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Date: Sun, Oct 16, 2005 8:31 PM
Subject: Monarch Grove, Los Osos Waste Water Treatment Plant

This is a letter to the San Luis Obispo Tribune editor. I hope it is printed before the December 2, hearing in Santa Barbara.

In my opinion the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Board has let the homeowners of Monarch Grove down. Most homeowners are environmental stewards and have tried their level best to do the right things. We have been hampered by poor decisions by your staff that has allowed a developer to literally promise a state of the art treatment plant, build a white elephant, and then throw it over the fence for homeowners to re-engineer, fix, operate and maintain in a picture perfect compliant manner!

We had hoped for more from this state organization but got substandard support in my opinion.

Letter to the Editor:

Last week Monarch Grove Homeowners made headlines "for watering a golf course with tainted water" from their wastewater treatment plant. Fines of \$35,000 have been suggested?

Here's what the Tribune's reporter, David Sneed, failed to report:

- a.. Anastasi Corporation was responsible for the design and construction of the plant.
 - b.. the developer is one of the largest property owners in Los Osos.
 - c.. Regional Water Quality Board (RWQCB) approved the design, construction and permitting of the plant.
 - d.. the plant was marketed and sold as "State of the Art" to all homeowners by a SLO developer, Richardson properties
 - e.. the plant was constructed with 67% less trickling filtration capability than original design specified, as well as at least 9 other built-in deficiencies.
 - f.. the plant had operational problems from the start because of these deficiencies.
 - g.. Monarch Grove Homeowner's Association (MGHA) was initially controlled by the developers (until a majority of homes were sold (63/83))
 - h.. in 2001, 75% of the homeowners petitioned the RWQCB not to allow transfer of the discharge permit from developers to Homeowners until problems were fixed .
 - i.. RWQCB transferred the permit despite Homeowners plea for help in 2001.
 - j.. Anastasi has promised to fix the plant numerous time but has failed to deliver on promises
 - k.. MGHA (although not in the prohibition zone) volunteered to connect to the Los Osos sewer project (whenever it gets built).
 - l.. MGHA has been struggling since startup to evaluate, modify, and effectively operate a deficient plant---compliantly.
 - m.. the current violations from the RWQCB do not pose a serious health risk and are mostly reporting errors, sporadic excess turbidity and nitrogen levels
 - n.. any excess nitrogen is naturally consumed by the plants in the discharge pond that feeds golf course irrigation.
 - o.. water from the pond is used beneficially to irrigate the Sea Pines Golf course, thus saving the groundwater aquifer
- The Mission Statement of the RWQCB is: To preserve and enhance the quality of California's water resources, and ensure their proper allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations "

So are they doing their job?

In your judgment, who should be fined ? Homeowners___? Developers ___? RWQCB ____?

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