

State Water Resources Control Board

Date

Correspondence ID: «Mailing»

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EXAMPLE

NOTICE OF GROUNDWATER EXTRACTION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT (SGMA)

You may be required to track your groundwater extractions starting **July 15, 2024**, and to report those extractions to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) by **December 1, 2024**, pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). This notice will help you take steps now so you can most easily meet your extraction reporting responsibilities later.

The Purpose of This Notice

This notice explains new obligations for groundwater well owners in the Tulare Lake Subbasin, which the State Water Board designated as “probationary” under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) on April 16, 2024. Groundwater extractors (people who pump groundwater) within this subbasin are required to track their groundwater extractions starting **July 15, 2024**, and submit annual groundwater extraction reports to the State Water Board by **December 1, 2024**, unless they are *de minimis* extractors. A *de minimis* extractor is a well owner who pumps two acre-feet or less of groundwater per year for domestic purposes only.

Groundwater extractors who pump more than 500 acre-feet per year of groundwater from this subbasin will need to install and use certified flow meters on their wells. The State Water Board may approve alternative approaches for tracking those large extractions. See bit.ly/sgma-tulare-lake for more information.

Background

Groundwater extraction reporting is required in some situations under SGMA. One of these situations is when the State Water Board designates a subbasin as probationary. With few exceptions, anyone who pumps groundwater in a probationary subbasin must track their monthly groundwater extractions, submit reports, and pay fees to the State Water Board each year while the subbasin is in probation or subject to a State Board interim management plan.

Please see the following section to determine if you are exempt from reporting extractions and paying fees. These obligations are separate from any obligations imposed on you by your Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA). If the State Board eventually develops an interim management plan for a probationary subbasin, it may use reported groundwater extraction values to assist in development of the interim plan.

For more information about SGMA and the State Water Board’s role, please visit our SGMA website at <https://waterboards.ca.gov/sgma> or refer to the “Groundwater Pumpers and State Intervention under SGMA FAQ” bit.ly/SGMA-pumper-FAQ.

How to Determine if You Are Exempt from Extraction Reporting Requirements

You are not subject to SGMA reporting requirements if either of these apply to you:

- You do not own any groundwater wells in the Tulare Lake Subbasin.
- You are a *de minimis* extractor, meaning you own one or more groundwater wells in the Tulare Lake Subbasin, *but*:

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | ERIC OPPENHEIMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- all your wells combined pump two acre-feet or less per year; *and*
- you use the water you pump for domestic (household) purposes only.

If you meet either of these exemptions, please visit the Groundwater Extraction Annual Reporting System (GEARS) at gears.waterboards.ca.gov to notify the State Water Board that you are not subject to SGMA reporting requirements. There is no fee to notify the Board that you are exempt; once you notify the Board, you will be removed from the mailing list and will not need to report your exemption in the future. Otherwise, the Board may assume that you are subject to groundwater extraction reporting requirements and fees.

How to Begin Tracking Your Groundwater Extractions

You will need to track your monthly groundwater extraction volumes for reporting to the State Water Board beginning **July 15, 2024**. SGMA requires that extraction volumes be measured by a device or method satisfactory to the State Water Board. Please refer to the document called “Options for Measuring Extraction Volumes,” which describes approaches for measuring extraction volumes: bit.ly/measure-extractions

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you extract **more than 500 acre-feet of groundwater per year** from the Tulare Lake Subbasin, you must use flow meters to measure your extractions **starting July 15, 2024**, with certain exceptions. Visit bit.ly/sgma-tulare-lake today to learn more about this requirement and how to request Board approval of an alternative approach.

How to Submit Your Annual Groundwater Extraction Report and Pay Fees

You will need to submit an annual groundwater extraction report to the State Water Board by **December 1, 2024**, and every year afterwards, until the State Water Board determines that the GSAs for the groundwater subbasin will manage the subbasin sustainably and rescinds the subbasin’s probationary status.

System for Reporting

All groundwater extraction reports must be submitted via the Groundwater Extraction Annual Reporting System (GEARS): gears.waterboards.ca.gov.

You will need a Correspondence ID to create a GEARS account. Your Correspondence ID is: «Mailing».

Required Information

Groundwater extraction reports must include the following information:

- well owner information.
- well location and pumping capacity.
- the year pumping began.
- where the groundwater is being used and the purpose of use.
- monthly groundwater extraction volumes for the previous water year.¹

Please refer to the enclosed “Groundwater Extraction Report Quick Guide,” which provides additional information about reporting groundwater extractions in GEARS.

Extraction Fees

You are required to pay a groundwater extraction fee when submitting a groundwater extraction report with the State Water Board, unless you are exempt, as described above, or unless you receive a fee waiver.

After you file your groundwater extraction report, you will receive a separate invoice in the mail. Fees are due thirty days after the State Water Board mails an invoice, or April 1, whichever is later. The extraction fee includes a base fee, a fee per acre-foot of groundwater extracted, and an automatic late fee if reports are not submitted by the due date. If reports are not submitted on time, the Board may investigate and determine, at your expense, your groundwater extractions and other information required to be reported. You will receive 60 days’ notice and an opportunity to report without penalty.

¹ A “water year” is the 12-month period from October 1st through the following September 30th.

Extraction fees are required annually with each submittal of a groundwater extraction report until the probationary subbasin exits state intervention.

More information regarding the current fee schedule can be found on the State Water Board's website: bit.ly/sgma-reporting.

Fee Category (more than one may apply)	Fee Amount	Applicable Parties
Base Fee	\$300 per well	All non-exempt extractors required to report.
Volumetric Rate	\$20 per acre-foot of groundwater pumped	All non-exempt extractors required to report.
Late Fee	25% of total fee amount per month late	Non-exempt extractors who do not file reports by the due date.

Your Fees May Be Waived (Not Required) Even If You Are Required to Report

The State Water Board may waive fee requirements for you, upon request, pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 1044. Groundwater extractors who meet any of the following criteria may be eligible for a fee waiver:

1. You are an extractor who meets the definition of a low-income resident:
 - a. Your household income is 200 percent or less of the federal poverty level; or
 - b. You are enrolled in a public assistance program.
2. You are a public water system or state small water system serving a disadvantaged community where the primary purpose of providing water is for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes.
3. You are a public school.

To be eligible for a fee waiver, you must submit your annual groundwater extraction report by **December 1, 2024**. Additional fee waiver guidance is forthcoming and will be posted on the State Water Board's website.

If you have questions regarding any of the information in this notice, please contact State Water Board staff by email at sgma@waterboards.ca.gov or by phone at **(916) 322-6508**.

Sign up for SGMA groundwater extraction reporting and fee email reminders and updates at bit.ly/SWRCB-email-subscriptions (under State Water Board General Interests).

Assessor's Parcel Number(s) (APN) this notice is regarding: