



State Water Resources Control Board

1001 I Street • Sacramento, California 95814

Phone: (916) 341-5254 Fax: (916) 341-5252

Web site: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov> • Email: info@waterboards.ca.gov

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Contact: Dave Clegern
(916) 327-8239

California Water Quality Monitoring Council unveils Internet Portals to Connect Decision Makers and the Public with Water Quality Information

Sacramento- The California Water Quality Monitoring Council (Monitoring Council) is unveiling the first of several new internet portals addressing different water quality themes. The first is *Is it Safe to Swim in Our Waters?*

The site includes interactive maps and monitoring data that focus on swimming safety. The goal is to make this information as timely and user-friendly, as possible.

The California legislature mandated in 2006 that water quality monitoring and assessment activities be coordinated among organizations inside and outside California government, and that this information be made available to decision makers and the public via the internet. The Monitoring Council was formed in 2007 by a cooperative agreement between the California Environmental Protection Agency and the Natural Resources Agency for this purpose.

In conjunction with expert stakeholder work groups, the Monitoring Council is bringing together water quality information from a wide variety of organizations with special expertise in swimming safety, coordinated through the Beach Water Quality Workgroup (Southern California) and the Central/Northern California Ocean and Bay Water Quality Monitoring Group. Local, state and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations have all pitched in to answer your water quality questions.

California's waters are generally open and available for recreational uses. But, there are times when those uses are unsafe because of bacterial contamination from sewage spills, urban runoff, malfunctioning septic systems, discharges from boats, and waste from other swimmers, domestic animals, marine mammals and birds. Timely and accurate beach water quality monitoring and strong pollution prevention measures are critical for protecting beachgoers from waterborne diseases.

The new internet portal brings this information together in a single location and in an easy to understand manner for the public, environmental organizations, and water quality professionals. View the new portal at <http://www.mywaterquality.ca.gov/>.



California Water News