

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

**STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2005**

Prepared on September 12, 2005

**ITEM NUMBER: 9**

**SUBJECT: Resolution No. R3-2005-0118, Supporting Monterey County Water Resources Agency's use of Cleanup and Abatement Account Funds to Determine a Source of MTBE in Salinas Water Supply Wells**

**DISCUSSION**

As reported to the Central Coast Water Board (Water Board) in past agenda items, three water supply wells serving the City of Salinas have detected methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE) at concentrations up to 400 micrograms per liter (ug/L). Water Board staff has investigated or directed investigations at permitted gasoline storage facilities and leaking underground storage tank sited within ½ mile of the wells, and has partnered with the Monterey County Environmental Health Department and the Monterey County Water Resources Agency to identify a responsible party. We have not been able to find the source of MTBE or the parties responsible for impacts to the water supply wells. A focused subsurface investigation is needed to characterize the nature and extent of MTBE in groundwater and to identify the responsible party or parties.

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Division 7 of the California Water Code) Sections 13440-13443 created the Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA), funded with moneys received from court judgments and assessment of administrative civil liabilities. Water Board staff proposes that CAA money be used to perform a subsurface investigation to identify a party responsible for the MTBE release. With the assistance of Water Board staff, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency is applying to the CAA for funding to perform a subsurface investigation.

Conceptually, the investigation will start near the impacted water supply wells and groundwater samples will be collected from different depths (to approximately 500 feet) to characterize the nature and extent of the contamination and identify a source. The investigation will result in a report with a compilation of MTBE concentrations at different depths and geological cross sections, and identification of a source or sources of MTBE. Water Board staff will use this information to identify a responsible party and to direct cleanup of groundwater and recover CAA funds. It is estimated that \$500,000 is needed to adequately conduct the investigation. State Water Resources Control Board policy requests a Water Board resolution concurring with the Monterey County Water Resources Agency's application for the CAA funds.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt Resolution No. R3-2005-0118, supporting use of cleanup and abatement account funds by Monterey County Water Resources Agency to conduct a subsurface investigation to find the source or sources of MTBE impacting three water supply wells in Salinas.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Resolution No. R3-2005-0118.