



EL DORADO AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT CORP

PROTECTING OUR PRECIOUS RESOURCE

AUGUST 2017

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Watershed Connection

A publication for members of the El Dorado Subwatershed Coalition

A member of the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition

Regulatory Update for EDAWQMC

By Lesa Osterholm

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This year began the on-site inspections by the Central Valley Regional water board staff to members' properties. While many of us do not like this, the purpose is for the water board staff to confirm what members have reported on their Farm Evaluation Plans. This is largely due to the challenges from the environmental justice groups and their lawsuits with the water boards. As a result, El Dorado had two inspections this year.

The inspections should be organized through the EDAWQMC Board and are scheduled at a mutually agreed upon date and time. The water board staff developed a 6-page checklist of "assessments" they are doing on the site visits. There are on-going challenges to the assessments and whether the regional water board has the authority to "look beyond" what members have reported in their Farm Evaluation Plans.

In the meantime, we wanted to remind all members to keep your annual paperwork in a file as the water board staff will request to see it. The paperwork should consist of the following; Notice of Confirmation, Farm Evaluation Plan, Nitrogen Management Planning annual worksheets (if you apply nitrogen) and Sediment and Erosion plans, if you have one. At this time, the water board staff will inspect chemical and pesticide storage, areas around fuel tanks or any other area where something is leaking onto the ground, look for cover crops, irrigation systems, etc.

The message to members is be as efficient as possible with irrigation management, if you add nutrients, apply only what the crop needs and the timing of that is equally important, reduce any potential run off and maintain vegetative cover and/or filter strips to protect water quality. Once again, great job everyone for your good growing practices and keeping the waters clean in El Dorado County and beyond!

Remaining 2017 Board Meeting Dates

Board of Directors

Monday, October 16, 2017 @ 3:30pm

Monday, December 18, 2017 @ 3:30pm

Executive Committee Meetings

Monday, September 18, 2017 @ 3:30pm

Monday, November 20, 2017 @ 3:30pm

All meetings are held at the Agriculture Department, Placerville

Your attendance and comments are always welcome

President's Notes*By Dedrian Kobervig*The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control is Stepping Up Enforcements

In the month of June two of our members were visited by employees of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board for the purpose of conducting on-farm inspections. The Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program General Order does allow for on-site inspections:

The Member understands that the Central Valley Water Board or its authorized representatives, may, at reasonable hours, inspect the facilities and irrigated lands of persons subject to this Order to ascertain whether the purposes of the Porter-Cologne Act are being met and whether the Member is complying with the conditions of this Order. To the extent required by California Water Code section 13267(c) or other applicable law, the inspection shall be made with the consent of the Member, owner or authorized representative, or if consent is withheld, with a duly issued warrant pursuant to the procedure set forth in Title 13 Code of Civil Procedure Part 3 (commencing with section 1822.50). In the event of an emergency affecting the public health and safety, an inspection may be performed without the consent or the issuance of a warrant.

The members were notified in advance and given a copy of the regional water board on-site inspection form. I had the opportunity to attend both inspections.

A few of the items that were of special interest to the inspectors were:

Paper Work:

- ◆ Is the current Farm Evaluation (FE) available for this operation?
- ◆ Are farm conditions consistent with the Farm Evaluation?
- ◆ Is a Nitrogen Management Plan (NMP) available for staff review?
- ◆ Is there a complete NMP for each farm operation?
Nitrogen management plans need to be completed for each parcel and commodity.

There was also a visual inspection of the farm sites. Things that were looked at included:

- ◆ Are there any ditches, constructed swales, tile drains, or other structures or features that may transport irrigation water offsite?
- ◆ Are pesticide containers rinsed out and disposed of in areas that prevent discharge to surface waters and groundwater (e.g., away from wells)?
- ◆ Are pesticides used to control rodents (e.g., bait traps or poison) placed in locations that prevent discharge to surface waters?
- ◆ Is there bare soil vulnerable to erosion?
- ◆ Is there evidence of soil erosion?
- ◆ Is construction and operation of any settling ponds, basins, or tail water recovery systems consistent with the applicable NRCS practice standard or equivalent alternative standard?
- ◆ Any evidence of a sediment discharge that may have caused or contributed to an exceedance of WQOs? (this is a finding of potential to discharge)
- ◆ Is there a farm equipment maintenance or storage area, or an equipment bone yard?
- ◆ Is there a farm equipment fueling area?
- ◆ Any evidence of a hazardous materials or waste discharge? (Is agricultural rubbish, refuse, irrigation tubing or tape, or other solid wastes placed in an area where they may contact or may eventually be discharged to surface waters?)
- ◆ Neither farm had wells on the property but if one was onsite it would have been inspected for well head protection.

During the farm inspections, the regional staff took pictures to document the conditions of roads, storage facilities, and erosion control measures in place. They also wanted to visit the farm's outer boundaries to visually inspect for any possible offsite runoff.

Ag. Water Quality Member Update

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board employees conducting the on-farm inspections were very polite and professional. Their final report to the growers will include comments on how the grower can improve and avoid any off-property water or sediment discharges if they saw a problem.

This being the first time inspections were conducted in El Dorado County, I wanted to know what enforcement powers the Regional Board has. The following question was emailed to the lead inspector and his answer is attached - **“Can you clarify the enforcement code or ordinance that enables you to make recommendations for corrections even if there is no evidence that any sediment or ground water has left the property?”**

“There is no water code or ordinance that enables board staff to make recommendations. Board staff’s recommendation does not compel a grower to improve management practices, so no code or ordinance is needed. Board staff may observe a potential threat to water quality and recommend corrective action. If a grower then takes no corrective action and a waste discharge occurs to waters of the State, the Central Valley Water Board would consider staff’s recommendation and the grower’s failure to act as part of any enforcement proceedings.”

The inspections took no more than an hour and were set up to accommodate the grower’s schedule. Enforcement seems to be taking a higher priority as this program progresses so we are sure to have more inspections in the future.

Treasurer’s Report.....

By Bob Witters

January 1 to June 30, 2017	
Total Income YTD:	\$40,827.00
Budgeted Income:	\$36,857.00
Expenses	
Computer/Internet	\$878.00
Outside Contracts	\$14,683.00
Insurance	\$622.00
Lease	\$1,749.00
Mailings	\$643.00
Office Expenses	\$181.00
Tax Prep	\$150.00
Utilities	\$852.00
Total Expenses YTD:	\$19,758.00
Budgeted Expenses:	\$21,798.00
Assets	
Checking Account Balance:	\$13,980.00
Savings Account Balance:	\$46,055.00
Total Assets:	\$60,035.00



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How the Heck Do You Fill out Those Nitrogen Management Reports!!

Remember you need to fill out Nitrogen Management reports for your individual commodities every year. Because we have been designated as low vulnerability, we do not have to submit them to the state; but they must be completed and kept on site. We do not provide you with your APN number, that is on your Farm Evaluation. If you use EID water for irrigation there is no detectable nitrogen in the water.

Need more blank forms go to **EldoradoAgWater.org** and down load them from the Forms tab. The East San Joaquin water Quality Coalition has made a series of videos giving step by step instructions. These videos can be watched on YouTube at:

Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sw3LMwx86vQ&t=2s>

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9JIwNAQDPQ>

Part 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oeH7KCIVKDo>

Part 4: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUESG7PLVK0>