

**MWD**

METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

April 5, 1993

(Executive Committee--Information)
 (Water Problems Committee--Information)
 To: Board of Directors (Special Committee on Legislation--
 Information)

From: General Manager

Subject: Proposed Legislation to Allow the Use of Copper Sulfate in
 Drinking Water Reservoirs to Control Algae Growth

Report

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) has recently been the subject of a legal complaint from the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) to prevent the use of the algicide copper sulfate in drinking water reservoirs due to the potential to impact aquatic life. In response, LADWP has worked with Senator Rogers of Inyo County to sponsor legislation (SB 1164) to assure the continued use of copper sulfate in drinking water reservoirs without prosecution from the CDFG. Metropolitan supports LADWP in this effort, and plans to coordinate with LADWP staff to develop legislative proposals to address this issue.

Copper sulfate is used widely throughout California and the continued use of copper sulfate in drinking water reservoirs is extremely critical to Metropolitan, LADWP, and other drinking water purveyors, for the following reasons:

- The use of copper sulfate in water supply reservoirs is necessary in many cases to control taste and odor problems associated with algae growth, in order to provide water which complies with state and federal secondary drinking water standards for taste and odor and to achieve the highest standards of customer satisfaction.
- The use of copper sulfate is necessary to assure maximum performance at drinking water treatment plants. Specifically, excessive algae growth in water supply reservoirs affects water treatment by: 1) impairing adequate filtration performance at the treatment plant; 2) increasing pH which affects the coagulation process; and 3) causing fluctuations in the dissolved oxygen level which affects effluent quality.

- Copper sulfate use is also important to prevent blooms of potentially toxic algae in water supply reservoirs.
- Currently, copper sulfate use is critical to drinking water suppliers because there are no other effective means to controlling excessive algae growth in water supply reservoirs.

There are two different legislative approaches that may be taken to resolve the copper sulfate issue, and assure the continued use of copper sulfate by drinking water purveyors. One approach would be to specifically amend the California Fish and Game Code to allow the use of this algicide in drinking water reservoirs to control excessive algae growth and comply with state secondary drinking water standards.

Another legislative approach would involve drafting language to amend the California Health and Safety Code to allow the use of copper sulfate and other algicides in water supply reservoirs in order to control excessive algae growth, and also to state in the code that this provision takes precedent over provisions of the California Fish and Game Code. Metropolitan staff prefers this legislative approach because amending the Health and Safety Code would be more acceptable to the interested parties and this approach is more likely to be successful.

Metropolitan staff will support the LADWP staff in their development of legislative proposals to address this issue. We anticipate that the Department of Water Resources and the Department of Health Services will coordinate with LADWP to develop valid legislative proposals and support LADWP in this effort.

Board Committee Assignments

This letter is referred for information to:

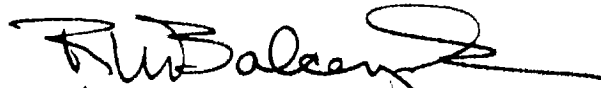
The Executive Committee because of its authority with regard to legislation sponsored by the District or in any way affecting the District, pursuant to Administrative Code Section 2417 (a);

The Water Problems Committee because of its authority with regard to policies, sources, and means of importing water required by the District, pursuant to Administrative Code, Section 2481 (a); and

The Special Committee on Legislation because of its authority to review proposals for State and Federal legislation that may affect the District, pursuant to Administrative Code, Section 2581 (a).

Recommendation

For information only.



Richard W. Balcerzak

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