

# Water Board Moves Toward Sliding Scale Permit Fees

At the June 20, 2014 Permit Fee meeting, the Water Board Fee Branch staff indicated that they would consider implementation of a sliding scale Stormwater Program Permit Fee as proposed by CADRA, SoCal GMP, and Brash Industries. The Sliding Scale Proposal was presented by Mr. Marvin Sachse, the only meeting attendee representing industrial permittees. The proposed program establishes an annual fee rate based upon a measure of permittee size, such as: number of employees, facility size, or gross revenue, with smaller facilities paying a lower fee than larger facilities.

The Sliding Stormwater Permit Fee concept was proposed by Mr. Sachse to the State Water Board three years ago and Mr. Sachse has been encouraging its adoption ever since. Water Board Fee Branch staff members advised Mr. Sachse that the Water Board Fee Branch supported the concept and would be working to implement fee reductions and fee scaling when the new Industrial General Permit is implemented on July 1, 2015.

The Water Board Fee Branch staff appreciated Mr. Sachse's presentation and requested a formal submission of his presentation along with the backup material used in the presentation that demonstrated Arizona's utilization of a sliding fee schedule based upon acreage and Washington State's program based upon gross sales which includes a fee reduction provision for hardship, ability to pay, and small businesses. The Stormwater Permit fees for Nevada and Oregon are, respectively, ½ to ⅓ that of the fees charged in California. Mr. Sachse pointed out that California municipalities were also charging Stormwater fees, giving the perception of double charging for the same program.

Mr. Sachse also described the overall condition of the State's economy and the impacts the large Permit fees have on the small business operator which could result in Stormwater program abandonment which, ultimately, reduces the number of permittees and the overall level of compliance. In a conversation with one of the Water Board Fee staff members, it was mentioned that there would not be a fee increase next year.