

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

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT: **Alessandra Moyer**
MEETING DATE: **October 12, 2022**

ITEM: 3

2022 Dr. Teng-Chung Wu Pollution Prevention Award – Presentation of Award to San Francisco Department of the Environment

DISCUSSION

This item is the presentation of the 2022 Dr. Teng-Chung Wu Pollution Prevention Award to the San Francisco Department of the Environment for its efforts to reduce polyfluoroalkyl and perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the environment. PFAS refers to a large group of human-made “forever” chemicals that are resistant to degradation in the environment and can be toxic to people and aquatic animals.

Since the 1940s, PFAS have been used widely in many industries as water-repellant, oil-repellant, and stain-resistant coatings. PFAS can be found in products such as non-stick cookware, fast-food packaging, water-repellant garments, aerosol sprays, pesticides, chrome, fire-fighting foam, cosmetics, carpet, and upholstery textiles. In the past, PFAS was primarily associated with industrial activity, but now the PFAS in wastewater appears to come mainly from non-industrial sources, such as homes, schools, offices, and restaurants. Because PFAS persist in the environment, they have been found to contaminate air, water, and soil all around the world.

The San Francisco Department of the Environment recognized the need to eliminate the pathways by which PFAS enters the environment and began to work toward this goal in 2015, taking the following actions:

- The Plastics, Toxics, and Litter Reduction Ordinance, enacted in 2020, prohibited PFAS in single-use food service ware. The Department worked with the Biodegradable Products Institute to create a certification system for PFAS-free compostable food service ware. San Francisco’s ordinance paved the way for statewide legislation. AB 1200 and AB 1201, authored by San Francisco Assemblymember Phil Ting, were signed into law in 2021.
- The Department developed the City of San Francisco’s policy of not purchasing carpet and furniture with PFAS-containing stain resistance treatments.
- The Department has collaborated with the San Francisco Fire Department and other agencies to discontinue the use of firefighting foam containing PFAS.
- The Department advocated for legislation requiring disclosure of PFAS-containing products, and the California Legislature passed AB 2247, which will require registration of products containing intentionally added PFAS, on August 30, 2022.
- The Department participated in the development of new Green Screen certifications for PFAS-free food service ware, furniture, and fire-fighting foam.

The Board established the Dr. Teng-Chung Wu Pollution Prevention Award in 2007 to honor the legacy of Dr. Wu, who worked for many years at the Board and was an early and visionary pollution prevention advocate. He believed the best way to keep the Bay clean was to keep pollutants from entering wastewater, rather than constructing expensive treatment works to remove them. The

annual award in his name recognizes innovation, effectiveness, and collaboration in pollution prevention.

APPENDIX

A. Past Pollution Prevention Award Recipients

Appendix A
Past Pollution Prevention Award Recipients

Past Pollution Prevention Award Recipients

Year	Recipient	Achievement
2007	Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group	Mercury reduction education
2007	East Bay Municipal Utility District	Collaboration with local groups
2008	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission	"Fats, Oils, and Grease to Fuel" program
2009	Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group	"No Drugs Down the Drain" campaign
2010	Wastewater Treatment Agencies of Marin County	Collaborative public education program
2011	Millbrae Water Pollution Prevention Program	Outstanding public outreach
2012	Alameda County	Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance
2012	Thomas Barron	Lifetime achievement in pollution prevention
2013	City of Palo Alto	Research and outreach efforts on contaminants of emerging concern
2014	Phil Bobel	Lifetime achievement in pollution prevention
2015	Central Contra Costa Sanitary District	Leading a campaign against flushing disposable wipes
2016	City of San Jose	Innovative outreach campaigns
2017	Melody LaBella and Karin North	Numerous projects to reduce wastewater pollution
2018	Ann Joseph	Promoting integrated pest management in retail
2019	Geoff Brosseau	Reducing stormwater pollution throughout California
2020	City of Berkeley	Single Use Foodware and Litter Reduction Ordinance
2021	California Association of Sanitation Agencies	Advocacy of AB 818: "Do Not Flush" labeling on disposable wipes