

AUTOMATIC WATER SOFTENERS

in the Santa Clarita Valley

FACT SHEET



The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, which oversees the Santa Clara River, set a chloride limit of 100 milligrams per liter (mg/L) for discharges to the Santa Clara River.

The Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District (SCVSD) operates two water reclamation plants that discharge to the Santa Clara River. Historical and current discharges exceed the chloride limit of 100 mg/L. The plants utilize conventional wastewater treatment that is not designed to remove chloride from the wastewater. Installation of equipment to remove the chloride is costly and will be funded by all SCVSD ratepayers.

The SCVSD determined that the largest controllable source of chloride coming into the plants was from the use of residential automatic water softeners (AWS), also known as self-regenerating water softeners. Reducing the amount of chloride coming from residential AWS has reduced the size and cost of chloride removal equipment needed at the plants thereby benefiting all SCVSD ratepayers.

To maximize cost savings for the community, the SCVSD Board approved an installation ban (Ordinance Prohibiting the Installation of Certain Water Softening Appliances) making it illegal to install new AWS after March 27, 2003.

To encourage removal of water softeners, in 2005 the SCVSD began offering rebates to homeowners that removed and turned in their AWS. Rebates are still being paid today.

Building upon the initial success of the voluntary removal program, on November 4, 2008, 64 percent of the area voters approved Measure S, the Santa Clara River Chloride Reduction Ordinance of 2008, which required the removal of all AWS from homes in the SCVSD by June 30, 2009. Rebates continue to be paid.

To date, rebates have been paid for the removal of over 8,000 AWS. This has resulted in a significant reduction of chloride from the SCVSD water reclamation plants of about 55 mg/L and savings of approximately \$100 million for our ratepayers. However, sampling indicates that as many as 500 AWS may still be discharging. These AWS cost the entire SCVSD community and must be removed. Non-operating AWS also need to be removed. Rebates are still available for the removal of qualified AWS.

The SCVSD staff is visiting homes where there is reason to believe that an AWS was installed but for which no rebate has been paid. Any home found to have an existing AWS is potentially subject to a Notice of Violation, a fine of up to \$1000, and/or up to 30 days in jail.

REBATES FOR REMOVAL OF AWS ARE STILL AVAILABLE.

Visit www.lacsd.org/chloride or call 1-877-CUT-SALT for more information on the AWS ban. For more information on the SCVSD's Chloride Compliance efforts, please visit www.lacsd.org.



Converting Waste Into Resources

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