

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

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**TENTATIVE ORDER NO. R9-2026-0001
AMENDING**

ORDER NO. R9-2010-0032

**WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS AND MASTER RECLAMATION PERMIT
FOR THE CITY OF ESCONDIDO HALE AVENUE RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY**

AND

ORDER NO. R9-2023-0131

**WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CITY OF ESCONDIDO
MEMBRANE FILTRATION AND REVERSE OSMOSIS FACILITY,
SAN DIEGO COUNTY**

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region (San Diego Water Board) finds:

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The City of Escondido (Discharger) owns and operates the Hale Avenue Resource Recovery Facility (HARRF). The HARRF treats domestic wastewater to tertiary treatment standards to produce recycled water. The Discharger distributes recycled water produced at the HARRF for non-potable reuse, predominately for industrial uses (e.g., power generation) and landscape irrigation.
- 1.2. The San Diego Water Board adopted Order No. R9-2010-0032, *Waste Discharge Requirements and Master Reclamation Permit for the City of Escondido, Hale Avenue Resource Recovery Facility* (Order No. R9-2010-0032) on July 14, 2010. Order No. R9-2010-0032 established waste discharge requirements (WDRs) for the production and purveyance of tertiary treated recycled water from the HARRF. The water reclamation requirements contained in Order No. R9-2010-0032 are consistent with recommendations provided by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), Division of Drinking Water..
- 1.3. The Discharger owns and operates the Membrane Filtration and Reverse Osmosis Facility which demineralizes tertiary treated recycled water from the HARRF for reuse at commercial agricultural operations.

- 1.4. The San Diego Water Board adopted Order No. R9-2023-0131, *Waste Discharge Requirements for the City of Escondido, Membrane Filtration and Reverse Osmosis Facility, San Diego County* (Order No. R9-2023-0131) on December 13, 2023. Order No. R9-2023-0131 established WDRs for the production and purveyance of demineralized recycled water to irrigate salt-sensitive crops at commercial agricultural operations.
- 1.5. The Discharger submitted a request to the San Diego Water Board on October 3, 2025, to remove the color effluent limitations from Order Nos. R9-2010-0032 and R9-2023-0131. The Discharger included documentation with summaries of effluent and groundwater color concentrations at a recycled water use site. The comparison of data showed no correlation between the effluent color concertation and the resulting groundwater color concertation. The Discharger also submitted results from a chemical dosing study conducted by its chemical provider. The study evaluated dosing strategies to meet the color effluent limitation and concluded the dosing rate needed to meet the limit is economically infeasible.

2. LEGAL AUTHORITIES

- 2.1. Section 13263(e) of the California Water Code (Water Code) provides that the San Diego Water Board may, upon application by any affected person, or on its own motion, review, and revise waste discharge requirements. Water Code section 13167.5(a)(1) requires a 30-day public comment period for waste discharge requirements.
- 2.2. Order Nos. R9-2010-0032 and R9-2023-0131 are not being reopened for any other purpose than the revisions contained below. Except as contradicted or superseded by the findings and directives in this Order, all previous findings and directives of Order Nos. R9-2010-0032 and R9-2023-0131 shall remain in full force and effect.

3. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

- 3.1. The action to adopt this Order is categorically exempt from the requirements of the CEQA (Public Resources Code, division 13, chapter 3, section 21000 et seq.) pursuant to title 14, section 15301 of the California Code of Regulations because it involves permitting existing facilities.
- 3.2. The Discharger as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) certified a final Environmental Impact Report for construction and operation of the HARRF in June 1992. The Discharger's Environmental Impact Report identified limited environmental impacts and no significant impacts to water quality.
- 3.3. The Discharger as the Lead Agency under CEQA issued a Mitigated Negative Declaration for construction and operation of the Membrane Filtration and Reverse Osmosis Facility in 2020. The Discharger's Mitigated Negative

