



Phelan Pinon Hills Community Services District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State's Revised Water Quality Standards Temporary: May Positively Impact District's Chromium-6 Mitigation Project

*Decision Will Not Adversely Impact Customers or Water Quality, according
to the Phelan Piñon Hills Community Services District*

PHELAN, Calif. (August 8, 2017) – The State Water Resources Control Board's (State Board) decision to reverse a previous water quality mandate and conduct a new economic feasibility study will provide the Phelan Piñon Hills Community Services District (PPHCSD) up to a four-year compliance extension, District officials announced today.

They also signaled they intend to review project engineering and explore potential cost savings options.

The shift stems from a May 31, 2017, court ruling that invalidated the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for hexavalent chromium, asserting that the state failed to properly consider the economic feasibility of complying with the MCL.

Hexavalent chromium (Chromium-6) is a naturally occurring heavy metal that is also used in a variety of industrial processes. At high levels, long-term exposure to the metal may cause cancer. The Chromium-6 found in the PPHCSD's water is naturally occurring and is not the result of industrial processes.

"The State Board's revision will have no immediate impact on our customers who will continue to receive high quality drinking water that meets our traditionally high safety standards," said Don Bartz, General Manager. "We would like to assure the public that the state's MCL limit revision will not affect service and water quality."

He noted the District's levels of 10-16 parts per billion (ppb) is far below both the state's 50 ppb standard and the 100 ppb threshold set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

"We believed the State Board's previous 10 ppb mandate timeline was economically restrictive and costly while providing no additional safety for our customers," said Mr.

Bartz. "The State Board, however, has indicated its court ordered economic feasibility study will likely result in the reinstatement of the 10 ppb standard."

"We have already invested \$3.7 million towards the state's previous unfunded compliance mandate. The State Board's recent reversal will allow the District additional time to review compliance options not previously available that could potentially save money for our rate payers." said Mr. Bartz.

Part of the \$3.7 million already spent on the PPHCSD's blending project included the purchase of additional water rights. "These additional water rights will not only protect service levels, but will also allow the District the ability to naturally blend our water supply to dilute chromium levels without the need for less ideal, and more expensive, chemical well head treatment," Mr. Bartz stated.

He also said the District hoped this effort "will translate into long-term savings for our customers because we would not have to invest in more costly alternatives. Although we will be using this compliance extension as an opportunity to reinvestigate all options, our current blending project may still be our best, and least costly, compliance method. We are a relatively small, rural water district and in spite of our size, our water quality exceeds standards with fewer resources than larger districts."

Mr. Bartz added the District would join any effort on the part of Water Districts throughout the state to seek a financial remedy should such an effort take place.

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For further information regarding this matter, please contact District staff at (760) 868-1212.

About the Phelan Pinon Hills Community Service District

Our Mission is to provide all authorized services reliably and economically for the promotion of community development and to utilize all available resources for maximum beneficial use. Our vision is to develop a Community Services District that enhances the living experience for all people within the District.