



Subject: Water Quality Issues and Regulation Compliance

Dear Grower:

The Merced Irrigation District is continuing to face stringent water quality regulations by the State of California to protect surface and groundwater supplies from potential pollutants. Regulations in the form of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne) set limits for the control of water quality impairments in surface and groundwater supplies.

This letter is official notice that the Merced Irrigation District intends to use aquatic herbicides in the District's canals under its current Water Quality Order, Statewide General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit for the Discharge of Aquatic Pesticides for Aquatic Weed Control in Waters of the United States. If you have any questions about the District's use of aquatic herbicides please contact Weed Control Supervisor at 722-2719, extension 2917.

Water quality is currently being monitored in the San Joaquin River watershed area including the Merced River of which Merced Irrigation District is a part. The District asks that growers not place any type of tank containing agricultural fertilizers, chemicals or fuel on District canal banks. If these tanks were to leak into the District's irrigation system there is a potential for an expensive and time consuming clean-up with possible downstream crop damage. Prior to placement of any such tanks near District facilities, please contact the MID Engineering Department at 209-722-5761.

The District also asks that growers using "chemigation" and "fertigation" injection/applications not inject/drip pesticides and fertilizers directly into District facilities. When applied through private irrigation systems in water supplied by the District, growers must comply with all label regulations for backflow prevention. Agricultural chemicals and fertilizers applied by these methods can be a source of backflow contamination into surface and groundwater supplies if improperly applied. The District will be watching for any potential sources of contamination that could pollute surface and groundwater. The District is currently required to monitor surface water quality and file reports with the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Contaminants common in fertilizers have been found in past years throughout the District at concentrations as high as thirty-seven times the maximum contaminant level set by the state of California.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping to keep the District in compliance with the current water quality regulations. Your cooperation will assist us in controlling operating costs and keeping irrigation water affordable.

Sincerely,

Bryan Kelly
Deputy General Manager, Water Resource