

State Water Resources Control Board

EX PARTE DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR PENDING GENERAL ORDERS

The prohibition against ex parte communications no longer applies to general waste discharge requirements (including NPDES permits), general waivers and general Clean Water Act section 401 water quality certifications. A “general order” does not name specific dischargers, but instead allows eligible dischargers to enroll. The following information will help the public comply with the requirement to meet statutory disclosure requirements. For more information, see Water Code section 13287 and http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/laws_regulations/docs/exparte.pdf.

Must I disclose ex parte communications with board members regarding pending general orders?

You must provide written disclosure if you are in one of these categories:

- Potential enrollees (including their representatives or employees)
- Persons with a financial interest (including their representatives or employees). For a definition of “financial interest,” consult the Political Reform Act (Gov. Code, § 87100 et seq.) and implementing regulations (Cal. Code of Regs., tit. 2, § 18700 et seq.), or the Fair Political Practices Commission website (<http://www.fppc.ca.gov/index.php?id=51>)
- Representatives acting on behalf of any formally organized civic, environmental, neighborhood, business, labor, trade, or similar association

What must I disclose?

The attached form lists the information that must be disclosed to document a meeting, telephone call or other conversation. For written communications, a complete copy of the letter or email with all attachments is adequate.

When is the disclosure due?

Water Board staff must receive the disclosure within seven (7) working days after the board member receives the communication (generally, the date of a phone call or meeting with a board member).

Who must receive my disclosure documents?

Unless the board member(s) provided you with a different contact person, please send your materials to: commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov

What will the Water Board do with my disclosure?

The Water Board is required to post the disclosure on its website and to distribute it via any electronic distribution list for the proposed order. There is no requirement to distribute the disclosure to board members or to prepare responses. If you want to submit written comments or evidence on a proposed general order, you must provide the comments or evidence following the procedure and timelines provided in the notice for the board's proceeding.

May other interested persons respond to a disclosure notice?

The Water Code does not require that interested persons be allowed to respond to disclosure notices. Any such responses should be included in formal comments submitted during the order's written comment period, included in oral comments at the hearing, or both.

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS REGARDING PENDING GENERAL ORDERS
DISCLOSURE FORM**

Note: This form is intended to assist the public in providing the disclosure required by law. It is designed to document meetings and phone calls. Written communications may be disclosed by providing a complete copy of the written document, with attachments. Unless the board member(s) provided you with a different contact person, please send your materials to: commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov. Use of this form is not mandatory.

1. Pending General Order that the communication concerned:
2. Name, title and contact information of person completing this form:
Note: Contact information is not mandatory, but will allow the Water Board to assist you if additional information is required. If your contact information includes your personal residence address, personal telephone number or personal email address, please use a separate sheet of paper if you do not want that information posted on our website. However, this information may be provided to members of the public under the Public Records Act.
3. Date of meeting, phone call or other communication:
Time:
Location:
4. Type of communication (written, oral or both):
5. Names of all participants in the communication, including all board members who participated:
6. Name of person(s) who initiated the communication:
7. Describe the communication and the content of the communication. Include a brief list or summary of topics discussed at the meeting, any legal or policy positions advocated at the meeting, any factual matters discussed, and any other disclosure you believe relevant. The Office of Chief Counsel recommends that any persons requesting an ex parte meeting prepare an agenda to make it easier to document the discussion properly. Attach additional pages, if necessary.
8. Attach a copy of handouts, PowerPoint presentations and other materials any person used or distributed at the meeting. If you have electronic copies, please email them to facilitate web posting.

POUs and Cooperatives Priority Edits to the [Utility Wildfire General Order \(UWGO\)](#):

- Reduce number of projects covered by the UWGO. Reducing the total number of projects covered is the primary issue. We're supportive of limiting coverage of poles/towers replacements to in-water work. Many of the other project activities should be narrowed in the same way due to having the same negligible likelihood to discharge to waters or impact water quality.
- Remove tribal consultation from all Category A activities.
- Trigger for coverage for vegetation management: limbing, cutting, trimming, mastication, mowing, crushing, prescribed herbivory, chipping, skidding, mulching, uprooting, and removal of plant materials such as leaves, plants, dead or dying trees, branches, or trunks, that are:
 1. within 50 feet of any waters of the state; **and**
 2. cumulatively results in over 0.50 acre of soil disturbance in locations with slopes equal to or greater than 30% and soils having *erodibility K factor* equal to or greater than 0.2.
- Streamline and narrow data tracking, recordkeeping and reporting; allow for agencies to submit what they have versus requiring a specific template; utilize a realistic timeline for production of documents.
- Remove the requirement for Vegetation Management Offset Plans entirely.
- Defer implementation of the GO for one year after adoption to ensure sufficient time for utilities to fully understand the requirements and make necessary programmatic changes for implementation. Clarify and ensure that the GO applies exclusively to projects initiated by utilities after the implementation date.
- Include language making it clear that Erosion and Sediment Control Plans do not need to be site specific for Category A activities.
- Add a trigger of 0.5 acre of soil disturbance within 500 feet from waters in locations with slope equal to or greater than 30% and soils having erodibility K factory equal to or greater than 0.2 for access route construction, reconstruction, maintenance, or improvements of access routes.
- Clarify and provide implementation tools for when “Urgent Response Activities” would apply, to incorporate ability for utilities to be able to respond to public safety issues, existing regulatory requirements, and add timing flexibility.

- Clarify the definition of urban; consider expanding the applicability of exclusion for urban areas within high fire threat areas via narrow, site-specific considerations (paved roads, storm drains, ephemeral run-off channels, etc.).
- Streamline invoicing and fee payment schedule.
- Remove herbicide application trigger for coverage; Herbicide Application (Section IV. F. 24.d.) is overly restrictive and outside the Board's purview. Cut stump, swabbing, cambial injection, or other non-spray applications can occur outside of the wind restriction.