

Local Government Operations Protocol Comments Orange County Sanitation District

Dear Ms. Tornek,

The purpose of this communication is to present our General Comments to the recently (July 10, 2008) released Local Government Operations Protocol developed by your organization together with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the Organization of Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI). Orange County Sanitation District (OCSD) operates two large Wastewater Treatment Plants in Southern California serving 3.5 million residents and numerous businesses. We are actively involved in developing the inventory of Greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions and the cost-efficient and technologically advances means of reduction of such emissions and proactively responding to the challenges caused by the Climate change (CC) and its impact to our current and future operations. We are conducting this work in cooperation with the National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACWA), Water Environment Federation (WEF), Southern California Alliance of POTW (SCAP) and as a part of specially created California Wastewater Climate Change Group (CWCCG) consisting of more than 20 Water and Wastewater agencies representing all parts of the State. Our comments are as follows:

- We do not believe that the Protocol in its current form might be applicable to Special Districts (Introduction and Part I). Local Governments do not own and/or operate or otherwise exercise the control over the Sanitation Districts operations and therefore can't be responsible for emissions inventory and further reduction of GHG emissions from the large wastewater facilities. Only usually insignificant part of wastewater treatment operations under the local governments control as defined in Part II might be subjects to guidance of the Protocol
- We disagree that the biogenic emissions, in particular from combustion of digester gas, should be reported separately from Scope 1 emissions. CARB requires all combustion GHG emissions (e.g. from power generation with a capacity more than 1MW) to be quantified and reported. We do not believe in the separate and different kind of reporting of the same emissions using different protocols.
- The general formula (Activity data x emission factor = GHG emissions) in Part III is way too simplified and can't be applied to such complex bodies as cities or municipalities and even specific facilities. Despite seemingly more complicated equations in Part III as related to Centralized Wastewater Treatment Facilities the basic assumption remains the same. The proposed equations (especially 10.4 through 10.10) are based on such unreliable information as "population served" that the emissions of GHG using these EFs will remain under the well-based suspicion. We'd prefer the usage of the methodology that utilizes mostly site-specific collected or standardized requirements (e.g. NPDS permits or operational monitoring data)
- The relationship between the CARB mandatory reporting requirements and the corresponding CCAR programs (Chapters 14 and 15) is too complicated and might eventually lead to double counting (or underreporting) of emissions. We believe that the mandatory reporting in compliance with AB-32 requirements should be superior to any other reporting programs and could be transferred to other programs (e.g. to CCAR or TCR) "as is" without additional changing and accommodating. As we understand, this position is supported by the CARB as expressed in its staff comments during the Public Workshop on July 10th.

- We support the organization of the Standard Reporting under the Protocol and believe that it might be of a significant help and actually provide the important base to the GHG reporting especially helpful for the organizations that do not have a big experience in GHG determination and reporting. Still we should repeat our belief that the biogenic emissions, not just from digester gas combustion, and the applicable renewable energy credits and/or offset should be parts of the reporting body and not included in the some kind of the separate Information items. We especially believe that the proactive work by our and other sister agencies should be specially reported and the corresponding “green credits” should be noted and recorded.

As we understand, the work on the part of the Protocol related to the Centralized Wastewater Treatment Facilities is not completed and likely will be continued in the coming months. We believe that our statewide organization (CWCCG) should be significantly more involved in this work. We expect to be closely involved in these efforts and will submit our specific comments as the corresponding material becomes available.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in your important work and submit the above comments. If you have questions please contact me at 714-593-7085 (vkogan@ocsd.com)

Regards

VK

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