

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

**STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2004**

Prepared on January 7, 2004

**ITEM NUMBER: 29**

**SUBJECT: Almaden Vineyards, Inc., Cienega Winery, Hollister, San Benito County, Rescission of Waste Discharge Requirements (Order No. 86-105)**

**KEY INFORMATION**

Discharger: Cienega Valley Vineyards/DeRose Winery  
Location: 9970 Cienega Road, Hollister, San Benito County  
Site Owner: Mr. Tony Cedolini, Mr. Pat DeRose  
Discharge Type: Winery Wastewater  
Treatment: Neutralization and land disposal  
Design Capacity: 100,000 gallons per day  
Discharge Volume: 18,345 gallons per day (estimated daily maximum)  
Recycling: Distillation of lees and composting of pumice for use in vineyard  
Existing Order: Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 86-105

**SUMMARY**

On June 13, 1986, the Regional Board adopted Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 86-105 to regulate the winery process wastewater discharge from the Almaden Vineyards, Inc., Cienega Winery. Around 1988 the approximately 700-acre Almaden Vineyards property was divided and sold off into two separate portions at which time winery operations ceased completely for a number of years. The new owners/operators, Cienega Valley Vineyards/DeRose Winery, resumed operation of the lower portion of vineyards and original winery facility sometime in the early to mid 90's at a significantly decreased production capacity. After reviewing the winery's case history and visiting the site, Regional Board staff determined Order No. 86-105 is not appropriate and current winery operations at this facility are more appropriately regulated under a Small Winery Waiver. Therefore staff recommends rescinding Order No. 86-105 and enrolling the facility in the Small Winery Waiver portion of General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Winery Waste (Order No. R3-2002-0084).

**DISCUSSION**

Cienega Valley Vineyards/DeRose Winery (hereafter, Winery or Discharger) is located in the Cienega Valley approximately six miles south of Hollister. The Winery is situated on a 300-acre portion of the original Almaden Vineyard and consists of a 100-acre vineyard, original Almaden winery operations buildings, and disposal/percolation pond adjacent to Cienega Valley Road. Order No. 86-105 was originally adopted for Almaden Vineyards' major red wine production facility that historically produced approximately 3 million gallons of wine per year. Most of the original Almaden winery equipment was removed by the new owners and major portions of the winery facility buildings are now being leased out or used for other purposes.

The winery currently produces about 5,000 cases (approximately 12,000 gallons) of wine per year and generates up to 400 gallons per day of winery wastewater for a short portion of the year during the peak of crush season. Significantly less wastewater is produced during the rest of the year with no daily wastewater production occurring

during a large portion of the year. Winery wastewater (tank/barrel/floor/crush pad/equipment wash and rinse water) is discharged to an evaporation/disposal pond with an estimated 100,000 gallons per day capacity. The disposal pond is located east of Cienega Road on fairly level topography consisting of tight clay loam soils.

The Discharger uses organic biodegradable cleaning products in its winery operation and recycles all of its solid waste products (lees [wine sediment] and pumice [stems, skins and seeds]). Wash and rinse water solutions containing citric acid (used for disinfection) are neutralized with caustic soda prior to discharge and a biodegradable product Terg-A-Zyme (Alconix) is sometimes used for additional cleaning. Lees are distilled for spirits used in the production of port and pumice is composted for use in the vineyard and on-site vegetable garden. Regional Board staff visited the winery facility shortly after the crush season this fall; the evaporation/disposal pond was essentially dry with grasses and brush growing in and around the pond that were characteristic of the surrounding area. No odors or nuisance conditions were observed in or around the disposal area.

An unnamed drainage way is located southeast of the winery and flows in a southeasterly direction until it empties in to the San Benito River about nine miles southeast of the winery. Groundwater in the winery's production well (located on an adjacent property) is encountered at approximately 90 feet below ground surface.

## CONCLUSION

No significant surface water or groundwater impacts are likely as a result of the existing winery operations. Given new ownership and reduced production of the winery, existing Order No. 86-105 is significantly outdated and inappropriate for the current winery operation. Cienega Valley Vineyard/DeRose Winery is more appropriately regulated by a Small Winery Waiver as specified by General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Winery Waste (Order No. R3-2002-0084)

## COMMENTS & RESPONSES

The following parties were notified by letter dated December 15, 2003 of staff's recommendation to rescind Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 86-105 and enroll the Discharger in the Small Winery Waiver. No comments have been received.

**Tony Cedolini, Cienega Valley  
Vineyards/DeRose Winery**

**Pat DeRose, Cienega Valley Vineyards/DeRose  
Winery**

**San Benito County Planning Department**

**San Benito County Environmental Health Dept.**

**San Benito County Water District**

## RECOMMENDATION

Rescind Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 86-105.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Existing Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 86-105
2. General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Winery Waste, Order No. R3-2002-0084

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(DeRose) Winery\SR Resc of Order 86-105.doc