

January 8, 2020

San Diego Region Irrigated Lands Group Newsletter

ou are receiving this newsletter as a member of the San Diego Regional Irrigated Lands Group (SDRILG).

As a reminder, SDRILG is a non-profit organization governed by seven farmers who volunteer their time as members of the board of directors.

Joining SDRILG is a benefit exclusively for Farm Bureau members. As a member you are enrolled in a third-party group as required by the General Order for Agriculture adopted by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Diego Water Board).

Fourth quarter self-inspection

As required by the General Order, to remain in compliance you are obligated to complete simple Quarterly Inspections each year. It is now time to complete your last quarter self-inspection for 2019. If you know your farm well and walk it regularly, the report should take you no more than five to ten minutes to complete. *Remember the overall success of our members completing these self-inspections is one of the best tools to show that an expensive and intrusive inspection program conducted by regulators on your farm is not necessary.* You can access the quarterly inspections at <https://noi.sdirrigatedlandsgroup.org/qsir/login/2019/02> or click the “Quarterly Inspections” link on the menu bar at www.sdirrigatedlandsgroup.org.

Your Annual Responsibilities

As a reminder, you have several responsibilities in 2020 in order to remain compliant with state law and avoid a direct relationship with the San Diego Water Board.

- Follow best practices that prevent any pollutants (organic, mineral, or chemical) from leaving your farm site in irrigation or stormwater runoff
- Conduct quarterly self-inspections of your farm when prompted
- File your 2019 Annual Report when prompted
- Complete two hours of runoff pollution prevention education (see below)
- Pay your annual state acreage and SDRILG administration fees that will be assessed in May

Annual Education Requirement

The General Order for Agriculture requires growers to complete two hours of training each calendar year on runoff pollution prevention. This year’s calendar of in-person classes as well as the content for online training are now in development. Once those are set you will be notified so can fulfill your 2020 education requirement.

Information Changes

If you change your email address, mailing address, or your phone number, please contact the SDRILG office so your records can be kept up to date. Also, if you leased or purchased parcels not previously enrolled or moved off of parcels that were enrolled, it is important to report those changes as well.

Monitoring

One of the key responsibilities of a third-party group is to do sampling and testing on behalf of members to see if agriculturally-generated materials are reaching local waterways or affecting stream health. This is done during both wet and dry seasons. The sampling is done on a watershed basis, not targeting individual farming operations. In 2019 those sampling and testing events were in February and August. The engineering and scientific firms hired by SDRILG to do that work must report results for 2019 to the San Diego Water Board by April 30, 2020. Those test results will then become a public record. Should problems be discovered, SDRILG will work with UC Cooperative Extension on educational outreach and suggested practices to convey to all members on how to reduce pollution of the discovered materials.

As always, if you have any questions about SDRILG or your compliance responsibilities, please feel free to call 760-745-2215 or email info@sdirrigatedlandsgroup.org.