



State Water Resources Control Board

Division of Drinking Water

June 6, 2025

Water System No. CA1510017

George Croll, General Manager
Indian Wells Valley Water District
P.O. BOX 1329
Ridgecrest, CA 93556

Dear George Croll,

This letter concerns the current and future operations of Inyokern Community Services District (Inyokern CSD). The State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board), Division of Drinking Water (Division) has concerns regarding Inyokern CSD's water system deficiencies, detailed in Appendix A. These deficiencies are resulting in unsafe drinking water for the residents of the water system. Further, there are concerns about the ability of Inyokern CSD to sustainably provide safe and affordable supply of drinking water into the future. Therefore, the State Water Board strongly recommends that Inyokern CSD voluntarily consolidate with Indian Wells Valley Water District (CA1510017). The State Water Board may take future steps to order the consolidation if it is not voluntarily negotiated in a timely manner.

Six Month Period for Voluntary Consolidation

Prior to issuing an order directing the Indian Wells Valley Water District to consolidate with Inyokern CSD, California Health and Safety Code (CHSC) Section 116682, subd. (b)(1) requires the State Water Board to encourage voluntary consolidation. Section 116682, subd. (b)(7)(A) also requires the State Water Board to notify both Inyokern CSD and Indian Wells Valley Water District and to establish a deadline of no less than six months, unless a shorter period is justified, to negotiate consolidation. **This letter serves as official notification that pursuant to CHSC Section 116682(b), Inyokern CSD is to negotiate with Indian Wells Valley Water District regarding managerial and physical consolidation of Inyokern CSD with Indian Wells Valley Water District. The deadline for completion of this negotiation is December 12, 2025.** The State Water Board requests that the parties report the outcome of such negotiations to no later than two weeks following the deadline. This reporting shall include the milestones agreed upon to accomplish consolidation and a timeline for completing them. Additionally, the reporting shall include a letter signed by Indian Wells Valley Water District and Inyokern CSD stating that they intend to consolidate voluntarily in accordance with the agreed upon milestones and timelines. If a timely

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | ERIC OPPENHEIMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

voluntary consolidation cannot be negotiated, the State Water Board may exercise its authority pursuant to CHSC Section 116682(a) to order consolidation.

Consolidation Assistance

The State Water Board acknowledges that consolidation is a complex process and stands ready to assist Inyokern CSD and Indian Wells Valley Water District. Pursuant to CHSC Section 116682, subdivision (b)(7)(B), and in order to assist with the negotiation process, the State Water Board will provide technical assistance and work with both Inyokern CSD and Indian Wells Valley Water District to develop a financing package that benefits both parties. This assistance will be provided by both the Division and the State Water Board's Division of Financial Assistance and Division of Drinking Water. Funding will align with the adopted Intended Use Plan and Funding Policies. More information available at [Financial Assistance Funding - Grants and Loans | California State Water Resources Control Board](#)

If you have any question regarding this letter, please contact me or Elvira Reyes of my staff by email at elvira.reyes@waterboards.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Bryan Potter, P.E.,
Senior Water Resource Control Engineer, Southern Engagement Unit, SAFER Section
State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water

Appendix:

A. Background Information

Cc (Via email)

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Appendix A. Background Information

Inyokern Community Services District (CSD)

Inyokern CSD is classified as a community public water system with a population of 782 residents, served through 265 service connections. Inyokern CSD provides groundwater to its customers. As documented in the following findings, Inyokern CSD consistently fails to provide adequate supply of safe drinking water.

1. To date, Inyokern CSD has failed to submit an acceptable Corrective Action Plan to the Division. Compliance Order No. 04_24J_002 established a deadline of August 31, 2024. Two attempts were made on August 31, 2024, and January 31, 2025.
2. On January 23, 2025, the Division approved the permit amendment application to inactive Well 04. Inyokern CSD solely relies on Well 03 to supply domestic water to its customers as of January 23, 2025.
3. On October 10, 2024, the Division issued Citation No. 04_19_24C_013 failure to meet the minimum pressure for September 2024.
4. On September 7, 2024, the Division issued a Boil Water Notice due to a water outage and water service was returned on September 9, 2024.
5. On August 2024, Inyokern CSD was awarded \$147,593.76 in emergency funds to repair Well 03, treatment, and supply interim hauled water.
6. On July 17, 2024, the Division issued Compliance Order No. 04_24J_002 for failure to meet the minimum pressure and maximum day demand capacity at all times for 2024. Return to compliance deadline is August 31, 2025.
7. On June 29, 2024, the Division issued a Boil Water Notice due to mechanical problems with the well resulting in a dry tank, low water pressure, and water outage. Water service was returned on June 7, 2024.
8. On June 22, 2024, the Division issued a Boil Water Notice due well and pressure tank operating problems. Water service was returned on June 26, 2024.
9. The 2023-2024 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) was authorized by Penal Code §933.5 to investigate special districts within Kern County. Upon receiving citizen complaints, the Grand Jury initiated an investigation into the operations and financial condition of the Inyokern CSD. The Grand Jury found that the Inyokern CSD is financially insolvent and is facing multiple critical issues. Inyokern CSD has shown that it does not have the means or ability to rectify these issues. This has caused the citizens of the Inyokern CSD to face water insecurity.

10. On February 23, 2022, the Division issued Citation No. 03_19_22C_007 for failure to comply with permit provision and failure to comply with the revised total coliform rule. Specifically, the Water System failed to comply with Permit Provision No. 15 of its Domestic Water Supply Permit No. 03-19-20P-013 (issued on August 31, 2020) for quarterly bacteriological monitoring of raw water, in 2021, from Wells 03 and 04.
11. On December 19, 2019, the Division issued Citation No. 03_19_19C_031 for failure to have a certified distribution operator for 2019.
12. On February 6, 2019, the Division issued Citation No. 03_19_19C_008 for 1, 2,3 – Trichloropropane (1, 2, 3, -TCP) Monitoring Violation for 4th Quarter 2018.