STANFORD LINEAR ACCELERATOR CENTER

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SPECIAL HEARING
2/3/05
cc: BD, DI, DWQ
e-cys: BD, CC, HMS, TH, CMW

Mrs. Debbie Irvin, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor (95814)
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, California 95812-0100

Subject: Comments Regarding Reissuance of the NPDES General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Industrial Activities (Industrial General Permit)

Dear Mrs. Irvin,

Comments on the following topics are submitted for consideration in the review of the draft Industrial General Permit, which is currently out for public review:

1) Appropriate Benchmarks
2) Lack of Mechanism to Change Benchmarks Based on Regional Conditions
3) Hardness Dependant Metals

Appropriate Benchmarks
The draft permit proposes significant consequences if any benchmark values are exceeded. Though benchmark values should be protective of receiving waters, they should not result in misguided efforts and expense that could be used to mitigate higher risk concerns. The benchmark values should consider regional background values and hydrologic conditions unique to California. The current benchmarks were developed by U.S EPA under assumptions more appropriate to conditions found in the eastern regions of the country.

Lack of Mechanism to Change Benchmarks Based on Regional Conditions
There are no mechanisms within the existing draft to allow modifications to benchmark values based on field data. A reiterative process that allows for periodic review and correction based on actual data representing regional background conditions would allow for an adaptive management approach that would better serve the environment, people and economy of the State of California.

Hardness Dependant Metals
The toxicity of many of the benchmark metals are dependant on the hardness of the water. Though this is acknowledged in Table VIII.2 by indicating which metals are hardness dependent, this fact is not utilized when determining if the benchmark has been exceeded. In many regions the hardness of the receiving waters is much higher than the 100 milligrams per liter as calcium carbonate used in developing the benchmark values.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact me at (650) 926-4538.

Sincerely,

Judy Fulton
Water Program Manager
Environmental Protection Department

JF/jf

Enclosures:

cc: Helen Nuckolls, SLAC-ES&H
Susan Witebsky, SLAC-ES&H