

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

ORDER 87-088

ORDER REQUIRING BOLINAS COMMUNITY PUBLIC UTILITY
DISTRICT TO CEASE AND DESIST FROM DISCHARGING WASTE
CONTRARY TO REQUIREMENTS PRESCRIBED IN ORDER NO. 82-40

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, hereinafter called the Board, finds that:

1. The Bolinas Community Public Utilities District (hereinafter called the Discharger) owns and operates a municipal wastewater system in Bolinas, Marin County, which presently collects, treats and disposes of approximately 30,000 gallons per day (gpd) of municipal sewage (average dry weather flow) from some 165 residences of the sewered portion of the community. The remainder of the community is served by private on-site wastewater systems. Wastewater from the sewered area is collected and pumped to a series of four oxidation ponds for stabilization and storage, with ultimate disposal through pond evaporation and spray disposal on some 45 acres of grassland.
2. On June 16, 1982 the Board adopted Order 82-40 prescribing waste discharge requirements for the discharge. the requirements of Order 82-40 provide, in part, as follows:

"A. Prohibitions

1. There shall be no bypass or overflow of sewage from the collection, treatment, or disposal system to waters of the State.

.....

C. Provisions

.....

2. The disposal of waste shall not cause degradation of groundwater suitable for domestic use or cause any quality parameter that would make groundwater unsuitable for irrigation use."
3. The present treatment and disposal system (lift station, four waste ponds and spray disposal facilities) were completed with a federal grant in 1975. A 900 foot section of pipeline was replaced and a force main installed as part of the treatment system. This eliminated the direct discharge of collected sewage to Bolinas lagoon.
4. The present collection system consists of approximately 8000 linear feet of 6-inch sewer and 2,400 linear feet of 8-inch sewer, constructed between 1908 and 1919. Other than the 900 feet replaced above much of the collection system is badly deteriorated. This situation has caused a severe infiltration/inflow (I/I) problem during the rainy season - resulting in excess flows and failures at the lift station, sewage bypassing, pond overflows, and over saturation of the disposal fields.

5. On February 27, 1985 the Discharger adopted Resolution No. 259, declaring a sewage collection system emergency and establishing a moratorium on new sewer connections until funding could be obtained to make the necessary repairs to correct the I/I and other system problems.
6. In a letter to the Board on April 10, 1985 the Marin County Health Department (County Health) declared the continuing failures in the Bolinas sewer system a real and potential public health hazard and requested the Board to do what it can to alleviate the problem.
7. On May 15, 1985 the Board adopted Resolution No. 85-0007 supporting the Discharger's moratorium on new sewer connections. The Resolution also recommended to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) that the Discharger be considered for a Pollution Study grant under the small community assistance section of the State Bond Law of 1984. If the study results (in conjunction with previous documented system problems) supported a public health hazard finding by the Board, then the Discharger could be placed on the Grants List for funding as a Class A project to correct the identified problems.
8. On February 27, 1986, the State Board approved a one year Study Pollution grant for the Discharger to investigate and document public health and water quality problems associated with the sewer system.
9. On February 18, 1987, the Board received a Pollution Study entitled "Wastewater Pollution Study for Bolinas Downtown Sewer System," dated January 1987 and prepared by Questa Engineering Corp. The main findings of the study are as follows:

Public Health Issues

- a. High rates in infiltration/inflow (I/I) occur in the sewer system and have, on a regular basis, been principally responsible for raw sewage bypasses to the environment and Bolinas Lagoon. This contributes to public health hazards.
- b. The majority of the collection system is very old, and contains numerous sources of I/I related to structural defects in the main sewer lines as well as from lateral connections. The sewer line on Brighton Avenue appears to be the greatest contributor of I/I, and should be replaced.
- c. Exfiltration during wet weather conditions at major pipe off-sets or storm drain crossings along the Brighton Avenue sewer line is suspected.

Water Quality issues

- a. The high I/I problem causes exceedance of storage and disposal capacity at the treatment plant. Excessive flows to the treatment plant exceed the storage and disposal capacity on an annual basis, and cause soil saturation and ponding of effluent in the spray area, and uncontrolled runoff of effluent to local watercourses which drain to Bolinas Lagoon and Bolinas Bay. Long-term monitoring indicates exceedance of bacteriological standards for tidal and non-tidal surface waters, with 10-percent of the fecal coliform in excess of 2,400 MPN/100 ml.
 - b. Excess ponding and seepage due to wastewater spray disposal operations have been responsible for substantial increases in levels of total dissolved solids (TDS), chloride, and sodium levels in groundwater underlying and immediate surrounding the disposal site. These increases seriously impair local groundwaters for domestic and irrigation water supply uses.
10. The State Department of Health has posted the Bolinas Lagoon prohibiting sport harvesting of shellfish due to high coliform counts. This prohibition has remained in effect for the last twelve years due, in part, to the continuing threat of contamination from the Bolinas PUD wastewater sewage system overflows.
 11. Excessive infiltration has introduced large amounts of abrasives into the system, causing accelerated wear on system components, such pumps and valves. A valve failure in the force main on May 15, 1987 was due to a worn valve ball dislodging from its seat and obstructing the pipe, causing a rupture. Over 100,000 gallons of raw sewage was spilled, much of which contaminated the Bolinas Lagoon and shellfish beds. The Health Department reposted the lagoon.
 12. The Board concurs with the Discharger and County Health that the present sewer collection/treatment system in Bolinas poses a hazard to public health and water quality.
 13. This action is an order to enforce waste discharge requirements adopted by the Board. This action is therefore exempt from provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15321 of the Resource Agency Guidelines.
 14. The Board after due notice to the Discharger and other affected persons, conducted a public hearing at which the Discharger appeared and evidence was received concerning the discharge.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

- A. The Bolinas Community Public Utilities District cease and desist from discharging wastes contrary to the requirements contained in Order No. 82-40 as listed in Finding 2 of this Order.

- B. Compliance with Order A. shall be achieved according to the following time schedule:

<u>Task</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
1. Submit a time schedule for correction of selected collection system & I/I problems	15 August 1987
2. Full Compliance	1 October 1989

I, Roger B. James, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an Order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, on July 15, 1987.


Roger B. James
Executive Officer