

State of California
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
LOS ANGELES REGION

ORDER NO. R4-2009-XXXX

AMENDING WATER RECLAMATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUND WATER RECHARGE
IN ORDER NO. 91-100

FOR

WATER REPLENISHMENT DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICTS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY
LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
(Rio Hondo & San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds)

(File No. 71-67)

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Regional Water Board), finds:

1. Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, and Water Replenishment District of Southern California (hereinafter called the Reclaimer as a whole) reclaim water for ground water recharge at Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds under water reclamation requirements contained in Order No. 91-100 adopted by this Regional Water Board on September 9, 1991.
2. County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Districts) operate the Pomona Water Reclamation Plant located at 295 Humane Way, Pomona, California; the San Jose Creek Water Reclamation Plant located at 1965 South Workman Mill Road, Whittier, California; and the Whittier Narrows Water Reclamation Plant located at 301 North Rosemead Boulevard near the City of South El Monte, California. These plants produce disinfected tertiary treated recycled water. In addition to the use of recycled water for ground water recharge, the effluent is also discharged to surface waters or used for irrigation and industrial purposes under separate National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits and water recycling requirements, respectively.
3. Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) owns and operates Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds. A portion of recycled water discharged to surface waters is delivered to the spreading grounds by diversion from San Gabriel River or Rio Hondo Channel. The recycled water from the San Jose Creek Reclamation Plant could also be diverted to San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds directly from its effluent pipeline.
4. The Montebello Forebay is located in the northerly portion of the Central Basin immediately below the Whittier Narrows. Currently, it is the most important area of ground water recharge in the Central Basin. The Rio Hondo and the San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds are located in the Montebello Forebay.

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February 2, 2009

5. Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD) is responsible for the ground water management in the Central Basin. WRD purchases the recycled water from the Districts for ground water recharge. However, LACDPW conducts the daily operations at the spreading grounds.
6. For years, the Central Basin in Los Angeles County has been in overdraft and therefore requires artificial recharge to ensure adequate groundwater supplies for local pumpers. WRD has historically utilized water from 3 sources, local runoff, imported water and recycled water, for recharge. Most of the recharge in the Central Basin is accomplished by percolation of water at spreading basins in the Montebello Forebay.
7. For the first time in the WRD's 49 year history, imported water has not been available for recharge for more than 16 months and is not expected to be available for the next few years. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, who provides the imported water for recharge, has predicted that water may be available for only 3 out of every 10 years in the future. WRD has normally recharged 21,000 acre-feet (AF) per year of imported water. Due to this loss of imported water and other constraints such as the long-term drought, ground water levels are now at their lowest levels in 30 years and may continue to go down even lower unless recharge from other sources are utilized. If ground water levels continue to drop, some wells currently used for domestic and industrial purposes may no longer be usable, and therefore would be in jeopardy.
8. To ensure an adequate and reliable source of ground water in spite of the current and possible future shortage of imported water, the recharge of more recycled water in the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds is an appropriate option.
9. The Montebello Forebay Groundwater Recharge Project has been operating since 1962. Currently, an average of 50,000 AF of disinfected tertiary recycled water is delivered to the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds, which percolates into the underlying aquifers. The existing permit requires comprehensive monitoring of the plant effluents, shallow monitoring wells and nearby production wells to ensure that water continues to meet all applicable permit requirements.
10. Order No. 91-100 provides the quantity limitations for recycled water as follows:

The average quantity of reclaimed water spread, based on a running 3-year average, shall not exceed 50,000 acre-feet (AF) per year. The maximum quantity of reclaimed water spread in any one water year shall not exceed 60,000 AF or 50 percent of the total inflow into the Montebello Forebay for that year, whichever is less; additionally, the maximum quantity of reclaimed water spread in any 3-year period shall not exceed 150,000 AF and 35 percent of the total inflow all sources into the Montebello Forebay during that period.

