



# California Regional Water Quality Control Board

## Los Angeles Region




Linda S. Adams  
Cal/EPA Secretary

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Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

**TO:** Interested Persons

**FROM:** Renee A. Purdy   
Chief, Regional Programs

**DATE:** April 22, 2010

**SUBJECT:** NOTICE OF JULY 8-9, 2010 BOARD HEARING ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE BASIN PLAN TO UPDATE THE BACTERIA OBJECTIVES BY REMOVING THE FECAL COLIFORM OBJECTIVES FOR FRESHWATERS DESIGNATED FOR WATER CONTACT RECREATION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region (Regional Board) will hold a public hearing on the proposed basin plan amendment to update the bacteria objectives by removing the fecal coliform objectives for freshwaters designated for water contact recreation. The goal in updating the Region's fresh water bacteria objectives is to maintain consistency with EPA's recommendation pursuant to Federal Clean Water Act §304(a) that *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) replace fecal coliform as an indicator of the presence of pathogens in fresh water, and to remove unnecessary regulatory and monitoring requirements that arise from having water quality objectives for both indicators. The Notice of Filing, Staff Report, CEQA analysis, tentative Board Resolution and proposed Basin Plan language are available on the website of the Regional Board at:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/water\\_issues/programs/basin\\_plan/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/index.shtml).

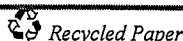
***The Public Hearing will be held on Thursday July 8, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. and  
Friday July 9, 2010 at 8 a.m.***

***at the Ventura County Government Center, Hall of Administration  
800 S. Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009***

***Please note 8:00 a.m. start time on Friday***

The Board will take formal action on the proposed amendment to update the freshwater bacteria objectives. Any person may present relevant statements or arguments. Oral presentations should be summarized in writing to the extent possible. If necessary, time limitations on presentations may be imposed. Written comments must be received by the Regional Board Staff no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 10, 2010. Written comments should be submitted electronically to [gamah@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:gamah@waterboards.ca.gov). Failure to comply with these requirements is grounds for the Regional Board to refuse to admit the proposed written

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comment or exhibit into evidence (California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Section 649.4). Where electronic submittal is not feasible, comments should be submitted to:

California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region  
320 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200  
Los Angeles, California 90013

ATTN: Dr. Ginachi Amah

For additional information, contact Dr. Ginachi Amah at (213) 576-6685 or [gamah@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:gamah@waterboards.ca.gov). The hearing facilities will be accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Ms. Theresa Rodgers at (213) 576-6789 at least five working days prior to the meeting.

Background on Freshwater Bacteria Objectives for Water Contact Recreation (REC-1)

In 1986, the U.S. EPA published revised ambient water quality criteria for bacteria, recommending that states use enterococcus in marine water and *Escherichia Coli* (*E. coli*) or enterococcus in fresh water (*U.S. EPA, Ambient Water Quality Criteria for Bacteria - 1986*). These criteria were based on epidemiological studies conducted in 1983 and 1984 to determine the most appropriate bacterial indicators and corresponding objectives for waters designated for water contact recreation. Following this, in March 1999, U.S. EPA made a commitment in its *Action Plan for Beaches and Recreational Waters* that "where a State does not amend its water quality standards to include the 1986 criteria, EPA will act under Section 303(c) of the Clean Water Act to promulgate the criteria with the goal of assuring that the 1986 criteria apply in all states no later than 2003." In response, the Regional Board updated its bacteria objectives in 2001 to incorporate both EPA's 1986 criteria, and those specified by Assembly Bill 411 (1997), as codified in California Code of Regulations Title 17, section 7958.

While EPA recommended the use of *E. coli* in place of fecal coliform, the Regional Board did not remove the fecal coliform objective during the 2001 update of its bacteria objectives. Rather, it allowed a transition period for incorporation of *E. coli* objectives into permits and water quality monitoring programs, and for collection of data on the new objective to establish an adequate monitoring database. EPA sanctions such transition periods but recommends a single triennial review cycle as the duration of the transition period. This is the third triennial review cycle since the adoption of the 2001 bacteria objectives.

The Regional Board's goal in updating the region's fresh water bacteria objectives is to maintain consistency with EPA's recommendation that *E. coli* replace fecal coliform as the indicator of the presence of pathogens in fresh water, and to remove unnecessary regulatory and monitoring requirements that arise from having objectives for both indicators. This action will result in having *E. coli* as the sole bacterial indicator to assess and regulate the quality of fresh waters used for water contact recreation (REC-1).