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State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



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FUE

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**Mr. Bruce Ambo, Public Services Director
City of Morro Bay
955 Shasta Avenue
Morro Bay, CA 93442**

ASHURST WELL FIELD

Thank you for the cooperation provided during the 2008 State Project Water (SPW) Shutdown. During the event, the Department of Public Health, Drinking Water Field Operations Branch, Carpinteria District Office (Department), was contacted by a concerned resident. The resident received a notice from the City of Morro Bay Water Department (City) concerning the quality of water they would be receiving during the SPW shutdown. The notice warned the affected residents to not drink the water due to elevated nitrate levels and suggested the use of under the counter, residential drinking water treatment units before drinking the water.

Public Notices

Unfortunately, the Department was unaware the City was potentially delivering non-potable water to approximately eleven connections and was also unaware the City was issuing the notice. The City must always consult the Department when 'Do Not Drink' notices, or any other notices related to a change in the quality of drinking water, are served to customers. This allows the Department to review the notice for content and to be prepared if customers call with concerns. The notice delivered to the eleven customers should not have recommended the use of 'point of use' reverse osmosis units owned by the customers. Neither the City or the Department can be certain these devices are properly maintained and operated and therefore cannot ensure the water delivered would be safe to drink.

All future notices of this nature must be approved by the Department. For a list of notices containing required language please visit:
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/drinkingwater/Pages/Notices.aspx>.

ASHURST WELLFIELD (Wells 9, 9A, 10, 10A and 16)

During discussions concerning the reason for issuing the public notice, the City explained that water from the Ashurst Well Field was needed to make up for the water that was unavailable due to the SPW shutdown. Well 16 was used to provide this

additional water. The well exceeds the nitrate standard at times as do most of the wells in the Ashurst Wellfield. Well 11A is a Chorro Valley Well that is and has historically been low in nitrates. Well 11A is the easternmost well located approximately 2 miles from the Ashurst Wellfield. The City operates Well 11A regularly.

In the past, the Department understood that Well 11A served several customers before blending with the Ashurst Wells (if used) before reaching a dedicated line serving the Kings Tanks. The Quintana Chlorination Station has been identified as the location where the Chorro Valley Wells blend. Prior to the installation of a chlorination facility at Well 16 in 2007, Wells 9, 9A, 10, 10A and 16 (if used) were chlorinated at the Quintana Chlorination Station.

The City has expressed concern regarding the quality of water served to approximately eleven connections near the Chorro Valley Wells. Due to the distribution system configuration, the City said there was a remote chance, under an unusual hydraulic condition, these eleven connections could receive water which is not properly blended.

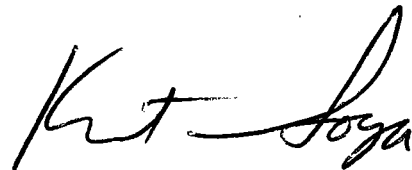
The Department is requiring the City to cease the use of the Ashurst Wells 9, 9A, 10, 10A and 16. This letter serves as a notice to the City that the Department has changed the operational status of these wells to inactive.

To reactivate these wells the City must submit an application, to the Department, for their use. The application must include:

- A proposal for nitrate treatment for the Ashurst Wells. The treatment (e.g. blending) must be provided before any customer connections.
- Plans of the distribution system piping. The plans must clearly show service connections and the junction of water from Well 11A with water supplied from the Ashurst Wellfield. The plans must also show the dedicated line to the Kings Tanks and service line returning from Kings Tanks to the east end of town.
- A chlorination plan for the Ashurst Wells. The plan shall describe how all Ashurst Wells are chlorinated prior to delivery to customers.

If you have any questions regarding this letter please contact Jeff Densmore at (805) 566-1326.

Sincerely,



**Kurt Souza, P.E., Chief
Southern California Section
CDPH-DWFOB**