



CCGC UPDATE

www.centralcoastgc.org

Reminder to Sample Wells Before Year End

CCGC members are given extra time to complete irrigation and domestic well sampling with the new coalition program adopted in April 2017 by the Regional Water Board. The deadline is almost here to complete the first sample by the end of 2017. To date, members have reported sampling 312 wells: 201 irrigation wells and 111 domestic wells. That means there are hundreds of wells that haven't been sampled yet or results not yet reported to CCGC, one of the requirements for gaining that extra time to complete sampling (see article below for list of approved labs). Remind your lab about the forms needed for reporting your results to CCGC to ensure no enforcement action is taken. A second sample must be completed before 2020 for both domestic and irrigation wells.

Nitrate Exceedances in Wells Similar to Years Past

Well results reported to CCGC as of late September showed that 24% of 111 domestic wells tested were above the nitrate drinking water standard of 10 mg/L Nitrate as nitrogen. Of the 27 wells above the standard, only five wells were "new exceedances" and required members to notify residences within 48 hours. The remaining 106 wells were sampled previously by CCGC and members had already notified occupants of high nitrates. There were 56 irrigation wells, or 28% of 201 total, above the nitrate drinking water standard throughout the coalition region. The totals for both domestic and irrigation wells received to date were similar to results of sampling between 2013-16 when 35% of domestic and 30% of irrigation wells were above the standard.

2017 CCGC Membership Enrollment Status

A majority of past CCGC members renewed their membership for 2017, enabling them to take advantage of the extended time to complete domestic and irrigation well sampling on their ranches. As of late September, member roles totaled 208,800 acres, just under the 226,000 acres enrolled in 2016. Membership totaled 432 growers compared to 510 in previous years. The first CCGC membership list was submitted to the Regional Water Board in August, with an updated list scheduled to be delivered in October. Water Board staff is checking well data posted to GeoTracker and comparing it to the member roles. If a non-member had no well results posted as of early September, Water Board staff reported they would inform those growers that they were out of compliance with the order requirements. Previous CCGC members who did not renew or growers interested in joining CCGC before

December can still pay 2017 dues and receive member benefits of expanded time frame sampling. The CCGC Board of Directors adopted a \$150 late charge for growers who renew or join after September 29.

If existing members are adding new ranches, refer to the Add Acreage Form at www.centralcoastgc.org. If you need another copy of your invoice, please contact CCGC by emailing director@centralcoastgc.org or calling 831-240-9533.

Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA) Worksheet Sent to Members

CCGC sent to members in August an Excel spreadsheet for completing the Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA) Summary Report that simplifies tracking and reporting nitrogen applications via fertilizer and nitrates in groundwater. The spreadsheet is based on the four spreadsheets on the Regional Water Board website. After a member's information is entered, it performs the calculations then transfers the data into the final TNA Summary Report form. This TNA report needs to be submitted to the Regional Water Board on March 1, 2018 (sooner if you terminate a ranch or complete a strawberry crop in Fall 2017).

We encourage members NOT to share the TNA spreadsheet with non-CCGC members. Member dues paid for development of this tool and it's not fair to our members to give it away. However, it's not too late for growers to join the coalition and receive their own copy.

A reminder that the rules changed in 2017 on reporting nitrogen applications, expanding the TNA reporting requirement beyond just Tier 3 ranches to all Tier 2 ranches with vegetable crops considered "high risk", including strawberries.

Phone Assistance for Members Available for TNA Reporting

Assistance for completing Total Nitrogen Applied (TNA) reports is being offered to CCGC members in 2017. CCGC staff and others trained to provide guidance are available via phone and email. Also being planned for February 2018 are TNA workshops to be held throughout the Central Coast region, which will assist members in advance of the March 1, 2018 reporting deadline. Growers who are not coalition members can receive the TNA phone assistance for \$100 per membership (in addition to the \$350 annual dues plus a \$150 late fee). Current members can add this feature at any time.

