



City of Beaumont

April 21, 2009

Honorable Marion Ashley
Fifth District Supervisor
Riverside County Board of Supervisors
4080 Lemon Street, Fifth Floor
P.O. Box 1645
Riverside, California 92501

RE: Riverside County Ordinance No. 864.2, Prohibiting the Installation of Specific Septic Tank Systems in the Cherry Valley

Dear Supervisor Ashley:

It has come to the Council's attention that the Groundwater Quality Evaluation Committee for the Beaumont Cherry Valley Area (Committee) is in the process of finalizing recommendations to you regarding the water quality concerns in the Cherry Valley Community of Interest. One of the recommendations being considered by the Committee is to repeal Ordinance 871, which established a prohibition for conventional septic system use in Cherry Valley. The Council strongly believes that no credible and scientifically based information has been presented to the Committee that contradicts the findings that necessitated the prohibition. We have been advised that there are no new investigations underway or planned to address the cumulative groundwater quality impacts from the proliferation of septic tanks in Cherry Valley.

The Beaumont Basin is the key local water supply for Cherry Valley and the four cities of Beaumont, Banning, Calimesa and Yucaipa. The septic tank systems in Cherry Valley, many located on small lots or serving densely populated mobile home parks, have contaminated the groundwater upgradient of the Beaumont Basin so badly that the Bonita Vista and Cherry Valley Mutual Water Companies had to abandon their wells and their customers were forced to connect to the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District. Thousands of septic tanks in Cherry Valley discharge human waste, including nitrates, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals into the forebay of the Beaumont Basin and are polluting the very water supply that Cherry Valley and the four cities depend on. The best scientific evidence to date indicates that the continued use and proliferation of conventional septic tanks will contaminate our drinking water supply and render parts of the basin unusable, increase the cost of water service and reduce water supply reliability.

Therefore, the Council recommends further scientific study of the cumulative impacts of septic systems in Cherry Valley on the Beaumont Basin and invites Riverside County to participate

with the City of Beaumont, the San Timoteo Watershed Management Authority and the State Regional Water Quality Control Board in this effort before considering the repeal or amendment of Ordinance No. 864.2.

Very truly yours;
CITY OF BEAUMONT

Je Fox, Mayor

Cc: Jerry Thiebolt, Regional Water Quality Control Board
✓ Andy Schlange, San Timoteo Watershed Management Authority
Mayor, City of Calimesa
Mayor, City of Banning
President, Yucaipa Valley Water District
President, Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District
Supervisor Jeff Stone
Supervisor Roy Wilson
Supervisor Bob Buster
Supervisor John Tavaglione