



# Enforcement News

## **Global real estate company agrees to pay \$565,304 for unauthorized discharges at construction site**

### ***Exeter reaches settlement with Santa Ana Water Board***

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**RIVERSIDE** – A global real estate investment company on Friday agreed to a \$565,304 settlement with the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board for releasing contaminated water at a commercial construction site in Riverside in violation of its stormwater discharge permit.

On three occasions in April 2020, Exeter Property Group and Exeter Alessandro Land, known collectively as “Exeter,” discharged sediment-laden water into tributaries of Sycamore Canyon Creek, which is located on a preserve for a multi-species conservation plan. The water flowed into a channel along a freeway and through a 1,300-acre city park and low-density housing, exposing humans and wildlife to bacteria, metals and organic compounds in violation of the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities.

A regional board investigation determined the unauthorized discharges were caused by the company’s failure to install and maintain required erosion and sediment controls. Specifically, perimeter controls were missing or ineffective in various areas. Staff also found that the site’s Stormwater Pollution and Prevention Plan, a key planning document for controlling pollutants and stormwater, was deficient.

“We take our responsibility to protect public health and the environment from incidents like this very seriously,” said Jayne Joy, executive officer of the Santa Ana Water Board. “The fines and penalties we impose are designed to deter exactly these types of activities, and in a broader sense, remind everyone that we are all stewards of the environment.”

Under the California Water Code, permit violations can result in an administrative civil liability of up to \$10,000 per day, as well as \$10 per gallon discharged in excess of 1,000 gallons.

*The Santa Ana Water Board is responsible for protecting and restoring water quality over 2,800 miles of Southern California terrain, portions of the Orange County coastline,*





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*460 miles of streams and over 17 lakes, as well as numerous groundwater basins that serve as important drinking water sources throughout the region.*