ITEM NO. 11.1

DIRECTOR AB 1234 REPORT

Director Name: Kathye Armitage

Meeting Attended: "Understanding and Addressing PFAS in our Water" webinar hosted by the Southern California Water Coalition

Date of Meeting: February 19, 2021

Location: Virtual

Board Meeting to Be Presented At: March 2, 2021

Points of Interest:

- Panelists:
  - Robert Beste, Assistant General Manager, Water Replenishment District of Southern California
  - Steven Carmona, City Manager, City of Pico Rivera, California
  - Jason Dadakis, Executive Director, Water Quality and Technical Resources, Orange County Water District
  - Scott Grieco, P.E. Ph.D., Global Technology Leader, Jacobs
  - Craig Miller, General Manager, Western Municipal Water District
  - Dan Newton, California State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water
  - Steve Tedesco, Senior Vice President, Tetra Tech
- Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) is a class of over 4,000 man-made chemicals that are in things we use everyday and are called "forever chemicals" because they don't break down easily
- Exposure to PFAS has affects on human health
- In California alone, PFAS has been found in over 660 wells, affecting 209 water systems in six counties
- Some agencies have implemented PFAS treatment systems, others are working to implement them
- What levels are safe?
  - California doesn't have a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL), but does have a Response Level and Notification Level
  - Currently working on Public Health Goal by reviewing literature
  - The state does not intend to create a MCL for each individual compound, but instead intends to create MCLs for groups of compounds
- Regional governing water agencies/groundwater managers have started to create policies to help smaller agencies with capital costs for PFAS treatment by either covering them or sharing them
- What is being done to minimize costs?
  - Scientists are investigating different types of media that can be used

        - Novel sorbents are showing good results
        - As new media that last longer become available, they will help to reduce operating costs for PFAS treatment
    - From engineering/construction perspective, it is recommended to be forward-thinking and save room on treatment facility sites for additional regulations coming down the road that may require adding to your design
        - They are seeing a lot of sites that are too small and will need upgrading/upsizing
        - Will save money in the future to plan for that in the design phase
- How do we prevent/reduce PFAS contamination going forward?
    - We need to look at manufacturing streams and think about the products used in manufacturing before we use them
    - Incorporate flexibility into treatment systems (i.e. have vessels that can allow switch to other media) and setting aside more space
- How do we ensure that after initial treatment the residuals don't re-enter the environment?
    - With current technology, we are dealing with reactivation of carbon that is sent back for high temperature process
        - Concern now is that the process may not be efficient in destroying PFAS and we need a better understanding of the process
        - Secure hazardous waste landfill is another option
        - A lot of work being done on true destructive technologies
    - Some areas have to think about PFAS treatment in both their drinking water and wastewater systems
- PFAS is just one of the costly issues for water providers (aging infrastructure being another big one). How do you communicate the costs of PFAS removal to customers/ratepayers?
    - Need to communicate that the cost of PFAS removal is an investment and that you don't want to shortcut on water quality
        - Help customers understand the costs that have to be made
    - If you are looking for outside funding sources to help with costs, communicate that
    - Good communication takes effort and is not free, but it is key
- California has communities that struggle with affordability
    - These are often areas where a lot manufacturing took place/still take place
    - Efforts are being taken to help offset the additional costs for PFAS treatment using state and federal programs
    - Some areas getting creative through cost-sharing with regional partners in neighboring cities
    - A lot of these smaller agencies don't have the technical expertise and can benefit from a turnkey system for them to put in and use for treatment

The webinar was recorded and can be viewed at:
https://socalwater.org/watch-waterqualitymatters-webinar-video-on-demand/