



Dairy CARES Report

June 2007

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Central Valley dairy producers should receive mailing on new dairy water quality rules within days

It has been almost two months since the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (on May 3) adopted historic new water quality regulations for existing dairies. However, dairies are not covered under the regulations until dairy producers are actually notified. That could happen within a few days.

Regional Board staff have said that they expect to send out, via certified mail, the complete General Order Waste Discharge Requirements for Existing Milk Cow Dairies sometime during the week of June 25. The mailing will be sent to about 1,600 dairy producers in the Central Valley. The entire order is more than 120 pages in length, so the mailing itself is a massive undertaking. Reading it is another story entirely.

As producers receive the rules, here are a few things to remember.

- **Keep a copy of the General Order on site where you can find it and make sure you and any staff involved in management of the dairy know where to find it and are familiar with the contents.**
- **Not everything is required immediately.** The first significant reporting deadline is December 2007, and many of the requirements are phased in over the next several years.
- **Help is on the way.** The California Dairy Quality Assurance Program is planning a series of free producer workshops this fall to assist dairy producers in meeting the initial deadline; the classes will also inform participants about what comes next. Most producers will be able to complete and turn in their initial paperwork right at the workshop. CARES member organizations will be assisting with this effort.
- **What should producers be doing now?** CARES has prepared a brief summary of actions dairy producers should be doing nearly immediately upon receiving the order (see the list below). We have provided this list to CARES coalition member organizations to assist dairy producers further.

Immediate actions

- Notify the Regional Board on any change in ownership or if you plan to close or make changes to the dairy.
- Note and follow the requirements in the order for disposal of dead animals (no on-site disposal)
- Begin using the manure manifest to track the solid and liquid material that is being taken off the dairy

- Conduct monthly inspections of the waste storage areas during the period June through September and keep a written record noting when the inspections were done, by whom and any important conditions observed
- Maintain at least two feet of freeboard in any aboveground retention pond and at least one foot in any belowground retention pond. Take a monthly photo of the pond freeboard and store in a place where it can be retrieved easily.
- Conduct daily inspections of the land application areas when process waste water is being applied. Keep a written record noting when the inspections were done, by whom and any important conditions observed
- Make sure that the waste management and storage areas are not causing a vector (flies, mosquitoes and other pests) problem.
- Set aside a records storage area for all records of inspections, sampling and other requests for records management on-site.
- Notify the Regional Board if you plan to construct a new settling, storage, or retention pond or reconstruct an existing pond.
- Report noncompliance events (such as a spill or flooding event) as described in "Priority Reporting of Significant Events" in the Monitoring and Reporting Program

Other actions

- Conduct weekly inspections of the waste storage areas during the period October through April. Keep a written record noting when the inspections were done, by whom and any important conditions observed.
- Monitor all tailwater and stormwater discharges and any overflows to surface waters as described in "Monitoring of Surface Runoff" in the Monitoring and Reporting Program (more information on this will be provided in CDQAP classes this fall).
- By November 3, 2007, operators must sample all domestic and agricultural wells and tile drains on the dairy facility as described in "Groundwater Monitoring" in the Monitoring and Reporting Program.
- By December 31, 2007, all operators must prepare and submit the Existing Conditions Report (Done in cooperation with CDQAP Training Classes)
- Also by December 31, 2007, operators must develop a written agreement with all land owners that are receiving process wastewater from the dairy facility.

These requirements will also be summarized in the mailing to dairy producers from the Regional Board. Dairy producers with questions should contact the Regional Board staff, their trade association or the University of California Cooperative Extension for further information.

CARES is a statewide coalition supporting economic and environmental sustainability for California's dairy industry. CARES members include the Alliance of Western Milk Producers, Bank of the West, California Dairies Inc., California Dairy Campaign, Crystal Cream & Butter, Dairy Farmers of America-California, Dairy Institute of California, Hilmar Cheese Co., Joseph Gallo Farms, Land O' Lakes, Milk Producers Council, Saputo Cheese, Turlock Dairy & Refrigeration, Western United Dairywomen, and others. For information about CARES, visit our web site at www.dairycares.com, write dairycares@aol.com or call 916-441-3318.