

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

**STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2004**

Prepared on November 24, 2003

**ITEM: 28**

**SUBJECT: Rescission of Waste Discharge Requirements (Order No. R3-2002-0015)  
for San Luis Obispo County Farm Supply Company Paso Robles, San Luis  
Obispo County**

**KEY INFORMATION**

Discharger: ..... San Luis Obispo County Farm Supply Company  
Location: ..... 999, 1004, 1005, 1044, 1048, 1108, 1124, 1144, and 1148 Paso Robles Street, Paso Robles  
Discharge Type: ..... Fertilizer contaminated rinse water and accidental fertilizer spills  
Discharge Volume: ... 7 gallons per day  
Treatment Method: ... None (Rinse water is collected in a sump and stored in an aboveground storage tank)  
Disposal Method: ..... Given to employee as a premium and applied by employee to agricultural crops  
Existing Order: ..... Order No. R3-2002-0015 (Waste Discharge Requirements)

**SUMMARY**

The Regional Board adopted Order No. R3-2002-0015 (Waste Discharge Requirements) to regulate a retail business's bulk handling of dry and liquid fertilizers. Since that time, the discharger removed the bulk liquid fertilizer storage tank and sold the portion of the property where the liquid fertilizer tank resided. Since the bulk liquid fertilizer storage facility no longer exists and the Regional Board normally waives waste discharge requirements for dry bulk fertilizer operations, staff proposes rescission of Order No. R3-2002-0015. and waiver of waste discharge requirements for the fertilizer operations.

facility is bounded on the north and south by commercial and industrial facilities, on the west by Highway 101, and on the east by Salinas River.

The Discharger sells farming and agricultural goods, including bulk dry fertilizer. The dry fertilizer silos are at the 1108 address. Prior to November 2002, the Discharger also sold bulk liquid fertilizer. The Discharger dismantled the liquid fertilizer tank farm in February 2003 and traded away that property in September 2003. The former liquid fertilizer tank farm was at the 1005 address.

**DISCUSSION**

**The Business**

The San Luis Obispo County Farm Supply Company (hereafter Discharger) resides at 999, 1004, 1044, 1048, 1108, 1124, 1144, and 1148 Paso Robles Street in Paso Robles (for a map, see Attachment "A" of Order No. R3-2002-0015). The

The Discharger sells and delivers bulk fertilizer to customers' fields. Whenever possible, Delivery tank truck rinsing occurs in the field. The few tank trucks not field-rinsed get rinsed at the Discharger's loading pad. The rinse water flows to a sump, and then gets pumped into an aboveground storage tank. The discharger employs Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize unplanned fertilizer releases. BMPs consist of

- ◆ Sweeping dry fertilizer spills at the end of day or when rain is imminent;

- ◆ Use of discharge chutes for the dry fertilizer silos to minimize wind-blown dry fertilizer during loading of transport trailers;
- ◆ Pumping rinse water sumps at the end of day or sooner when full or rain is imminent; keeping operational paved areas free from cracks and surface deterioration; and
- ◆ Use of an impermeable loading pad to contain rinse water and accidental spills.

The former liquid fertilizer tank farm consisted of liquid fertilizer storage tanks inside a concrete secondary containment structure. Tank trucks were loaded, unloaded, and occasionally rinsed over a concrete loading pad equipped with a concrete collection sump. Sump liquids were pumped to a storage tank at the end of day. Periodically, an employee hauled rinse water to his ranch for agricultural application.

## REGULATORY AND COMPLIANCE HISTORIES

A concerned citizen first informed Board staff of the facility on November 3, 1997. Board staff inspected the facility on December 4, 1997, and noted several areas of spilled dry fertilizer. Board staff requested cleanup of the dry fertilizer spills. On December 8, 1997 Board staff requested a report of waste discharge (ROWD). The Discharger submitted a complete ROWD on January 28, 1998, and made a commitment to implement the following Operation Plan:

1. Pave the loading and unloading areas of fertilizer products.
2. Immediately sweep and clean up spilled fertilizer when rain is imminent or ground is wet.
3. Install and maintain discharge chutes on the overhead fertilizer silos.
4. Sweep and clean the fertilizer loading and unloading areas on a daily basis.
5. Implement best management practices to prevent chemical or fertilizer spills.
6. Maintain paved areas free of cracks with regular annual maintenance, or as needed.

Based on facility improvements and BMP implementation, Regional Board staff recommended waiving waste discharge requirements for the facility. On April 30, 1998, the Regional Board waived waste discharge requirements for the facility.

On August 9, 2000, in response to an anonymous tip that the Discharger stored and sold liquid fertilizer, staff inspected the facility again. The inspection found the Discharger operating a liquid fertilizer tank farm not equipped with impermeable secondary containment and without an impermeable loading and unloading pad. Staff observed soil staining underneath hose couplings, an indication of liquid fertilizer leaks and accidental spills. Staff directed the Discharger to excavate the nitrate-contaminated soil and install an impermeable secondary containment structure and a loading pad for the tank farm. Staff's inspection on August 9, 2001, confirmed the completion of a liquid fertilizer tank farm with concrete secondary containment and a concrete loading and unloading pad. Since the Discharger stored and sold bulk dry and liquid fertilizers, there was a potential for water and soil contamination from accidental spills and improper rinse water handling. On August 15, 2001, Board staff requested the Discharger to submit another ROWD for the facility. The Discharger complied and the Regional Board adopted Order No. R3-2002-0015 to establish waste discharge requirements for bulk handling of dry and liquid fertilizers.

Since the Regional Board adopted Order No. R3-2002-0015, the Discharger has been in substantial compliance. Subsequent to adoption of Order No. R3-2002-0015 the Discharger removed the bulk liquid fertilizer storage facility (as mentioned previously).

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMARY

Waste discharge requirements for existing facilities are exempt from provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resource Code, Section 21100 et seq.) in accordance with Section 15301, Chapter 3, Title 14 of the California Administrative Code.

## COMMENTS

By a December 12, 2003 letter, the following parties were notified of staff's recommendation to rescind Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. R3-2002-0015:

San Luis Obispo Farm Supply Company  
(Discharger)  
Gomer Family Trust (Land Owner)  
Paul Smith (Land Owner)  
State Water Resources Control Board  
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary  
Monterey County Water Resources Agency  
City of Paso Robles Public Works Department  
San Luis Obispo County Environmental Health  
Adjacent and neighboring property owners within  
300 feet of the facility

We received no comments.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Since the bulk liquid storage facility no longer exists, the Discharger continues to implement the previously mentioned Operation Plan, and the Regional Board normally waives a report of waste discharge for dry bulk fertilizer operations, staff proposes rescission of Order No. R3-2002-0015 and a waiver pursuant to California Water Code Section 13269.

### **ATTACHMENT**

1. Order No. R3-2002-0015.

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File: San Luis Obispo County Farm Supply Company  
Task: 121-1