The Reclaimer has requested that the quantity limitations be revised as follows:

The maximum quantity of recycled water spread in any 5-year period shall not exceed 35 percent of the total inflow from all sources into the Montebello Forebay during that period.

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11. Pursuant to Section 13523 of the California Water Code, this Regional Water Board has consulted with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) regarding the Reclaimer's request to modify the quantity limitations for recycled water. The State CDPH approves of the Reclaimer's proposed change in the November 5, 2008 letter to the Regional Water Board.
12. This Order amends Order No. 91-100 allowing the Reclaimer to increase the amount of recycled water for ground water recharge by removing the running 3-year allowable annual average quantity limit and annual volume caps of recycled water. It allows the maximum quantity of recycled water spread to the Montebello Forebay to be 35 percent of the total inflow during a period of 5 years instead of 3 years prescribed in the existing permit.
13. Pursuant to Section 60320.045 in draft Groundwater Recharge Reuse Regulations (Article 5.1, Chapter 3, Division 4, Title 22 of California Code of Regulations), this Order requires sampling frequency for total organic carbon (TOC) at six spreading ground wells to be increased from bimonthly to weekly for one year beginning in the first week of May 2009. These analytical data are necessary to demonstrate the compliance with the TOC requirement in draft Groundwater Recharge Reuse Regulations when the quantity of recycled water spread on the Montebello Forebay is allowed to be 35 percent of the total inflow in the ground water.
14. The requirements contained in this Order, as they are met, will be in conformance with Water Recycling Criteria, the goals and objectives of the Basin Plan and policies of this Regional Water Board, and comply with the requirements of the Water Code.
15. Any person aggrieved by this action may petition the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) to review the action in accordance with Water Code section 13320 and California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 2050 and following. The State Water Board must receive the petition by 5:00 p.m., 30 days after the date of this Order, except that if the thirtieth day following the date of this Order falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday, the petition must be received by the State Water Board by 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. Copies of the law and regulations applicable to filing petitions may be found on the internet at:
http://waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality
or will be provided upon request.
16. Amending water recycling requirements for an existing facility is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code, Section 2100 et seq.) in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, section 15301.

The Regional Water Board has notified the Reclaimer and interested agencies and persons of its intent to amend the water recycling requirements for the recycled water quantity limitations and has provided them with an opportunity to submit their written views and recommendations.

The Regional Water Board, in a public meeting, heard and considered all comments pertaining to the tentative Order amending the water recycling requirements.

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IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Order No. 91-100 adopted by this Regional Water Board on September 9, 1991, is amended as follows:

1. On page 6 of Order No. 91-100, replace the requirements under Section B. QUANTITY LIMITATIONS with the following:

The maximum quantity of recycled water spread in any 5-year period shall not exceed 35 percent of the total inflow from all sources into the Montebello Forebay during that period.

2. On page T9 of the Monitoring and Reporting Program (CI-5728), add the following as footnote 11 for Total Organic Carbon in the Table under the ground water monitoring program:

11. The monitoring frequency for total organic carbon (TOC) at six spreading ground wells shall be weekly for one year beginning in the first week of May 2009. In May 2010, the monitoring frequency may resume to bimonthly unless other instructions are given by the Regional Board.

3. On page T13 of the Monitoring and Reporting Program (CI-5728), add the following reporting requirement to the end of Reporting Provisions section:

After completing consecutive TOC monitoring for 20 weeks at six spreading ground wells beginning in the first week of May 2009, the TOC 20-week running average for all wells and for each of six spreading ground wells shall be respectively reported in the regular monthly monitoring reports until the end of April 2010.

All other Requirements, Limitations, and Provisions of Order No. 91-100 not affected by the foregoing amendments shall remain in full force and effect.

This Order takes effect upon its adoption.

I, Tracy J. Egoscue, Executive Officer, do hereby certify that this Order with all attachments is a full, true, and correct copy of an Order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region, on April 2, 2009.

Tracy J. Egoscue, Executive Officer

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