Declaration found that the construction and operation of the Membrane Filtration and Reverse Osmosis Facility would not have a significant effect on the environment with implementation of mitigation measures.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 4.1. The San Diego Water Board notified the Discharger and interested agencies and persons of its intent to adopt this Order and provided them with an opportunity to submit written comments and recommendations. The San Diego Water board also provided an opportunity for the Discharger and interested agencies and persons to submit verbal comments and recommendations at a public hearing.
- 4.2. The San Diego Water Board heard and considered all comments pertaining to the adoption of this Order in a public meeting on February 11, 2026.
- 4.3. Any person aggrieved by this action of the San Diego Water Board may petition the State Water Board to review the action in accordance with Water Code section 13320 and California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 2050 et seq. The State Water Board must receive the petition by 5:00 p.m., 30 days after the adoption date of this Tentative Order. Copies of the law and regulations applicable to filing petitions may be found on the Internet at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality or will be provided upon request. For instructions on how to file a petition for review, see the State Water Board website at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality/wqpetition_instr.shtml

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that, pursuant to Water Code section 13263, Order Nos. R9-2010-0032 and R9-2023-0131 are amended as follows:

1. CHANGES TO ORDER NO. R9-2010-0032

- 1.1. Section IV.A.1: Effluent Limitations, Table 6,¹ is modified as shown below:

Table 6. Effluent Limitations

Constituent	12-Month Average ¹ (milligrams per liter, mg/L or as noted)
Boron (B)	0.75
Odor	N/A
Color	15 units
Fluoride (F)	2.0

¹ Table 6, as shown in this Order, is a limited excerpt from Order No. R9-2010-0032. All other constituents listed but not shown in this Order, remain unchanged in Order No. R9-2010-0032.

- 1.2. Attachment C, section III.A.1: Monitoring Location – Recycled Water Service Table C-2,² is modified as shown below:

Table C-2. Effluent Monitoring RWS-001

Parameter	Units	Sample Type	Minimum Sampling Frequency ^{a,b}
Boron (B)	mg/L	Composite	Quarterly
Color	units	Composite	Quarterly
Fluoride (F)	mg/L	Composite	Quarterly

- 1.3. Attachment D, section IV.A: Effluent Limitations, Table D-5,³ is modified as shown below:

Table D-5. Summary of Effluent Limitations

Constituent	12-Month Average ¹ (mg/L or as noted)
Boron (B)	0.75
Odor	N/A
Color	15 units
Fluoride (F)	2.0

2. CHANGES TO ORDER NO. R9-2023-0131

- 2.1. Section III.B: Discharge Specifications and Effluent Limitations, Table 3,⁴ is modified as shown below:

Table 3. Effluent Limitations at RSW-005

Constituent	Units	Average Annual ¹
Boron	Milligrams per liter (mg/L)	0.75
Chloride	mg/L	100
Color Units	Apparent Color Unit (ACU)	15 units
Fluoride	mg/L	1

- 2.2. Attachment C, section IV.A: Monitoring Requirements, Table C-1,⁵ is modified as shown:

² Table C-2, as shown in this Order, is a limited excerpt from Order No. R9-2010-0032. All other constituents listed but not shown in this Order, remain unchanged in Order No. R9-2010-0032.

³ Table D-5, as shown in this Order, is a limited excerpt from Order No. R9-2010-0032. All other constituents listed but not shown in this Order, remain unchanged in Order No. R9-2010-0032.

⁴ Table 3, as shown in this Order, is a limited excerpt from Order No. R9-2023-0131. All other constituents listed but not shown in this Order, remain unchanged in Order No. R9-2023-0131.

⁵ Table C-1, as shown in this Order, is a limited excerpt from Order No. R9-2023-0131. All other constituents listed but not shown in this Order, remain unchanged in Order No. R9-2023-0131.

Table C-1. Effluent Monitoring at RWS-005

Parameter	Units	Sample Type	Minimum Sampling Frequency
Chloride	mg/L	24-hour composite or grab	Semiannual
Color Units	Apparent Color Unit (ACU)	24-hour composite or grab	Semiannual
Flowrate	Million gallons per day (MGD)	Recorder	Continuous

I, David W. Gibson, Executive Officer, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of an order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region, on March 11, 2026.

TENTATIVE

David W. Gibson, Executive Officer