



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
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U.S. EPA fines East Bay communities and municipal utility district for sewage discharge violations

SAN FRANCISCO – Today the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board announced that the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) and five East Bay communities will be assessed \$389,300 in penalties for violating the terms of a 2014 settlement designed to prevent untreated sewage from entering San Francisco Bay.

“East Bay communities made commitments to upgrade aging sewer infrastructure to protect the waters of San Francisco Bay and surrounding communities,” said Alexis Strauss, EPA’s Acting Regional Administrator for the Pacific Southwest. “We’re taking this action to ensure diligent attention to renewal of wastewater infrastructure.”

“Protecting San Francisco Bay is a top priority of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board,” said Executive Officer Bruce Wolfe. “That includes ensuring compliance with agreements reached with East Bay MUD and the East Bay communities to prevent sewage spills that contaminate the bay. We will continue to monitor compliance with the 2014 settlement, which will benefit the entire region.”

Under the 2014 Clean Water Act settlement, EBMUD and seven East Bay communities paid a \$1.5 million civil penalty for past sewage discharges and agreed to assess and upgrade their 1,500-mile-long sewer system infrastructure over a 21-year period. Since that time, 720 miles of sewer have been inspected and about \$80 million has been spent to rehabilitate nearly 100 miles of sewer pipe.

The parties are being assessed the following penalties for violations of the settlement that occurred between September 22, 2014, and June 30, 2017:

- **City of Oakland** - \$226,500 - Failure to prevent sanitary sewer overflows from reaching waters and failure to repair acute defects within one year.
- **EBMUD** - \$134,000 - Failure to prevent sanitary sewer overflows from reaching waters and failure to meet effluent limitations for chlorine and coliform.
- **Stege Sanitary District (serving El Cerrito, Kensington, and a portion of Richmond)** - \$26,800 - Failure to prevent sanitary sewer overflows from reaching waters.

- **City of Alameda** - \$1,200 - Failure to prevent sanitary sewer overflows from reaching waters.
- **City of Albany** - \$400 - Failure to prevent sanitary sewer overflows from reaching waters.
- **City of Berkeley** - \$400 - Failure to prevent sanitary sewer overflows from reaching waters.

When wastewater infrastructure is not properly maintained, untreated sewage can escape and be discharged to the bay. Older sewer systems in particular can be overwhelmed during rainstorms, releasing untreated sewage. In addition to polluting waterways, untreated sewage can spread disease-causing organisms, metals and nutrients that threaten public health. Sewage can also deplete oxygen in the bay, threatening fish, seals and other wildlife.

Read the settlement at: <https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/consent-decree-and-stipulated-orders-east-bay-municipal-utility-district>

Learn more about efforts to protect San Francisco Bay at <https://www.epa.gov/sfbay-delta> and <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/>.

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