



Media Release

California Regional Water Quality Control Board -- San Francisco Bay Region

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 11, 2011

Contact: Dave Clegern
(916) 327-8239

Secondary Contact: Dyan Whyte (510) 622-2441

San Francisco Bay Water Board Orders City of Pacifica to Improve Sewage Collection as part of \$1.7 Million Settlement

Oakland - The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board has ordered the City of Pacifica to reduce and eliminate sewage spills. The Water Board initiated an enforcement action after Pacifica discharged 6.9 million gallons of partially treated wastewater during a January 2008 storm. The discharge entered Calera Creek and the Pacific Ocean and resulted in closure of area beaches. This discharge and numerous sewage spills over recent years were a result of the City's failing sewage collection system that becomes inundated with runoff during storm events.

The City has agreed to the terms of the order and will begin improving its maintenance and operation practices and upgrading its sewage collection system. Since some improvements involve replacing failing pipes and constructing new pipes, the improvements will take years to complete.

The order was part of a larger settlement between the Water Board and the City that included a \$1.7 million penalty. This penalty was for the January 2008 discharge and a number of past sewage spills and other discharge violations. The settlement allows the City to spend up to \$820,000 of the penalty on local environmental projects. One of the projects that the City will undertake involves a \$650,000 grant program to help property owners repair and replace defective private sewer laterals in the City. Private sewer laterals connect homes and businesses to the City's main sewer line and are the responsibility of property owners. In communities like Pacifica, as much as half the problem comes from private laterals.

Pacifica is not unique in the Bay Area for having a failing sewage collection system. The Water Board began its program to address sewage spills in 2003, first with outreach to sewage collection system agencies, then with formal requirements, and finally with increased enforcement. The Water Board has issued orders against ten sewage collection system agencies and penalized twelve since 2008. Two other enforcement actions are pending.

For additional information on this action, please visit

www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/board_info/agenda.shtml



Media Release

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board's mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's water resources, and ensure their proper allocation and efficient use for the benefit of present and future generations.