



Tri-TAC

Jointly Sponsored by:
League of California Cities
California Association of Sanitation Agencies
California Water Environment Association

February 28, 2012

Reply to: 500 Capitol Mall, Suite 1000
Sacramento, CA 95814
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Via Electronic Mail

Charles R. Hoppin, Chair and Members
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento CA 95814
commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov

SUBJECT: Comment Letter—Pesticide Prohibition Basin Plan Amendment

Dear Chairman Hoppin and Members of the Board:

The California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) and Tri-TAC appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the Lahontan Region to replace the pesticide water quality objective with a region-wide waste discharge prohibition with exemption criteria. CASA and Tri-TAC are statewide organizations comprised of members from public agencies and other professionals responsible for wastewater treatment. Tri-TAC is sponsored jointly by CASA, the California Water Environment Association, and the League of California Cities. The constituency base for CASA and Tri-TAC collects, treats and reclaims more than two billion gallons of wastewater each day and serves most of the sewered population of California.

Our associations were not aware of the proposed Basin Plan amendment during the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) process and therefore, did not previously provide comments on the proposed amendment. In general, we do not object to what appears to be the purpose of the amendment, which is to provide an exemption to the prohibition on the discharge of aquatic pesticides, which are applied by spraying, either by ground or aerial application to control adult mosquitoes. However, we are concerned that the new discharge prohibition will adversely affect publicly-owned treatment works (POTWs) which may discharge trace amounts of pesticides.

Charles R. Hoppin, Chair and Members

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Pesticides may enter sewers from several different pathways, including bathing of pets and rinsing of household surfaces where pesticides have been applied. Not all pesticides are removed by traditional treatment processes, and in these cases, a POTW's effluent may contain detectable concentrations of pesticides. POTWs do not have the authority to restrict consumer use of pesticides, and cannot effectively police their proper disposal and handling.

We therefore request that the Basin Plan amendment be revised to include an exemption for trace amounts of pesticides discharged in a POTW's effluent. Such an exemption could be contingent upon routine monitoring for acute and chronic toxicity in the POTW's effluent, to ensure that waters discharged do not contain pesticides in toxic amounts, in conjunction with a narrative effluent limit to meet the Basin Plan's toxicity requirement that "[a]ll waters shall be maintained free of toxic substances in concentrations that are toxic to, or that produce detrimental physiological responses in human, plant, animal, or aquatic life."

We believe such a change could be made as a technical correction by the Regional Water Board Executive Officer prior to adoption of the amendment.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Roberta L. Larson
Director, Legal and Regulatory Affairs
CASA



Terrie Mitchell
Chair
Tri-TAC

RLL:TM:mb