

The Safe Drinking Water Pilot Project

SB1xx allocates \$2 million to the SWRCB to develop pilot programs to clean up nitrate-contaminated groundwater used for drinking water in the Tulare Lake Basin and the Salinas Valley.

What's the goal?

To improve the understanding of the causes of nitrate contamination of groundwater used as a source of drinking water and to identify potential solutions and sources of sustainable funding to implement those solutions. The SWRCB will develop a pilot program with analysis of options for clean up or treatment of nitrate contaminated groundwater in the Tulare Lake Basin and Salinas Valley.

Who's doing it?

Department of Public Health (DPH) will provide the funding out of the \$50 million allocated for its groundwater contamination program under Prop. 84. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) will develop the pilot programs, working with the Central Valley and Central Coast Regional Water Boards.

What does it include?

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is required to:

- Identify categories of nitrate dischargers and estimate the proportionate contribution of each source and category to the nitrate problem in the Tulare Lake Basin and in the Salinas Valley, and examine its own regulatory authority to control these discharges.
- Identify and analyze options to reduce current nitrate levels and prevent continuing nitrate contamination.
- Collaborate with DPH to identify methods and costs for treatment of nitrate contamination and provision of alternative water supply to groundwater-reliant communities, identify funding sources of nitrate cleanup and groundwater treatment, and create recommendations for developing a groundwater cleanup program for the Central Valley Water Quality Control Region and the Central Coast Water Quality Control Region based upon pilot project results.

What is the deliverable?

The SWRCB must:

- Submit a report to the legislature on the scope and findings of the projects within 2 years of receiving funding.
- Implement recommendations for developing a groundwater cleanup program for the Central Valley Water Quality Control Region and the Central Coast Water Quality Control Region based upon pilot project results within 2 years of submitting the report to the Legislature.

The full text of SB-1xx is available at http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/07-08/bill/sen/sb_0001-0050/sbx2_1_bill_20080930_chaptered.pdf