



Bay Area Clean Water Agencies

A Joint Powers Public Agency

Leading the Way to Protect Our Bay

BACWA BULLETIN

March 2006

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BACWA Executive Board Meetings

Every fourth Thursday from 9 – 12pm. You are welcome to attend.

The agenda and information packet are available at on the [website](#), under the



New and Revised Mercury TMDL Out Soon

The Regional Water Board will notice a revised Mercury Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Basin Plan Amendment by the end of March for a June 14, 2006 public hearing. The TMDL has been revised to conform to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) remand of September 2005.

Key Facts:

- The TMDL that was adopted by the Regional Water Board in September 2004 had a pooled wasteload allocation of 17kg/yr for municipal wastewater. The new TMDL will likely require a 20 percent reduction to the 17kg/yr over 10 years and a 40 percent reduction to the 17kg/yr over 20 years.
- Treatment plants with less than or equal to 0.1 kg/yr of mercury in their effluent, based on the analysis completed for the 2004 TMDL, will not be required to realize additional reductions.
- Advanced treatment facilities will not be required to reduce loading beyond 20 percent over 10 years.

BACWA's Testimony to the Regional Water Board

(BACWA Executive Director,
March 8th, 2006)

- Clean water agencies consider NPDES permits to be a contract and responsibility.
- BACWA member agencies will not accept permits that they cannot meet or are inconsistent with the CWA, the SIP and the Basin Plans.
- Tools such as reasonable potential analyses and compliance schedules are allowed per the CWA and the SIP.
- BACWA members want to make sure our ability to apply these tools is not ignored or eroded.

These reductions will be implemented through aggressive pollution prevention that includes:

- A requirement to implement a dental amalgam control program over the next five years.
- A mercury trading program that provides credits for addressing other sources of mercury in order to meet the 40 percent reduction over 20 years.

Investment in advanced treatment will not be required to reach the 40 percent reduction. The TMDL will be reviewed midway in the schedule to determine if the 40 percent reductions are achievable through these measures.

Municipal Mass Limit is a Pooled Limit

The Regional Water Board proposes a single mass limit for municipal wastewater, or a pooled limit. Triggers for each individual treatment plant are proposed as both concentration and mass based. If individual treatment plants exceed either trigger, studies will be required to determine why and how improvements can be made. Enforcement will result only if the pooled allocation is exceeded, and will focus on the individual facilities that exceeded their mass and or concentration triggers.

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Methyl Mercury Effluent Monitoring will be Required

Effluent monitoring of methyl mercury for publicly owned treatment works (POTWs) is required by the SWRCB Resolution, which remanded the Mercury TMDL back to the Regional Water Board. The Regional Water Board now proposes to issue a section 13267 letter, which will require that for a one year period:

- Treatment plants with an ADF of 5 mgd monitor monthly
- Treatment plants with an ADF of < 5 mgd monitor quarterly
- Intermittent or seasonal dischargers will collect samples during those months when the

discharge occur.

The 13267 letter will require instantaneous grab samples, downstream of the last connection through which effluent can be sent to an outfall. A report that includes the monitoring results will be required for submission to the Regional Water Board by July 31, 2007.

Although there is no water quality or effluent standard for methyl mercury, the mercury TMDL requires that municipal wastewater conduct or cause to be conducted studies to understand the fate, transport and biological uptake of mercury. BACWA is participating with the Water Environment Research Foundation on a cooperative study entitled Estimation of Bioavailable Mercury from Wastewater Treatment Plants in Receiving Waters. The methyl mercury effluent data will be important for this study.

After the 13267 letter is issued, the BACWA Lab Committee will work with BACWA member agencies to assist in the implementation of monitoring requirements. BACWA expects the 13267 letter will be issued by the Regional Water Board Executive Officer in April.

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Water Board Adopts Aggressive Schedule for Permit Renewals

Under pressure from the EPA Region 9, the Regional Water Board has adopted an aggressive schedule to re-issue as many as 35 NPDES permits between March and December 2006. The aggressive schedule continues into 2007, until all NPDES permits are current.

To meet this schedule, the Regional Board will use an EPA contractor, Tetra Tech, to review data and prepare reasonable potential analyses and effluent requirements per the SIP. The BACWA Permit Committee, which meets monthly, will be watching these permit re-issuances. The Permit Committee and the Lab Committee will hold a workshop in June for BACWA members to help you get prepared. Watch for the announcement.

To see when your facility is scheduled, refer to the

DID YOU KNOW?

At the March Meeting of the Regional Water Board **five BACWA Member agencies were recognized as leaders in Pollution Prevention** — the San Francisco PUC, the City of Palo Alto, the City of San Leandro, and the Mt. View Sanitary District in cooperation with the Delta Diablo Sanitation District.

[BACWA website](#) under the Permit Committee page or the [Regional Water Board website](#). To be prepared for your permit renewal, BACWA recommends that you:

- **Review your permit application** and make sure that you have the most current monitoring data available.
- **Be prepared to complete review of administrative draft** within one week of receipt. The Regional Water Board staff has stated that because of this aggressive schedule they will not allow more time for review.

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