



California  
Department of  
Health Services

**SANDRA SHEWRY**  
Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
**Department of Health Services**



**ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER**  
Governor

August 19, 2005

Mr. Roger W. Briggs, Executive Officer  
California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region  
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-7906

Dear Mr. Briggs:

Your letter dated July 12, 2005 provided notification that the proposed waste discharge requirements (WDRs) for the Carpinteria Sanitary District have been prepared by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and are available for review at your website. Comments are to be submitted in writing by no later than August 26, 2005.

There are presently two certified shellfish growing areas located in the Santa Barbara Channel that could potentially be adversely affected by sewage discharges into the channel. Discharge requirements, specifically coliform requirements, and the prompt notification of the Department of Health Services Preharvest Shellfish Unit (DHS/PSU) and the commercial shellfish growers have been included in the WDRs. This will help ensure that water quality at the growing areas meets State and national shellfish standards, and that harvesting is restricted during periods when the water quality has degraded.

The following comments are provided to the Tentative Order No. R3-2005-0110 to better improve the interaction between the Carpinteria Sanitary District and the commercial shellfish activities in the Santa Barbara area:

- 1) Page 13, paragraph V.A.1.b.1) – this paragraph, under the main heading of “Receiving Water Limitations”, provides the bacterial standards for any shellfish growing area. It states that, “In any 60-day period, the ‘median’ total coliform density shall not exceed 70 (MPN) per 100 mL, and not more than ten percent of the samples shall exceed 230 (MPN) per 100 mL.

The bacteriological standard provided in the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) Model Ordinance (2003) requires that for approved shellfish growing areas, the fecal coliform medium or geometric mean shall not exceed 14 MPN per 100 mL, and the estimated 90<sup>th</sup> percentile for the most recent 30 samples shall not exceed 43 MPN per 100 mL. It is requested that this standard be used in lieu of the requirements stated above. (Note: the NSSP Model Ordinance indicates that these fecal coliform limits are equivalent to the total coliform numbers provided in the proposed WDR).

- 2) Page E-4, Note 3 – the phone number for the Department of Health Services should be 510-412-4635.
- 3) Page E-30, paragraph XIII. – this section deals with the notifications required for sewage spills. Sewage spills involve raw sewage and often are more of a threat to shellfish growing waters than a treatment plant malfunction. It is requested that DHS be notified of such occurrences, similar to the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- 4) Page E-34, paragraph XIV.D.1. – this paragraph discusses the “Notification and Monitoring Procedure in Case of Disinfection Failure. Prompt notification requirements are an integral part of the Management Plan for shellfish growing areas, and the RWQCB is to be commended for including it in the WDRs.

In the top paragraph, the term “Santa Barbara Nearshore Aquaculture Area” is used as a term for the general locations of the shellfish growing areas in the Santa Barbara area. Actually, “Nearshore” refers to one specific growing area leased by one specific grower. A better general term would be “offshore of the Santa Barbara coast”. This paragraph also states that the notification shall be by facsimile transmission. It is requested that a telephone notification (by direct conversation or voice mail message (Note: all commercial growers are required to have a 24-hour voice mail service)) be required, in addition to the facsimile transmission. A phone call will provide a more prompt notification in most cases, and therefore is more protective of public health. Additionally, a phone message can be accessed remotely, unlike a fax. A facsimile notification does not provide adequate public health protection since it might not get picked up for a considerable length of time.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and for your consideration of these comments on the proposed Waste Discharge Requirements/National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit for the Carpinteria Sanitary District. If you have any questions concerning these comments, please contact me at (510) 412-4638.

Mr. Roger W. Briggs, Executive Officer  
Page 3  
August 19, 2005

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Todd R. Title". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Todd R. Title  
Preharvest Shellfish Unit  
Environmental Management Branch

