



# California Regional Water Quality Control Board

## Santa Ana Region



**Linda S. Adams**  
*Secretary for  
Environmental Protection*

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**Arnold Schwarzenegger**  
*Governor*

June 9, 2008

Mr. Chuck Butcher  
General Manager  
Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District  
560 Magnolia Avenue  
Beaumont, CA 92223-2258

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING WATER QUALITY MODELING ANALYSIS FOR BEAUMONT GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ZONE**

Dear Mr. Butcher:

Regional Board staff continue to be very concerned with the impacts of on-site waste disposal systems (septic systems) in the Cherry Valley Community of Interest (Cherry Valley) on groundwater quality in the Beaumont Groundwater Management Zone (Beaumont Basin). My staff reviewed a draft report prepared by Wildermuth Environmental Inc. (WEI), entitled "Water Quality Impacts from On-Site Waste Disposal Systems in the Cherry Valley Community of Interest, July 2006". In October 2006, my staff and Kristal Davis from WEI presented the WEI findings to the Regional Board. The Regional Board directed staff to continue to work with your agency and the County of Riverside to evaluate and address septic systems in Cherry Valley. Since that time, my staff has worked closely with the Riverside County Environmental Health staff, providing technical support and assistance. With our support, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors issued Ordinance No. 864, establishing a 90 day moratorium on the installation of septic systems unless the systems are designed to remove at least fifty percent (50%) of the nitrogen in the wastewater. Ordinance No. 864.1 extended the moratorium for an additional 120 days. Ordinance 871, approved by the Board of Supervisors on July 31, 2007, revised the moratorium to a non-expiring prohibition of conventional septic systems:

I understand that WEI is conducting modeling analysis of the impacts of septic systems in the Beaumont Basin. Early last year, Wen-bin Wang from WEI presented preliminary results of the modeling analysis to me and other Board staff. We note that two graphs from the modeling results are included in the final report entitled "Water Quality Impacts from On-Site Waste Disposal Systems in the Cherry Valley Community of Interest, March 2007." These two graphs show the projected extent of the nitrate plume in the Beaumont Basin in 2030 and 2100, assuming that all 7800 parcels in Cherry Valley area are developed with conventional septic systems. Currently, 1900 parcels in Cherry Valley have been developed. Since the County of Riverside has prohibited the use of conventional septic systems, the model should be re-run to simulate the nitrate concentrations in the Beaumont Basin

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assuming that all future developments have installed advanced septic systems with a nitrogen removal rate of at least fifty percent (50%), per the County ordinance. Modeling of this scenario will allow us to understand the impact of the existing conventional and new, advanced septic systems on groundwater quality. The extent of the benefits of the advanced systems can be evaluated by comparison with the model results reported in the March 2007 WEI report. We believe that it is important to verify that the Riverside County Prohibition and reliance on advanced septic systems will be protective of the quality in the Beaumont Basin. If the model analysis indicates that the prohibition is not protective, Regional Board staff would consider proposing additional actions to prevent the increase of nitrate in the Beaumont Basin. We ask that this modeling be completed within the next 3 months and request that you keep us apprised of the District's commitment to conduct the additional analyses (presumably through WEI) and of progress in the analytical effort.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call at (951)782-3284 or you may contact Cindy Li at (951)782-4906.

Sincerely,



Gerard J. Thibeault  
Executive Officer

cc: Mark Wildermuth, WEI, [mwildermuth@wildermuthenvironmental.com](mailto:mwildermuth@wildermuthenvironmental.com)

