

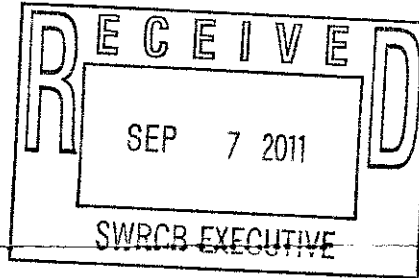
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CITY COUNCIL
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September 1, 2011

Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
P. O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000



RE: Draft Phase II Small MS4 General Permit

Dear Ms. Townsend and Members of the State Water Resources Control Board:

The City of Ceres has a population of 45,670. Ceres is a Small Phase II city and has a Stormwater Management Program in place. Upon reviewing the new proposed draft Phase II permit, we have some serious concerns.

As the draft permit is currently written, it is clear to us that it would be extremely difficult for small jurisdictions to implement all of the requirements, and do so within the proposed timeline. The requirements are so wide-spread and far reaching, and costly, that it could place Ceres and other small jurisdictions in a position of non-compliance. This could be detrimental for small jurisdictions, if faced with fines imposed by the State. The City of Ceres has taken steps to comply with the existing MS4 General Permit, and expected a reasonable new permit in the future.

The City has had to lay off employees and reduce services. The cost implications of the proposed permit are of grave concern. The City simply does not have the resources available to implement all of the additional requirements of the proposed permit. As an example, the City already has a stormdrain system map showing all of the City's stormdrain collection lines, stormdrain drop inlets, basins, and outfall lines. It would be expensive to have the system converted to GIS mapping. The City does not have in-house staff to do this or the funds to contract this out.

The City already provides employee training, stormwater system maintenance, and annual reporting. The proposed requirements are excessive and would require extra ordinary amounts of staff time to implement. **Foremost, it is difficult to see how these burdensome and expensive new requirements would actually result in the improvement of storm water quality.**

The City is a member of the Statewide Stormwater Coalition (SSC). The SSC is formulating a letter to the SWRCB to express the members' concerns on the draft Phase II Permit as well, in a separate letter.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed new Phase II requirements. We are hoping that the State will revise the proposed general permit to include a more realistic time-line, and include flexibility to the requirements based on individual jurisdiction's population and watersheds, to the extent possible.

Sincerely,

Toby Wells P.E.
Director/City Engineer
Legally Responsible Person (LRP)