



Enforcement News

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
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City of Compton to Pay Penalty, Upgrade Sanitary Sewer System for Discharging Raw Sewage Into Local Waterway

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 11, 2016

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LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) has entered into a settlement agreement with the city of Compton over the alleged discharge of raw sewage and other pollutants into Compton Creek for a period of approximately three years.

For the alleged discharges of untreated sewage to waters of the United States, Compton is liable for a civil penalty of \$268,365. The city must also complete capital improvement and sewer master plan projects on its sanitary sewer system.

The Regional Water Board alleges that on at least eight different occasions, from December 2010 to October 2013, Compton experienced sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) that released pollutants and untreated sewage into Compton Creek. The Regional Water Board also alleges the city failed to report three of the eight SSOs as required. Untreated sewage can contain pathogens such as E. coli, salmonella, parasites, viruses and rotavirus that are harmful to public health. Discharges of untreated sewage to water bodies can also impact aquatic life and result in closed beaches.

“We continue to work to improve the older sewer systems in our region, such as Compton’s, that pose serious threats to public health and the environment,” said Samuel Unger, Regional Water Board executive officer. “The action we’ve taken against Compton, and other municipalities in our region that have faced similar issues, will help the city reduce its risk for sewage spills by upgrading infrastructure and putting protocols in place to guard against overflows. These upgrades will help reduce the amount of spills and protect the community and surrounding waterways.”

As part of the settlement agreement, Compton will pay \$161,019 of the civil penalty to the State Water Pollution Cleanup and Abatement Account. The remaining \$107,346 will be suspended if the city follows through on several projects to upgrade and monitor Compton’s sanitary sewer system. Those projects include initial and ongoing video analysis of the sewer

system to identify areas where repair and upgrading is needed; inspecting the sewer system for hot spots every 90 days and performing maintenance and repairs as necessary; supplying quarterly progress reports to the Regional Water Board; implementing a root control program; hiring two new full-time staff and certifying all staff in collection system maintenance; reporting all SSOs to the Regional Board and other requirements.

To learn more about the settlement agreement and details related to the upgrade and maintenance projects, see the settlement agreement on the Regional Water Board's enforcement [website](#).

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