

# **1995 SEWER USE ORDINANCE REVISIONS**

## **Ordinance Provisions and Local Limits for Industrial Wastewater Discharges**

ordinance provisions became effective in January 1995 that affect businesses and institutions discharging wastewater to the sewer or to the storm drain system. The provisions clarify that the discharge of contaminated water to the storm drain system is not allowed. Discharges to the sewer are being further controlled to assist the Regional Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP) in meeting stringent Bay discharge limits. A summary of the provisions is available from the RWQCP at (415) 329-2598.

The key components of the ordinance are:

- new discharge limits for copper and nickel, with special pollution prevention provisions for metal finishers (see below);
- design requirements for new and existing facilities to prevent violations and unauthorized discharges to sewers and storm drains;
- an administrative penalty (fines) program;
- Best Management Practices for machine shops;
- cooling system additive use restrictions and management requirements; and
- clarification that pollutant discharges from construction sites to storm drains are prohibited.

The greatest impact of the ordinance provisions is on metal finishing facilities that plate, etch, or chemically clean copper. Metal finishers that work with copper have two options for compliance. The first option is to install specified Reasonable Control Measures (RCMs) and meet an annual average copper concentration limit of 0.4 mg/l of copper in the wastewater discharge. Alternatively, metal finishers may select the second option, which is to meet an annual copper mass limit consistent with implementing facility-specific pollution prevention measures that have a payback period of five years or less. Metal finishers had to implement the chosen option and meet their new discharge limits by July 1, 1996. The RWQCP assisted metal finishing businesses in deciding which compliance option to choose and developed mass limits where needed. The flow chart on the reverse side shows the process that was used to make these determinations and implement the ordinance.

Industrial discharges other than metal finishers must also meet a new limit for copper concentration in wastewater discharge. Their new limit will be 0.25 mg/l of copper (maximum) in their wastewater discharge effective July 1, 1998. Non-metal finishing

industrial facilities are being given a more stringent copper discharge limit because they do not use high strength copper-bearing solutions, making this lower limit achievable with normal water quality protection measures. Additional time was provided for non-metal finishing facilities to meet their new limit so that they can examine the effects of planned actions by water supply agencies and others to reduce corrosion of copper in piping and faucets. Following any water supply system adjustments made in the next several years, businesses and institutions may need to optimize their own operations to achieve compliance with the copper discharge limit prior to the July 1, 1998 deadline.

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# Discharge Compliance Program Flow Diagram

