



State Water Resources Control Board

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SWRCB

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Water Quality Monitoring Council Prepares New Plan To Help Californians Get Their Water Facts Straight

Sacramento-The California Water Quality Monitoring Council (Monitoring Council) now has a plan in place to assemble the widest collection of water quality data ever available about our state's lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and ocean waters. The Monitoring Council's internet portals also make that data available to state and community leaders, researchers and the public. And there's much more to come.

The Monitoring Council was established by the California Legislature in 2006 to reorganize California's system for collecting information on its water resources and to make that information public. Since that time the Monitoring Council has devised a water quality information network relying on state, local and non-governmental agencies and groups. The Monitoring Council operates under the umbrella of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the California Natural Resources Agency.

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) has helped the Monitoring Council develop a two-part system for gathering and sharing water quality information. The California Environmental Data Exchange Network (CEDEN) provides a means of gathering water quality data from wide a variety of sources. CEDEN first focused on making water quality information available from the State Water Board and nine Regional Water Boards. CEDEN will next provide public access to data from citizen and regional monitoring efforts and the federal Water Quality Exchange (WQX) network.

All this information and more will be available through the second part of the data system: the *My Water Quality* internet portals. The State Water Board's Surface Water

Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) has provided much of the data used on the portal *Is It Safe To Eat Fish and Shellfish From Our Waters?* and will soon deliver information on the health of our rivers and streams. Two additional portals, *Is It Safe To Swim In Our Waters?* and *Are Our Wetland Ecosystems Healthy?*, developed by two other Monitoring Council workgroups, keep track of beach contamination and one of the state's most fragile kinds of ecosystems.

Within the next year additional *My Water Quality* internet portals will provide the public with information on drinking water safety and the health of our estuaries and tidepool ecosystems.

The Monitoring Council is also developing a new BeachWatch database which will improve the flow of bacterial and beach closure data from coastal county environmental health departments to the Water Boards, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Heal the Bay, and the Safe to Swim internet portal via CEDEN.

A unique feature of the Monitoring Council's efforts is the cooperation and interactivity between dozens of agencies and organizations. The Monitoring Council has just presented a recommended Comprehensive Monitoring Program Strategy designed to increase that interaction, and draw on even more resources to keep Californians informed about their water quality. Accompanying that document is a 2010 update of the Water Boards' SWAMP Monitoring and Assessment Strategy, designed to complement the Monitoring Council's efforts.

Visit the [My Water Quality Portals](#)

Get [more information on the Monitoring Council](#)

Get [more information on SWAMP](#)