

**Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Central Valley Region  
Board Meeting – 2/3 February 2012**

**Response to Written Comments for County of Kern  
Shafter-Wasco Sanitary Landfill  
Kern County  
Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements**

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At a public hearing scheduled for 2/3 February 2012, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) will consider adopting waste discharge requirements that revise the existing waste discharge requirements to provide for construction of new waste management cells with an engineered alternative composite liner system, acceptance of treated wood waste, and to initiate a corrective action plan. This document contains responses to comments received from interested parties regarding the proposed Order circulated on 30 November 2011. Written comments from interested parties were required by public notice to be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board by noon on 30 December 2011 to receive full consideration. Comments were received by the due date from:

1. County of Kern

The comments are summarized below, followed by Central Valley Water Board staff responses.

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**COUNTY OF KERN**

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**COMMENT 1:** Finding No. 2 should be changed to the following:

The 357-acre waste management facility contains one existing waste management unit (Unit) covering approximately 91 acres. The facility is comprised of Assessor's Parcel Numbers 088-100-38, 088-100-40 and 088-100-08.

**RESPONSE:** Finding No. 2 has been modified as requested.

**COMMENT 2:** According to Title 22, Section 67386.11 (b)(3), a landfill that accepts treated wood waste (TWW) shall "...monitor the composite-lined portion of a landfill unit at which TWW has been disposed..." and "When a release is verified, cease discharge of TWW to that landfill unit until corrective action results in cessation of the release." The Shafter-Wasco Landfill is considered one Unit and each module is considered a portion of that Unit. TWW will only be discharged to lined portions of the Unit. KCWMD interprets the regulation such that TWW discharge will cease if a release has been verified from the portion of the landfill Unit which received TWW. There has already been a landfill gas release at the Shafter-Wasco Landfill. Years of monitoring has not indicated a release from the lined Modules 2 and 3. KCWMD requests that the wording of Finding No. 16(c) be modified to read:

Monitor the composite-lined portions of the landfill for a release and, if a verified release is detected from the portion of the Unit where TWW has been disposed, the disposal of TWW will be terminated at the Unit until corrective action ceases the release.

**RESPONSE:** Finding No. 16(c) and Discharge Specification B.5 have been modified as requested.

**COMMENT 3:** Due to changes in groundwater levels in recent years, Finding No. 21 should be modified to read:

The first encountered groundwater, occurring in a perched water-bearing zone, is about 60 to 74 feet below the native ground surface. Groundwater elevations in the perched water-bearing zone range from approximately 227 to 236 feet mean sea level (MSL). The groundwater in the perched water-bearing zone is unconfined. Depth to groundwater in the perched water-bearing zone fluctuates seasonally as much as three feet. In addition, perched groundwater elevations have decreased as much as 10 feet in the last seven years.

**RESPONSE:** Finding No. 21 has been modified as requested.

**COMMENT 4:** Monitoring wells SW1-07 and SW1-13 were omitted from Finding No. 25. Also, four new wells were recently installed at the site to replace wells that had gone dry, SW1-20 through SW1-23. Finding No. 25 should read as follows:

The existing groundwater detection monitoring system consists of 21 monitoring wells. Monitoring wells SW1-02, SW1-03, SW1-11, SW1-12, SW1-16, SW1-20, SW2-01 and SW2-02 are used to collect background water quality data in the perched water-bearing zone. Monitoring wells SW1-01, SW1-04, SW1-07, SW1-08, SW1-09, SW1-10, SW1-13, SW1-14, SW1-18, SW1-19, SW1-21, SW1-22 and SW1-23 are used to collect water quality data in the perched water-bearing zone downgradient of the Unit. Monitoring well SW1-06 is used to monitor the regional unconfined aquifer north of the Unit.

**RESPONSE:** Finding No. 25 has been modified as requested.

**COMMENT 5:** KCWMD submitted an Engineering Feasibility Study (EFS) that concluded that the appropriate corrective action for the landfill release was monitored natural attenuation (MNA) in conjunction with landfill gas extraction. The EFS submittal was followed by the submittal of an Amended Report of Waste

Discharge that specified MNA and landfill gas extraction as corrective action for the landfill. KCWMD believes these two documents constitute a corrective action plan according to Title 27, Section 20425.

**RESPONSE:** The EFS and the Amended Report of Waste Discharge will be reviewed for their content relating to a Corrective Action Plan.

**COMMENT 6:** Finding No. 53 should be changed to read:

The Kern County Board of Supervisors certified the final environmental impact report...

**RESPONSE:** Finding No. 53 has been modified as requested.

**COMMENT 7:** The one-week notification required prior to routine repair operations such as pulling a pump to clean a check valve, lowering a pump due to declining water levels, or repairing a leaking line reduces efficiency and can result in a special trip to a site to complete a task that could have easily been accomplished during the scheduled monitoring activities. During these difficult economic times we especially need to be as efficient as possible. Therefore, KCWMD believes Detection Monitoring Specification E.1 should read:

The Discharger shall provide the Central Valley Water Board staff a minimum of one week notification prior to commencing any field activities related to the installation or abandonment of monitoring devices...

**RESPONSE:** Detection Monitoring Specification E.1 has been modified as requested.

**COMMENT 8:** Provision G.11 does not take into consideration that changes in Title 27 no longer require financial assurance costs for corrective action be determined by the "Water Release Corrective Action Estimate Requirements," per Section 20380. The new requirements must include the provisions of Section 22101 (b), which detail the preparation of "Non-Water Release Corrective Action Estimate." The greater amount of the two methods shall be used as the new financial assurance costs per Section 22221 and is subject to LEA, CalRecycle and RWQCB for review and approval.

**RESPONSE:** Section 20380(b) of Title 27 requires the inclusion of a provision in WDRs that requires the Discharger to "...obtain and maintain assurances of financial responsibility for initiating and completing corrective action for all known or reasonably foreseeable releases from the Unit." Since Section 20380 and the WDRs require financial assurance for all foreseeable releases, compliance

with Section 22101 will result in compliance with Section 20380 and the WDRs. Provision G.11 has not been changed.

**COMMENT 9:** KCWMD would like to change the due date for the annual reviews of financial assurance for corrective action and for closure and post-closure maintenance to April 30 of each year, since that is the date currently being used.

**RESPONSE:** Provisions G.12 and G.14 have been modified as requested.

**COMMENT 10:** KCWMD believes Provision G.13 should be consistent with Section 21865 of Title 27 and should therefore be worded as follows:

The Discharger shall update the preliminary closure and post-closure maintenance plan any time there is a change that will increase the amount of the closure and post-closure maintenance cost estimate or as required in Title 27, Section 21865.

**RESPONSE:** Provision G.13 has been modified as requested.