

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Diego Region

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 10, 2005

Contact: John Robertus
858-467-2987

SAN DIEGO REGIONAL WATER BOARD ACCEPTS \$1.2 MILLION
SETTLEMENT FOR CITY'S SEWER SPILLS

SAN DIEGO --The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board accepted a \$1.2 million settlement from the City of San Diego for multiple sewer spills over the past 3 years.

In three years the city had 30 spills totaling 2.35 million gallons of sewage resulting in beach closures. The payments, some of which will fund environmental projects within the San Diego area, settles the city's potential liability for sewer spills from February, 2001 through September 2004 and resolves the state's *Clean Water Act* lawsuit against the city.

The San Diego Water Board filed the *Clean Water Act* lawsuit against the city because the *Clean Water Act* requires the state to participate in any lawsuit by U.S. EPA against a municipality within the state.

U.S. EPA sued the city after environmental groups filed suits to force the city to reduce spills from its sewage collection system by increasing maintenance and replacing older sewer lines.

"Federal and State law requires the City of San Diego to operate its sewage collection system without leaking or otherwise discharging untreated wastewater. When unauthorized sanitary sewer overflows occur, the public's health, safety and welfare are threatened. In such cases, the San Diego Water Board is committed to taking appropriate enforcement measures to ensure compliance with the law, including the imposition of civil liability," said John H. Minan, chair of the San Diego Water Board and professor of law at the University of San Diego.

###