

ITEM: 12

SUBJECT: City of Atwater, Atwater Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (New), Merced County

BOARD ACTION: Consideration of new Waste Discharge Requirements and new NPDES permit (NPDES No. CA0085308)

BACKGROUND: The City of Atwater (City) is constructing the Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (Facility) to replace its existing Atwater Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Facility will provide tertiary treatment with ultraviolet light disinfection for up to 6.0 million gallons per day. Treated wastewater will be discharged to Peck Drain, an extension of Atwater Drain to which the City currently discharges from its existing wastewater treatment plant under Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R5-2007-0063 (NPDES No. CA0079197). Peck/Atwater Drain is hydraulically connected to the San Joaquin River, a water of the United States. The proposed WDRs/NPDES permit for the Facility includes final effluent limitations for 5-day biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), total suspended solids (TSS), BOD and TSS percent removal, pH, copper, lead, zinc, ammonia (as N), electrical conductivity, nitrate plus nitrite (as N), total residual chlorine, total coliform, and acute whole effluent toxicity.

ISSUES: The United States Environmental Protection Agency commented that regulations require effluent limitations for chlorpyrifos and diazinon because there is an applicable total maximum daily load (TMDL) waste load allocation (WLA). However, water quality-based effluent limitations are only necessary when needed to achieve water quality standards established under section 303 of the Clean Water Act. It is very unlikely that chlorpyrifos and diazinon will be detected at concentrations exceeding applicable water quality objectives, as sales of all non-agricultural uses of diazinon were banned on 31 December 2004 and sales of the majority of non-agricultural uses of chlorpyrifos were banned in December 2001. Influent, effluent, and receiving water data collected to date from the Atwater Wastewater Treatment Plant are all non-detect. The proposed WDRs/NPDES permit requires the City to monitor the effluent and receiving water for chlorpyrifos and diazinon and includes a special provision that requires the City to determine if it meets the WLA. The City is required to submit its calculations, analysis, and conclusions in a technical report accompanying its application for renewal of its NPDES permit. Central Valley Water Board staff will review the monitoring data and technical report and will determine whether final effluent limitations are necessary in the next permit to achieve water quality standards. If effluent limitations are deemed necessary, they will be established consistent with the assumptions and requirements of the chlorpyrifos and diazinon waste load allocation for the lower San Joaquin River.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the proposed WDRs/NPDES permit.

Mgmt. Review _____

Legal Review _____

Agenda Date _____

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