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Water Quality Requirements for Beef - Cattle Feedlots, Auction Yards, & Other Newly Regulated Confined Animal Facilities Now in Effect

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Under the Bovine Feedlot General Order (“Order”) adopted in 2017, waste-discharge regulatory requirements imposed by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (“Regional Board”) are now in effect and apply to commercial beef-cattle operations where six or more animals (or at least 6,000 pounds of livestock) are confined for more than 45 days in one year.

Operations that fall under the Order must have applied for a permit by July 1, 2018. Operators that failed to file for a permit by the deadline may be subject to a penalty of up to \$1,000 for each day that their application is late. Permitted operations are required to regularly sample and monitor the wastes created by their operations, monitor groundwater quality, maintain records of the operation’s waste-management activities, and prepare and submit annual reports.

Some beef-cattle operations, such as auction yards, may be able to obtain permit coverage under a separate tier of the Order for Limited Population Operations. Regional Board staff will review an operation’s application and advise the operation if the criteria is met for the lower tier.

The application for a permit under the Order, called a “Notice of Intent for Confined Bovine Feeding Operations,” requires the operator to submit information regarding the current and largest number of animals in a single month over the last three years, details on the operation’s waste production and reuse (e.g., any land application of wastewater), manure and bedding removal, flood protection and runoff controls, composting operations, and to attach a map showing the operation’s production and land application areas.

Operators must also include a fee with their application. The fee ranges from \$0 to \$9,937 and is calculated based on the type of operation (feedlot or finishing/auction yard), and the type of animal (e.g., heifer, calf, cow/calf pair, etc.) confined at the facility.

If you would like more information about how the Bovine Feedlot General Order may affect you or your business, please contact us at contact@HartmanKingLaw.com.

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