

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT (Dylan Garner)
MEETING DATE: September 12, 2012

ITEM: 4

SUBJECT: **2012 Dr. Teng-chung Wu Pollution Prevention Awards**—Presentation of Awards to Alameda County for Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance and to Thomas Barron in Recognition of Lifetime Achievements in Pollution Prevention

CHRONOLOGY: September 2007 — Awarded to Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group for dental mercury reduction education and to East Bay Municipal Utility District for collaborative projects with local advocacy groups.
September 2008 — Awarded to City and County of San Francisco for FOG (fats, oil, and grease) to fuel program.
September 2009 — Awarded to Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group for State and regional “No Drugs Down the Drain” campaign.
September 2010 — Awarded to Wastewater Treatment Agencies of Marin County for their collaborative public education program.
September 2011 — Awarded to City of Millbrae Water Pollution Prevention Program for its outstanding outreach.

DISCUSSION: This item is for the presentation of the 2012 Dr. Teng-chung Wu Pollution Prevention Award. This year, we recognize two awards: one to Alameda County for adopting its new Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance and one to Thomas Barron in recognition of his lifelong achievements in pollution prevention.

On July 24, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a first-in-the-nation Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance requiring pharmaceutical companies that sell their products within the county to pay for programs to take back unwanted drugs. The new ordinance has sparked national attention by imposing extended producer responsibility to keep expired and unwanted drugs out of landfills and sanitary sewer systems. No other state or federal law mandates programs to safely collect and dispose of unwanted drugs. Unwanted drugs disposed down the toilet do not get fully treated or removed at wastewater treatment plants, so this groundbreaking means of keeping drugs out of sanitary sewer systems will benefit the Bay’s water quality.

Thomas Barron is an independent environmental consultant and leader in pollution prevention and source control. For nearly 40 years, he has worked closely with government agencies and private businesses to develop and implement new and practical ways to shift to milder products and practices that reduce hazardous materials use and pollutant discharges. His work has resulted in sweeping reductions in pollutant discharges from metal finishing, janitorial and custodial activities, and dental offices. Having prevented more than 800,000 pounds of water pollution, Mr. Barron plans to retire at the end of the year.

The Board established this award in 2007 to honor the legacy of Dr. Teng-chung Wu, who worked for many years at the Board and was a pollution prevention advocate for decades before it became popular. The award recognizes innovation, excellence, effectiveness, and collaboration in pollution prevention. The timing of the award coincides with National Pollution Prevention Week, September 17-23.

RECOMMEND-
ATION:

No action is necessary