

**REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN DIEGO REGION**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
June 10, 2026**

ITEM 4

SUBJECT

Consideration of Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003, *Waste Discharge Requirements for Ramona Landfill Inc., a Subsidiary of Republic Services, Inc., Ramona Landfill, San Diego County, California* (Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003). (Erin Schmitt)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend adoption of the Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 (**Supporting Document 1**).

KEY ISSUES

1. Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 establishes waste discharge requirements (WDRs) for the closure and post-closure maintenance of the Ramona Landfill (Landfill), which includes a site-specific monitoring and reporting program. The Landfill is located in Ramona, which is within San Diego County (**Supporting Document 2**). The Landfill is owned and operated by Ramona Landfill Inc., a subsidiary of Republic Services Inc. (Discharger).
2. Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003, if adopted, will replace Order No. 2000-06, the current WDRs for the Landfill. Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 is consistent with Division 2 of California Code of Regulations title 27 (CCR title 27) and Code of Federal Regulations title 40, part 258 (40 CFR).
3. Tentative Order R9-2026-0003 also establishes:
 - expanded emergency response action reporting requirements.
 - expanded inspection reporting and documentation.
 - protocols for final cover and fill soil imported and used in final cover system repairs.
 - annual site certification report requirements.

PRACTICAL VISION

Chapter 1 of the 2021 San Diego Water Board [Practical Vision](#), *Strategizing for Healthy Waters*, directs San Diego Water Board staff to prioritize outcome-focused work that protect key beneficial uses in key areas. Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 provides technical criteria for the closure and post-closure maintenance, and the long-term

monitoring systems of the Landfill, which are designed to protect human health and the environment. The Board's adoption of Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 is a proactive approach to maintaining high quality waters and protecting the beneficial uses within the Region.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this item is to provide the San Diego Water Board with information to assist in its consideration of Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003. If adopted, Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 will establish design requirements for the final cover system, and post-closure maintenance and monitoring of a 160-acre nonoperational, waste management unit in Ramona, San Diego County. The Landfill was previously owned and operated by the County of San Diego (County) from its inception in 1969 until 1997. Allied Waste Industries, Inc., now Republic Services Inc., acquired the Landfill in 1997.

The Discharger ceased acceptance of waste in June 2009. The Final Closure and Post-Closure Maintenance Plan was submitted on July 26, 2010, and construction of a final cover system was completed in June 2012. The Final Report of Construction Quality Assurance dated April 2012 and amended in July and August 2012, was rejected by the San Diego Water Board due to the presence of waste within vegetative mulch that comprised the top layer of the final cover. Use of contaminated vegetative mulch on the final cover is a violation of (CCR) title 27, section 21090(a)(3)(A)(1)(a).

Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 contains final cover system design requirements allowing the Discharger to: (1) remove the remnants of the contaminated vegetative mulch and the upper one foot of final cover soil layer, (2) import clean soil to rebuild the final cover soil layer, and (3) hydroseed the final cover soil layer to establish the vegetative layer of the final cover system, to formally close the Landfill in compliance with CCR title 27. Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 also includes post-closure maintenance specifications and requirements for groundwater, surface water, and landfill gas monitoring and reporting.

Board staff expanded the reporting requirements in Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 to address instances of noncompliance or damage at the Landfill and established conditional triggers for the Discharger to develop corrective action work plans. The expanded reporting requirements are, in part, a response to climate change. As extreme storm events become normal occurrences, the Landfill is subject to cycles of prolonged drought, punctuated by intense precipitation events. Board staff anticipate these climatic changes may adversely impact the Landfill, especially if the ancillary stormwater management systems are unable to accommodate peak stormwater run-on and run-off. Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003 requires the Discharger to recalculate every five years the maximum anticipated precipitation from a 100-year, 24-hour storm event, using the most current dataset, and if necessary, evaluate the need to expand

the Landfill's stormwater conveyance structures to accommodate peak stormwater run-on and run-off.

Board staff also developed Attachments C and D to Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003, with the intent to efficiently and effectively support the Discharger's future maintenance needs and avoid using limited Staff resources to prepare revised WDRs. Specifically:

- Attachment C provides the Discharger with criteria to determine if a soil is acceptable for use in future final cover system repairs. Attachment C also establishes requirements to ensure that any soil stored on site or used in the final cover system is free of waste and will not constitute a new discharge of waste at the closed Landfill.
- Attachment D provides the Discharger with the criteria to determine what information must be included in an annual site conditions certification report. The criteria is intended to support the Discharger's efforts to regularly inspect the Landfill, to identify areas in need of repair or significant maintenance. The report is also intended to support the Discharger's communication efforts with Board staff, by documenting maintenance activities and corrective actions completed throughout the year at the Landfill.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

The San Diego Water Board received one comment letter (**Supporting Document 3**) during the public written comment period, from the Discharger on February 16, 2026. Board staff prepared written responses to the Discharger's comments (**Supporting Document 4**). Additionally, staff's response to comments document presents additional changes to the Tentative Order identified by staff during the review of the Discharger's comments. These non-substantives changes are made to improve the readability of Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003.

COMPLIANCE RECORD

San Diego Water Board staff issued three staff enforcement letters, one notice of violation, one investigative order, and one cleanup and abatement order for the following violations of Order No. 2000-06:

- Failure to prohibit the use of contaminated green waste on the final cover layer.
- Failure to comply with the reporting requirements.
- Failure to adequately maintain the eastern side slopes.
- Failure to adequately respond to an investigative order issued by the San Diego Water Board.

The Discharger has resolved all of these violations.

Corrective Action Monitoring

The County of San Diego Department of Public Works (County DPW), the former owner and operator of the Landfill, completed a State-mandated Solid Waste Assessment Test (SWAT) investigation in 1992, which confirmed the release of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) to groundwater. The County DPW completed a subsequent site investigation in 1993 to characterize the release through on-site and offsite groundwater sampling to determine the downgradient extent of contaminants in groundwater. The results of the site investigation showed that one domestic supply well was impacted with elevated concentrations of VOCs and chloride. The San Diego Water Board issued Cleanup and Abatement Order No. 97-17 (CAO) to the County DPW in response to the results of the SWAT and site investigation reports. The CAO required development of a corrective action plan to address VOCs in groundwater downgradient of the Landfill. In addition, staff developed a corrective action monitoring program to monitor the concentrations of VOCs in groundwater wells known to be impacted by the earlier release. The Tentative Order includes a corrective action monitoring program to continue these monitoring efforts in conjunction with the requirements of the CAO.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notification of this action was sent to the Discharger and known interested parties on January 15, 2026 (**Supporting Documents 5 and 6**). Additionally, the San Diego Water Board sent a Notice of Public Hearing (**Supporting Document 7**) to the Discharger and known interested parties on April 24, 2026, and posted the agenda for this hearing on May 11, 2026. These actions satisfy the 45-day public notification and comment period requirements of Water Code, division 7, section 13167.5, and CCR title 27, section 21730(b).

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. Tentative Order No. R9-2026-0003
2. Vicinity Map
3. Comment Letter
4. Response to Comments
5. Transmittal Letter
6. Notice of Written Comment Period
7. Notice of Public Hearing