
Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY PROGRAM

RESOURCES FOR GROWERS APPROVED COOPERATIVE GROUNDWATER MONITORING PROGRAMS Updated July 11, 2013

Central Coast Water Board Order No. RB3-2012-0011, Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands (Agricultural Order) and the associated Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) require specific conditions, including the requirement to conduct groundwater monitoring and reporting. The Agricultural Order and MRP provide landowners and operators the option to comply with groundwater monitoring requirements by either sampling groundwater wells individually on their agricultural operations, or by joining a groundwater cooperative monitoring program approved by the Executive Officer. There are advantages and disadvantages to both the individual and cooperative groundwater monitoring options (including cost and responsibilities). Individual landowners and operators should evaluate the options carefully and choose the option that best fits their specific situation.

The Executive Officer has approved the following cooperative groundwater monitoring programs:

- **Central Coast Cooperative Groundwater Program**
This cooperative groundwater monitoring program is available to landowners and growers in Monterey, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and San Benito Counties. The program was approved on July 11, 2013. The contact for this program is Ms. Abby Taylor-Silva of the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California. If you wish to participate in this program or if you would like more information, please contact **Ms. Taylor-Silva at (831) 422-8844 or via e-mail at abby@growershipper.com**
- **Cooperative Groundwater Monitoring Program, Santa Rosa Creek Valley, Cambria, California**
This cooperative groundwater monitoring program is available to landowners and growers in the Santa Rosa Creek Valley Watershed in San Luis Obispo County. The program was approved on June 20, 2013. The contact for this program is Mr. George Kendall. If you wish to participate in this program or if you would like more information, please contact **Mr. Kendall via e-mail at: gwkendall@wildblue.net**

Within 60 days of approval, growers who would like to participate in an approved cooperative groundwater monitoring program must convey this election to the administrator of the approved cooperative monitoring program¹. The program administrator(s) will be responsible for providing a list of all program participants to the Central Coast Water Board. Growers who do not wish to

¹ The original deadline for choosing the cooperative groundwater monitoring program was August 1, 2012. Recent revisions to the MRP provides additional time as an "open enrollment" to join groundwater monitoring programs approved by the Executive Officer (within 60 days of approval).

participate in an approved cooperative groundwater monitoring program may conduct individual groundwater monitoring as described below.

What is my individual responsibility if I participate in a cooperative program?

The cooperative groundwater monitoring program acts as a third-party to conduct groundwater monitoring on behalf of the growers. However, ultimately growers who participate in the cooperative groundwater monitoring program approved by the Executive Officer are responsible for the successful implementation of that program. This individual grower responsibility has two consequences if the cooperative monitoring program is not successfully implemented:

- a) The Central Coast Water Board or Executive Officer will require individual growers to conduct individual monitoring per the requirements of the Agricultural Order and MRP.
- b) The Central Coast Water Board may take enforcement action against individual growers. The failure of a third-party group to successfully implement an approved program cannot be used as an excuse for lack of individual grower compliance.

What if I do not want to participate or there is no approved cooperative groundwater program in my area?

Growers who elected the cooperative groundwater monitoring option, but are not located in the local area of an approved cooperative groundwater monitoring program must comply with the Individual Groundwater Monitoring Program requirements pursuant to the Agricultural Order and MRP.

Similarly, growers who elected the cooperative groundwater monitoring option, but decide they do not wish to participate in a cooperative groundwater monitoring program must comply with the Individual Groundwater Monitoring Program requirements pursuant to the Agricultural Order and MRP.

The individual groundwater monitoring requirements require growers to sample their primary irrigation well and ALL wells that are used for drinking water purposes twice in a twelve month period; one sample must be collected during the fall of 2013 (September - December) and the second during the spring of 2014 (March - June).

A Grower Resource Document titled, *Individual Groundwater Monitoring Guidance*, is available on the Agricultural Regulatory Program's website at the link below. This document provides a general overview of the individual groundwater sampling and reporting requirements that apply to operations enrolled in the Agricultural Regulatory Program, as well as a list of laboratories that can provide assistance. The website also includes general information about the Agricultural Regulatory Program, including additional resources and guidance for growers.

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ag_waivers/index.shtml

If you have any questions, please contact Hector Hernandez at (805) 542-4641 or HHernandez@waterboards.ca.gov, or Angela Schroeter at (805) 542-4644 or ASchroeter@waterboards.ca.gov.