

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD  
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY  
JULY 19, 2006**

## ITEM 11

### SUBJECT

DRAFT STATEWIDE GENERAL NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES) PERMIT FOR DISCHARGES FROM UTILITY VAULTS AND UNDERGROUND STRUCTURES TO SURFACE WATERS (UTILITY VAULT PERMIT)

### DISCUSSION

On September 22, 1989, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Region 9 approved California's program to issue general NPDES permits (General Permits) for discharges of waste to surface waters. On July 19, 2001, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) adopted Water Quality Order No. 2001-11-DWQ for the reissuance of a general [NPDES permit \(CAG990002\)](#). This General Permit covers short-term and intermittent discharges from the de-watering of utility vaults and underground structures to surface waters. The State Water Board is proposing to renew the statewide General Permit for discharges from utility vaults and underground structures.

New dischargers wanting to obtain coverage under this General Permit will be required to submit:

- a Notice of Intent (NOI),
- a project map,
- an annual fee of \$1,000 plus an 18.5 percent surcharge (subject to change according to the California Water Code), and
- a Pollution Prevention Plan (PLAN) that meets the requirements of section VII.C.E. of the General Permit.

A discharger must submit an NOI detailing its utility vault discharges that occur within the boundary of a Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board). If a discharger has discharges occurring within more than one Regional Water Board boundary, an NOI must be submitted for each Regional Water Board. Regardless of how many regions are impacted, only one annual fee must be submitted to the State Water Board.

Existing dischargers who are authorized to discharge under the expiring General Permit will continue to be covered by that permit until the new General Permit becomes effective. Existing dischargers are not required to send an annual fee with the NOI because they will continue to receive their annual billing.

### POLICY ISSUE

Should the State Water Board adopt the proposed Water Quality Order No. 2006-XXXX-DWQ for the renewal of the general NPDES permit (CAG990002) for discharges from utility vaults and underground structures to surface waters?

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Funding for the State and Regional Water Boards to carry out activities related to this General Permit will be provided from annual fees obtained from each discharger with coverage under this General Permit. Staff work resulting from the approval of this action can be accomplished with these annual fees.

**REGIONAL WATER BOARD IMPACT**

The Regional Water Boards have been administering this General Permit since 1996. Adoption of this General Permit may increase their current workload because the permit requires that the Regional Water Board Executive Officers, or Regional Water Boards after a hearing, if requested, approve the PLANs.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the State Water Board adopt the proposed Water Quality Order No. 2006-XXXX-DWQ for the General NPDES Permit (CAG990002) for discharges from utility vaults and underground structures to surface waters.