

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

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT: Tong Yin and Robert Schlipf
MEETING DATE: March 9, 2022

ITEM: 5

Watershed Collaboration Award - National Association of Clean Water Agencies Recognizes Water Board and Bay Area Clean Water Agencies for Revised Chlorine Effluent Limits

DISCUSSION:

On February 1, 2022, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) bestowed its Watershed Collaboration Award to the Water Board and the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) for our work to revise the chlorine effluent limits in many NPDES permits.

At the November 2020 Board meeting, the Board amended the Basin Plan to establish chlorine water quality objectives and to replace requirements for technology-based total residual chlorine effluent limitations with requirements for water quality-based effluent limitations. By moving from technology-based limits to water quality-based limits, municipal wastewater dischargers will be able to reduce over-application of the sodium bisulfite they use to neutralize total residual chlorine. This change will reduce excess sodium bisulfite discharges and greenhouse gases emissions and save municipal wastewater dischargers about \$1.2 million per year (about 30 percent of the total annual dechlorination chemical cost). In exchange for less restrictive effluent limits, municipal wastewater dischargers agreed to continuously monitoring chlorine at a low detection limit to ensure better process control. This new regulatory approach for regulating chlorine from municipal wastewater dischargers, which allows dischargers to save on operational costs while still protecting water quality, demonstrates the power of collaboration between regulators and the discharger community.

NACWA represents public wastewater and stormwater agencies nationwide and uses its technical resources to advocate on clean water issues. Each year, NACWA recognizes achievements of public agencies in the clean water community through its awards program. We are pleased to receive this recognition. The East Bay Municipal Utility District put forward this nomination, and Eileen White, its Director of Wastewater, will present the award.