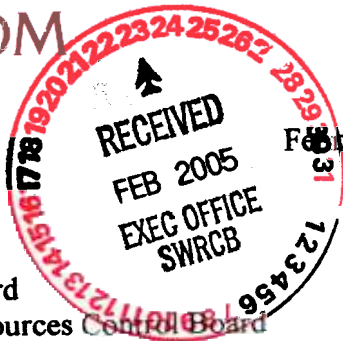




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BIOCOM



February 18, 2005

Ms. Debbie Irvin
Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Subject: Comments on General Industrial Stormwater Permit
Water Quality Order No. 05-XX-DWQ**

Dear Members of the State Water Resources Control Board:

BIOCOM leads the advocacy efforts of the Southern California life science community with more than 460 members including biotechnology and medical device companies, universities, and basic research institutions, and service support firms. California is home to two of the three largest biopharmaceutical companies in the world. As an advocacy organization we are actively engaged in ensuring that the life science industry remains a strong and growing part of the state's economy.

We would like to provide comment on a couple major areas of concern with the draft permit.

The first area of concern is that the 2004 draft permit was prepared such that changes cannot be easily determined. Companies which have expended a great deal of time, resources and employee training or those facilities having invested in capital projects ahead of regulation, will have a costly and difficult transition to the new permit.

The second and major area of concern is with the use of EPA benchmarks. While benchmarks can be a tool to measure BMP effectiveness, they are not a good measure of compliance. Reasons for this include the enormous variability in facility circumstances, the variability in sampling techniques and the variability in storm events and wet seasons year-to-year. There is also no consideration of background levels or offsite pollutant sources that impact onsite discharges and over which the facility has no control. Benchmarks should not be used as numeric limits.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments, and we hope you will consider these issues and the effect these permit changes can have as our life sciences strives to grow and prosper in the State of California.

Sincerely,

Handwritten initials

April Bailey
Director of Government Affairs and Communications