



Monterey County

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Board Report

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Receive a presentation from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to announce a new free domestic well drinking water testing program, and direct staff to collaborate with the Regional Water Quality Control Board on the outreach efforts in support of the program.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Monterey:

Receive a presentation from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to announce a new free domestic well drinking water testing program, and direct staff to collaborate with the Regional Water Quality Control Board on the outreach efforts in support of the program.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

The Monterey County Health Department/Environmental Health ("EHB") is responsible for the oversight of domestic drinking water within the County. EHB works in conjunction with the State Water Board and associated agencies to ensure the public has access to safe drinking water. As part of these cooperative efforts to work together to protect the public's right to safe drinking water, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board is sponsoring a free, voluntary drinking water testing program for residents in the Central Coast who obtain their drinking water from a private or shared groundwater well. This program is intended to help inform residents who do not obtain their drinking water from a public water system about the safety of their drinking water. It is also intended to inform the need for and development of safe drinking water solutions.

Groundwater in areas of the Central Coast Region may contain unsafe levels of nitrate, arsenic, or other harmful compounds. Unlike public water systems, private domestic and shared wells, which typically serve a single residence or up to fourteen residential dwellings, are not required to be regularly tested for contaminants. With approximately 44,000 domestic wells and several thousand shared wells in the Central Coast Region, the State Water Board, United States Environmental Protection Agency, and the Health Department recommend that residents who do not get their water from a public water system have their drinking water tested annually by a certified laboratory to ensure the water is safe to drink.

The testing results will be provided to participating residents along with information regarding how to interpret the results, what to do if the well is contaminated, and how to protect the well from contamination. Additional information will be provided regarding the availability of free replacement water programs.

The purpose of the presentation is to provide information to the Board of Supervisors and the public about the free water quality testing that is available to people living in the Central Coast Region who

get their drinking water from a private domestic or shared well that is not part of a public water system and for staff to receive direction from the Board regarding collaboration of outreach efforts. Introducing this presentation are:

Monterey County

- John Ramirez, Director, Environmental Health Bureau, Health Department

Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

- Matt Keeling, Assistant Executive Officer

While this work is not directly in support of a Health Department strategic initiative, it is in support of one or more of the ten essential public health services, specifically to enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Monterey County Health Department; Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board; State Water Board.

FINANCING:

There is no financial impact for receiving this status report.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

Check the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives:

☐ Economic Development:

- Through collaboration, strengthen economic development to ensure a diversified and healthy economy.

☐ Administration:

- Promote an organization that practices efficient and effective resource management and is recognized for responsiveness, strong customer orientation, accountability and transparency.

☒ Health & Human Services:

- Improve health and quality of life through County supported policies, programs, and services; promoting access to equitable opportunities for healthy choices and healthy environments in collaboration with communities.

☐ Infrastructure:

- Plan and develop a sustainable, physical infrastructure that improves the quality of life for County residents and supports economic development results.

☐ Public Safety:

- Create a safe environment for people to achieve their potential, leading businesses and communities to thrive and grow by reducing violent crimes as well as crimes in general.

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Attachment: R3 Well Testing Fact Sheets (in English and Spanish) is on file with the Clerk of the

Board