

Faye Thomas

From: Meredith McCarthy <mmccarthy@healthebay.org>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 5:28 PM
To: Clerk of Board
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Heal the Bay Final Comments
Attachments: AQMD Public Comment 11_18_24FINAL.pdf

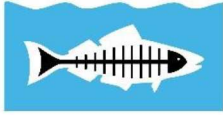
Please disregard the earlier version of Heal the Bay comments for Hyperion abatement review. Please use this instead. Thank you.



MEREDITH MCCARTHY | SR. DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY OUTREACH & CONNECTION
She/Her/Hers ([What does this mean?](#))
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11/18/24

South Coast AQMD
21865 Copley Drive
Diamond Bar, CA

Sent via email to: Clerkofboard@aqmd.gov

RE: LOS ANGELES CITY SANITATION BUREAU, HYPERION WATER RECLAMATION PLANT ORDER

To Chair Delgado and Board Members:

Heal the Bay is a non-profit environmental organization with nearly 40 years of experience dedicated to making the coastal waters and watersheds of Greater Los Angeles safe, healthy, and clean. We use science, education, community action, and advocacy to fulfill our mission. We would first like to recognize that we are on unceded Indigenous land. The scope of our work takes place across the lands of coastal Indigenous Peoples and Native Nations of the Tongva, Chumash, Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, and Kizh Nation tribes.¹ We would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to elders past, present, and emerging, as they continue their stewardship of these lands and waters.

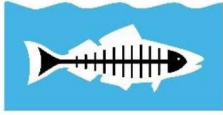
Heal the Bay would like to submit the following comments regarding the Los Angeles City Sanitation Bureau, Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant Order for review of the Abatement order. We submit these comments to provide potentially relevant information regarding the algal bloom and subsequent foul odors associated with algal bloom die off that occurred during the last two weeks of October 2024.

Background

A bioluminescent algal bloom in Santa Monica Bay occurs when strong winds move surface water offshore allowing for an upwelling of nutrient-rich deep water to come to the surface. When the plankton hit the warmer surface water, certain types of phytoplankton, particularly dinoflagellates, multiply in large numbers. These organisms can emit a stunning blue glow when disturbed, creating a mesmerizing effect in the water at night. During the day, these blooms often appear as reddish-brown patches, commonly referred to as “red tides.” The phenomenon is indicative of ecological changes in the bay, often triggered by nutrient runoff and warmer water temperatures.

As these algal blooms die off, they undergo decomposition, which can lead to strong, unpleasant odors. The decay of the algae releases gases like hydrogen sulfide, which has a characteristic rotten egg smell.

¹ Native Lands Digital. 2023. <https://native-land.ca/>



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The massive scale of the algal bloom in October hasn't been experienced since 2005. The odors were reported as far away as San Diego.

While the smell can be unpleasant, it's important to note that many bioluminescent blooms are not toxic to humans, although they can deplete oxygen in the water, potentially harming marine life.

As our oceans continue to warm, these phenomena may occur more frequently. Awareness of this natural process may help residents understand and appreciate the intersections of complex ocean systems and impacted land uses associated with our region.

Sincerely,

Tracy Quinn, CEO