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Outreach Begun on 4.0 Order Set for Adoption in 2020

The Regional Water Board held three listening sessions throughout the Central Coast region in August, gathering input from growers and others about what they'd like to see in the next order set for adoption in 2020. The content of the next order, being dubbed "4.0", will have numerous issues overshadowing its development including the outcome of lawsuits and petitions against both the previous order adopted in 2012, called 2.0, and the existing order currently being implemented, 3.0. In addition, the State Water Board just released revised Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) for the East San Joaquin Water Quality Coalition. While the order is directed to Central Valley irrigated agriculture, the State Water Board included provisions it describes as "precedential" for all irrigated lands programs throughout the State, including the Central Coast. The next step in development of 4.0 is issuance of the environmental impact report (EIR), scheduled to be released in March 2018. The first draft of the new order is tentatively scheduled for release in Fall 2018.

Labs Qualified for Groundwater Monitoring

Members are encouraged to use a lab that has indicated willingness and ability to meet CCGC reporting requirements which help avoid costly miscommunication and unforeseen issues on member's compliance and data reporting. Labs who have agreed to work with CCGC and its members are listed below. Please contact CCGC if you've already used a lab not on the list.

MLJ-LLC: <https://mljsampling.com>

Fruit Growers Laboratory (FGL): www.fglinc.com

Monterey Bay Analytical Services (MBAS): mbasinc.com

Dellavalle Laboratory: www.dellavallelab.com

Abalone Coast Analytical:

<http://www.abalonecoastanalytical.com/>

Monterey County Health Department – Consolidated Environmental Laboratory:

<http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/health/>

Control Laboratories, Inc.: <http://www.controllabs.com/>

Frequently Encountered Well Sampling Problems

Scheduling Samples: When scheduling your wells to be sampled, be sure to a) alert the lab that you are a CCGC member b) provide Form 2B from your membership packet to the lab. Completing Form 2B ensures that well sample results are uploaded under the correct Global ID preventing any disassociated results. Contact CCGC if you need another form 2B.

Shared Wells: Well that is shared (with a member or non-member) only needs to be monitored by one operation. If a well is on a parcel enrolled on your eNOI and is sampled by another operation, you need to obtain the Global ID used when the well result was uploaded. This information needs to be provided to CCGC.

Tier Level: The Tier level is assigned to each ranch by the RWQCB. You can check your Tier level assignment in your GeoTracker account. Tier level is based on multiple factors including proximity to an impaired water body or to a public water system in exceedance of nitrate, crop type and other considerations.

Changes to your Operation: Any changes to your Operation (well count, well classification, irrigated acres, parcel rotation, ranch termination) must first be done in your GeoTracker account on your eNOI, and secondly with CCGC.

Annual Exceedance Notification/Replacement Water check ups

CCGC is required to conduct annual follow-up with members who have a domestic well with nitrate exceedances. Included in the follow-up is documenting that all new tenants are properly notified and to update your replacement water action, if it has changed. If everything is the same – no new users to notify and no changes to the replacement water action – then a member only needs to sign a response letter confirming this. CCGC is working to make this process as simple as possible, but we need written documentation to avoid having Regional Water Board staff perform the follow-up.

Inspections/Posting to Continue in 2017

CCGC staff last year accompanied a member as they were inspected by the Regional Water Board to verify compliance with actions taken when a domestic well was found to exceed water quality standards for nitrates. Focus of the inspection was reviewing documentation of high nitrates in the domestic well and the proper placarding of spigots that passersby or workers might access for drinking water. Regional Water Board staff reiterated that postings are not necessary inside private residences where all members of the household are aware of the nitrates. Postings are intended to be displayed on faucets and spigots that can be accessed by employees or the public that may not have been directly notified by the member i.e. farm offices, tasting rooms and water sources in outbuildings or other facilities. Inspections are expected to continue in 2017.

