

## **State Water Resources Control Board Needs to Exert Some Self-Control**

California State Assemblyman Jeff Miller

Earlier this year, many of my colleagues from the Legislature from both parties joined me in signing a letter protesting the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) draft Industrial Storm Water permit.

The SWRCB has proposed a revised storm water permit that would require that businesses and public agencies comply with several new requirements that are over and above what the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandates and will result in hundreds of millions of dollars in additional costs with no proven environmental benefits.

Many California industries and many public agencies have warned the costs of these proposed storm water requirements would be huge, with no proven benefits. In addition, the SWRCB has not been willing to conduct any cost/benefit analysis or to look at less costly alternative methods for controlling storm water runoff.

We have urged the SWRCB to go back to the drawing board. We requested they conduct a cost-benefit analysis of this action and substantively engage with stakeholders.

**Unfortunately, the Water Board has so far ignored these requests. They have scheduled no new workshops or any other substantive meetings with stakeholders. They have prohibited Water Board Members from even meeting with stakeholders. Furthermore, they have stated there will be no cost-benefit analysis conducted on the permit.**

The Water Board's resistance occurs in spite of the fact more than 240 trade agencies, public entities, Legislators and businesses either testified or sent letters objecting to the Industrial Storm Water Permit. Here is an excerpt from the California Trucking Association's comments submitted to the State Water Board in response to their proposal:

*"CTA estimates that our members' facilities will face at least a 1000% increase in annual costs to comply with the current draft of the proposed permit. In California, the truck and bus rules alone will cost the trucking industry roughly \$6 billion. Additional regulatory expenses will only increase the existing regulatory burdens and may effectively run many California based businesses out-of-state or force them to shut down permanently."*

Nearly everyone who commented on the Storm Water permit agreed that before moving forward with its next draft, the Water Board should conduct a cost benefit analysis that would:

- Measure its environmental benefits.
- Calculate its impact on jobs, the economy and the costs it would impose on public agencies and private employers.
- Identify alternative storm water management strategies.

**Despite this reasonable request from many Legislators and stakeholders, I am concerned that Board staff does not plan to conduct any economic or cost-benefit analysis before issuing its draft permit this summer.** Incredibly, this means the Water Board will continue to forge ahead on this permit ignoring the facts presented to them by schools, local governments, Legislators and businesses that the costs of implementing this permit would be hundreds of

millions of dollars, reduced funding for schools and local government services, harm to businesses and the loss of jobs.

I will continue to stay on top of the SWRCB's process with regard to this costly proposal. Additional information can be found at [www.WiseWaterRegs.com](http://www.WiseWaterRegs.com).

---

Assemblyman Jeff Miller represents the 71<sup>st</sup> Assembly District