirements cannot be deleted. It is noted that the Discharger previous Order was outdated, please note that all domestic discharges to land should have groundwater monitoring and reporting requirements.

CCWD Comments No.16: General Comment, There is a significant increase in monitoring, reporting, and developing new management plans with this new permit even though the treatment process is unchanged. These added requirements will impact an already stressed budget and increase of operator time. As noted above, we believe that some of the monitoring/reports could be deleted or have less reporting frequency without compromising the data necessary to evaluate the performance of the plant.

Response: Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MRP) requirements are necessary to ensure compliance with the Order, and cannot be deleted. The Executive Office may change the MRP and the District may consider submitting a specific request along these lines. The request should be prepared by a licensed professional engineer or geologist and provide the rationale for the request including to remove monitoring or reporting requirements.

CENTRAL VALLEY CLEAN WATER ASSOCIATION COMMENTS

CVCWA Comments No. 1 [A], CVCWA respectfully disagrees that the District's treated effluent discharged to the effluent storage pond and land application area must qualify for the wastewater exemption (Section 20090(b)) to be exempt from Title 27. Rather, CVCWA contends that the unconditional reuse exemption of Section 20090(h) applies. This exemption states:

Reuse-Recycling or other use of materials salvaged from waste, or produced by waste treatment, such as scrap metal, compost, and recycled chemicals, provided that discharges of residual wastes from recycling or treatment operations to land shall be according to applicable provisions of this division. (Cal. Code Regs., Tit. 27, § 20090(h).)

The wastewater exemption Section 20090(b) of Title 27 should not be included in the tentative Order because this exemption is conditional and requires the CCWD District to demonstrate compliance with the Basin Plan prior to permit issuance. The reuse exemption Section 20090(h) of Title 27 is unconditional and does not require such a demonstration. CVCWA requests to revise the Order to apply the reuse exemption to the treated effluent stored in the effluent storage pond and land application area (LAA).

Response: Title 27 conditionally exempts certain activities from its provisions. To qualify for an exemption the activity must meet and continue to meet specified conditions. The conditional reuse exemption Section 20090(h) of Title 27 does not apply in this situation.

In addition, the treated effluent stored in the effluent storage pond is not exempt from Title 27 pursuant to Section 20090 (h) because the secondary treated wastewater stored in the ponds requires additional treatment before its reuse on the Saddle Creek Golf Course (SCGC). There is no direct reuse.

The LAA is used to dispose of excess treated wastewater that either cannot be reused at the SCGC or that accumulates in effluent storage ponds prior to the rainy season. The LAA is not exempt from Title 27 pursuant to Section 20090 (h) because their use is for wastewater disposal and there is no reuse.

The reuse of treated wastewater at the SCGC may qualify for an exemption under Title 27 pursuant to Section 20090(h) and the appropriate exemption would be detailed in the NPDES permit that governs the reuse.

CVCWA Comments No. 2 [B], The requirements for O&M Plan are overly prescriptive and restrain “the District’s operational flexibility or cause the O&M Plan [Operation and Maintenance Plan] to omit valuable information that the District would otherwise provide”. CVCWA asks to delete the requirements listed after each topic.

Response: The Discharger does not have an O&M Plan for this facility. The development and implementation of an O&M Plan is a best practicable treatment and control practice. In our best professional judgment the Order lists the basic requirements for O&M Plan. This list was developed using various sources including other Dischargers of similar circumstances. The District does have the flexibility to include any additional information in the O&M Plan that its needs to operate and maintain the facility to comply with the Order.