

OPERATIONS & WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE SUMMARY MINUTES

July 1, 2020

4:15 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Directors: Judy Huang (Chair), John Weed

Staff: Robert Shaver, Kurt Arends, Mike Wickham, Cris Pena, Thomas Spankowski, Jake Reed, Ranga Sampath, Caroline Abellar

The monthly Operations & Water Quality Committee Meeting was held on July 1, 2020 at 4:15 PM. Due to COVID-19 and in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-25-20 which suspends portions of the Brown Act, this meeting was conducted by Zoom Webinar and Teleconference and members of the public were invited to participate.

DISCUSSION TOPIC

1. Update on District's California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program: Thomas Spankowski, Environmental Engineer, provided an overview of the District's California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program which was established to minimize the risk of the accidental release of hazardous substances that can cause serious harm to public health or to the environment. The District has three facilities covered under the CalARP program: Newark Desalination Facility (NDF), Blending Facility (Blender), and Water Treatment Plant Number 2 (WTP2). Each of the three facilities has an Aqua Ammonia (AA) inventory over the regulatory threshold of 500 lbs. CalARP compliance enforcement is the responsibility of the local Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs). The CUPA for Fremont is the Fremont Fire Department (FFD), and the CUPA for Newark is the Alameda County Department of Environmental Health.

Mr. Spankowski explained that the CalARP program requires developing a Risk Management Plan (RMP). The RMP is implemented in the form of a workbook, enabling District personal and emergency responders to reference important operational and safety information about the AA system. The RMPs have multiple program levels which have varying requirements increasing in complexity from program level 1 to program level 4. WTP2 is a program level 1 facility, while the Blender and NDF are program level 2 facilities. Mr. Spankowski described the elements of a program level 1 RMP, which includes basic information of the facility and AA system, as well as a hazard assessment; and that of a program level 2 facility which requires additional information including hazard assessment, safety information, operation, and maintenance procedures.

Mr. Spankowski explained that when a hazard assessment is developed for a site, it will include an offsite consequence analysis (OCA). The OCA is used to model a release of the AA during a catastrophic failure of the AA system. Mr. Spankowski also described that an area of concern is developed, as part of the OCA, which shows the distance to the toxic endpoint where the concentration would be reduced to 200 ppm.

The RMP elements will be updated during 2020 and will include a hazard review of the Blender and NDF, updating of the Hazard Assessment and OCA for each facility, and Seismic Assessment for each facility.

Director Weed commented that a previous OCA showed the area of concern at WTP2 extending across Mission Blvd. and asked when did the model change. Mr. Spankowski explained that the modeling was updated in 2015 reducing the area of concern.

Mr. Spankowski and Mr. Arends confirmed for Director Weed that disclosures were provided to the new development (as of 2015) near WTP2.

Director Weed asked if the FFD CUPA duties will be taken over by the Alameda County Department of Environmental Health. Mr. Spankowski answered that as far as he knows there is no change planned, and the FFD will remain the CUPA in Fremont.

Staff indicated that they would return to the Committee at a future meeting to present the update of the CalARP.

2. Proposed Security Services Agreement: The District's Emergency Response and Security Officer, Jake Reed, briefed the Committee on the proposed security services agreement planned for the July 9, 2020 Board meeting agenda. Mr. Reed started the brief with a review of current services the District desired to continue under a new contract. Those services included a 24x7 dispatch, two guards to patrol District facilities during non-business hours and respond to as needed services 24x7. He then reviewed the process used to procure the recommended contractor. That process was a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Eight security companies submitted a proposal and Creative Security Company Inc. was selected as the best qualified and would be recommended to the Board of Directors to provide security services for the District. The cost of the new contract was reviewed along with the increase in qualifications and hours which resulted in a significantly higher cost. Mr. Reed concluded the brief by reviewing the transition planning to ensure a smooth transition from the current contractor to the new contractor who will begin providing services on August 1, 2020. Staff responded to questions from the Committee.
3. Update on Voluntary PFAS Monitoring: Mike Wickham, Water Production Manager, provided an overview of the voluntary monitoring for Per- and Poly- Fluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) conducted at ACWD's source waters and at the treated water at the entry points to the distribution system. Mr. Wickham described PFAS and explained that the California State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water (DDW) has established Notification Levels (NL) and Response Levels (RL) for two PFAS compounds, Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctanesulfonate (PFOS), and the Environmental Protection Agency had announced a determination to regulate PFOA and PFOS. NLs and RLs are health based advisory levels established by DDW for contaminants that may be considered for regulation but have not yet undergone or completed the regulatory setting process. The NL for PFOA is 5.1 parts per trillion (ppt) and the NL for PFOS is 6.5 ppt. The RL for PFOA is 10 ppt and the RL for PFOS is 40 ppt.

Mr. Wickham shared that the voluntary sampling for PFAS was still in process, and reviewed some of the sampling results received to date, which showed some of ACWDs groundwater sources had detectable levels of PFOA and PFOS above the NL. It was pointed out that all treated water delivered to our customers was either below the detection limit of 2 ppt or non-detect (ND), or detected at levels below the NL at the Blending Facility (BF). There were no detections of PFOA or PFOS in the raw or treated State Water Project surface water at Water Treatment Plant 2, in the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission supply to the Blending Facility (BF), or in the treated water entering the distribution system from the Newark Desalination Facility (NDF). The wellfield sampling resulted for PFOA were between ND and 2.7 ppt and PFOS detections were between ND and 13 ppt at the Mowry wellfield. PFOA detections were between ND and 6.3 ppt and PFOS detections between 9.3 and 12 ppt at the PT wellfields, and PFOA detections between ND and 3.2 ppt and PFOS detections between 2.4 and 9.1 ppt at the wells supplying the NDF. Mr. Wickham described some of the near and long term actions that ACWD was taking following these sampling results which included consulting with DDW, developing communications materials to post the results on the ACWD website, evaluating operational impacts of the PFAS detected in the wellfields, future PFAS monitoring and source investigation, and investigating potential treatment alternatives.

Director Weed asked if the sampling results were separated by well and inquired if removing a small number of wells from service would be a viable option for control of PFAS levels. Mr. Wickham explained that the results were per well, and that most of the wells showed similar levels of PFOS, so removing one or two from service does not appear to be advantageous at this time. Director Huang asked if the distribution system entry point from the NDF was sampled after the blended water. Mr. Wickham responded that the blended water was sampled and that Cedar well 2 did have detections of PFOA and PFOS at the well, but the levels were ND after being blended with the water at the NDF. Staff responded to other questions from the Committee.

4. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Topics discussed by the Committee were informational only and no recommendations were made.