



Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

December 7, 2021

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Notice of Violation of State Board Order No. 2006-0003-DWQ, Lake Arrowhead Collection System, Lake Arrowhead, San Bernardino County

The purpose of this Notice of Violation (Notice) is to inform Lake Arrowhead Community Services District (District) that Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) staff allege a violation of State Board Order No. WQ-2006-0003-DWQ (General Order). The Water Board is the public agency with primary responsibility for the protection of groundwater and surface water quality for all beneficial uses within Lake Arrowhead. The Lake Arrowhead Collection System (WDID No. 6SSO11152), operated by the Lake Arrowhead Community Services District (the Discharger), is enrolled for coverage under the General Order.

On July 14, 2021, Water Board staff received information from the District regarding a category 1 sanitary sewer overflow to Lake Arrowhead. The incident occurred near 482 State Highway 173, Lake Arrowhead. An estimated 2,875 gallons of untreated sewage were released from a manhole and ran down a hillside into Lake Arrowhead.

Water Board staff notified the District that they needed to take immediate corrective action to repair the sewer line and stop the flow of wastewater into the lake. Water Board staff also requested a report detailing the events of the sewer overflow and the steps taken by the District to mitigate its effects. The [District's report](#)* was provided to Water Board staff on July 22, 2021 and logged to the GeoTracker database.

* Link to the report:

https://documents.geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/regulators/deliverable_documents/4171994864/7.14.21%20SSO%20%E2%80%93%20Lake%20Arrowhead.pdf

The cause of the sewer overflow was determined to be a piece of rebar penetrating the sewer main 100 feet downstream of the manhole. The debris blockage caused by rebar installed by the Arrowhead Lake Association (ALA) and growth of roots into the damaged pipe led to the sewer overflow. Blockage was relieved with the use of a hydro-flusher within 18 minutes of the District receiving notification. This allowed the sewage to stop exiting the sewer main.

Although discharge from the damaged sewer line was eliminated, cleanup efforts of the area affected by the overflow towards the lake consisted of removing leaves and topsoil affected by the overflow. Bleach solution was applied to these areas but not to the lake itself. The sewer line was repaired by removing the rebar and placing a pipe repair clamp on the damage section. Signs warning the public were placed in the area until sampling for bacteria, pH, methylene blue active substance (MBAS), and ammonia nitrogen were less than either detection levels or maximum contaminant levels, depending on the constituent.

Water Board staff recognize this discharge was caused by an outside entity. However, the District is responsible for any illicit discharges from the sanitary sewer system. Therefore, Water Board staff appreciate that the District has requested the ALA coordinate with the Underground Service Alert System before any future sub-surface work is conducted in areas surrounding the lake to prevent reoccurrence.

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Discharger violated the General Order and the Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan) for the following violation:

- General Order Section C.1: Any sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) that results in a discharge of untreated or partially treated wastewater to waters of the United States is prohibited.
- General Order Section C.2: Any SSO that results in a discharge of untreated or partially treated wastewater that creates a nuisance, as defined in California Water Code, section 13050(m), is prohibited.
- General Order Section D.1: The Enrollee must comply with all conditions of this Order. Any noncompliance with this Order constitutes a violation of the California Water Code and is grounds for enforcement action.

Corrective Actions

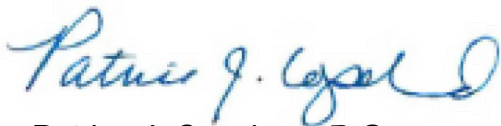
1. Repair the damaged pipe to prevent further spills. This corrective action was completed by **July 22, 2021**.
2. Submit a report containing the District's response following notification of the sewer spill and identifying the cause of the spill. This corrective action was requested by Water Board staff and completed by **July 22, 2021**.
3. Given that the nature of the spill resulted from actions taken by the ALA, the District has discussed the necessity for the ALA to consult the Underground Service Alert

System. The District's emergency response plan should consider similar spills in the future. Please submit a description of how the events of this incident will affect the District's emergency response plan. This description must be submitted by **January 31, 2022**.

4. It is unclear from the District's report when the section of sewer line was damaged by the rebar or when it was last inspected by the District. The report also mentions that the damage to the sewer line allowed roots to grow into the sewer main. This raises the possibility of sewage exfiltration from the sewer line preceding the overflow. Clarification regarding when the section of the sewer line was last inspected by the District and assessment of how long exfiltration from the sewer line may have occurred must be submitted by **January 31, 2022**.

Non-compliance with the General Order may result in additional enforcement action, including, but not limited to, administrative civil liabilities. The Water Board may impose administrative civil liability up to \$5,000.00 for each day in which the violation occurs or \$10.00 per gallon of discharge pursuant to California Water Code section 13350. Alternatively, the Water Board may impose administrative civil liability up to \$10,000.00 for each day in which the violation occurs and an additional \$10.00 per gallon of discharge in excess of 1,000 gallons pursuant to the California Water Code, section 13385. The Water Board reserves the right to take any further enforcement action authorized by law. The landowner is the ultimate responsible party for any water quality degradation that occurs on or emanates from its property.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Sergio Alonso, Water Resource Control Engineer, at (760) 243-7324 (sergio.alonso@waterboards.ca.gov) or Patrice Copeland, Supervising Engineering Geologist, at (760) 241-7404 (patrice.copeland@waterboards.ca.gov).



Patrice J. Copeland, P.G.
Supervising Engineering Geologist

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