



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Important Milestone Reached for Quail Valley Community

MENIFEE, CA—A significant amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin is now in effect, allowing for discharges from new septic systems in Quail Valley when certain exemptions are met. This important update for the Quail Valley community has been years in the making and took a multi-agency effort by Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD), Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (Santa Ana Water Board), County of Riverside, and City of Menifee.

On September 14, 2020 the amendment to the Quail Valley On-site Septic Tank-Subsurface Disposal System, which prohibited discharge from new septic systems in Quail Valley, was approved by the State Office of Administrative Law. The amendment had been previously approved by the Santa Ana Water Board on January 16, 2020, but needed this final approval in order to be put into effect. While new septic system discharge is still prohibited in Quail Valley, exemptions are now in effect in Subareas 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, or 8 (see map link) as long as there is no sewer service to the property.

The Quail Valley community, located in the city of Menifee, had been prohibited from discharging waste from new septic tanks by the state of California since 2006 because of rising groundwater and sewage that occurred from heavy rains. This state action impacted property owners and new construction. When the prohibition was inacted, officials were responding to public health concerns due to wastewater from failing septic tanks polluting groundwater and surface waters, as well as downstream Canyon Lake, which is a drinking water source. The Quail Valley mass and leaching surface (that would normally absorb and percolate wastewater) was inadequate to accommodate the volume of wastewater produced in the community.

Mayor Pro Tempore, Matthew Liesemeyer, who represents District 2 where Quail Valley is located, shared how important this amendment is to the community. “The City of Menifee is very happy to see the amendment approved. The amendment to the prohibition on new septic tank discharge represents an important milestone for the Quail Valley community, from both a property owner and commercial perspective. We appreciate the multi-agency and developer partnership that made this possible as well as the efforts and support from the Quail Valley Environmental Coalition. We look forward to continuing to work as a group to secure additional funding to assist the other subareas in Quail Valley.”

City leaders worked to implement the Quail Valley Septic Tank Emergency Response Plan (QVERP) and address septic tank flows that caused sewage to flow through yards and along streets. The Santa Ana Water Board prohibition on discharges from new septic systems stated no new septic systems could be installed in Quail Valley until two areas of the community receive sewer service. This prohibition was not to be lifted until sewer service is provided to, at minimum, Subareas 4 and 9. Sewer service is provided to Quail Valley by the EMWD. EMWD has been working with other local and state agency partners to actively seek funding to install new sewer pipes and resolve this problem.



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“EMWD is pleased to continue working with the City of Menifee, Santa Ana Water Board, and our partners at the state and federal levels on finding solutions that benefit both the Quail Valley community and our ratepayers,” said Ron Sullivan, President of EMWD’s Board of Directors.

In 2018, EMWD began work to install a sewer line up Goetz Road and down portions of Vista Way, Casa Bonita Avenue, Platino Drive, Datil Drive, and La Cresta Way. The total \$19.6 million cost for Subarea 9, Phase 1, which saw more than 150 homes connected to the new sewer and more than 70 vacant parcels provided with access to sewer connections. In addition to these completed sewer connections, the new mainline up Goetz Road was built to accommodate all future flows from the Quail Valley region (not just Subarea 9). This long-range planning maximizes funding and reduces the needs to return years later for additional construction impacts to the community. The City of Menifee provided funding, along with the State Water Resources Control Board, Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, Santa Ana Water Board, EMWD, and developer assistance. EMWD continues to work with the City of Menifee, the Santa Ana Water Board, the State of California, and federal representatives on a solution for the rest of Subarea 9 and Subarea 4.

EMWD, Santa Ana Water Board, County of Riverside, and City of Menifee appreciate the community’s patience while this critical work was done to ensure the health and safety of Quail Valley residents and also the environment.

Now that the prohibition has been amended, any construction, property additions, and improvements will be subject to ongoing regular application, reviews, inspections, and maintenance as outlined on the following webpages:

City of Menifee manages issuance of building permits:

<https://cityofmenifee.us/328/Building-Safety-Permits>

EMWD manages water/sewer connections for new construction and ongoing service:

<https://www.emwd.org/emwd-construction-updates>

County of Riverside manages septic structures, and will continue to inspect and approve percolation or cite/enforce. Citations may be issued for tanks that do not pass inspection:

<http://rivcoeh.org/OurServices/LandDevelopment/SepticSystems>



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For general information regarding Quail Valley septic tanks and sewer projects, please contact the following agencies:

City of Menifee

<http://www.cityofmenifee.us/PublicWorks>

Eastern Municipal Water District

<https://www.emwd.org/emwd-construction-updates> or call direct line: (951) 928-3777 ext. 4206

Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Board

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/santaana/water_issues/programs/septic_tanks/quail_valley.html

County of Riverside

<http://rivcoeh.org/OurServices/LandDevelopment/SepticSystems>

[Please click here for a map of Quail Valley sewer study subareas.](#)

PROJECT PARTNERS

Eastern Municipal Water District, Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, County of Riverside, and the City of Menifee



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ABOUT MENIFEE: *Situated in the heart of southern Riverside County along Interstate 215, Menifee is a vibrant, new city of more than 95,000 residents who enjoy a pleasant year-round climate, abundant recreational offerings, reasonably priced housing and convenient proximity to some of Southern California's premiere attractions and employment centers. Within its 50 square miles, Menifee's business, retail and entertainment outlets are starting to shape the community's character and this growing economic base is also contributing favorably to the city's strong financial position. Menifee's growing family-oriented population values the city's ongoing commitment to public safety, community events and smart growth for the future. All of these elements are working together to support the city's strategic vision to make Menifee one of the state's most promising new cities.*