



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **Stockton residents understand what causes water pollution**

Stockton area residents continue to realize that our local waterways are at risk, according to a recent community water quality survey sponsored by the City of Stockton and San Joaquin County Stormwater Management Programs.

Some 400 Stockton residents participated in the public opinion survey conducted in April and May of this year. The telephone survey of 401 heads of household in the Stockton Urbanized Area was an effort by the City/County Stormwater Management Programs to assess changes in public perceptions and behaviors related to stormwater quality management as compared to the first survey established in the spring of 2003, according to Bob Murdoch, Assistant Director of Municipal Utilities.

The survey was conducted as required by the City/County's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The City and County are co-permittees and share joint responsibility for implementation of the permits requirements. The 30-question survey took an average of 12 minutes to complete and questioned residents' knowledge on such pollution prevention matters as knowing the difference between the City's storm drain and sewer system, the perceived causes of water pollution, disposal of used motor oil, the use and disposal of household pesticides, yard waste, the method of pet waste disposal, and much more.

The information garnered from the survey will be used to improve the City's "Only Rain Down the Drain" stormwater outreach and education program to help residents better understand that what goes down storm drains (either from rains or runoff from businesses and homes) flows untreated straight into our local rivers, creeks, sloughs and the Delta. That water is not cleaned at the sewer plant like the water that comes from our homes,

offices, schools, and other buildings, Murdoch said. Some of the other findings from the survey included:

|  | <b>2003</b> | <b>2005</b> |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Respondents affirming the existence of a nearby body of water:   | 66%         | 71%         |
| Continue to identify impacts of water pollution as harming the Natural Environment and Human Health:                         | 32%         | 33%         |
| Open-ended question "what causes water pollution?" significantly. More respondents first mentioned "people":                 | 30%         | 41%         |
| Fewer pointed the blame at industrial plants:  | 19%         | 10%         |
| More respondents identified "everyone" as having responsibility for solving water pollution problems:                        | 32%         | 36%         |
| Respondents mentioning industry as responsible for solving water pollution problems decreased significantly:                 | 7%          | 1%          |
| Used pesticides all up:  | 38%         | 51%         |
| Take leftover household cleaners, pesticides, and other chemical to permanent Household Hazardous Waste collection facility: | 23%         | 29%         |
| Method of pet waste disposal (bag and trash) :   | 70%         | 80%         |
| Fewer change motor oil at home:  | 26%         | 18%         |
| Do it yourselfers take used oil to HHW waste collection facility:  | 75%         | 93%         |
| How storm water gets polluted?   |             |             |
| Illegal dumping continues to earn top mention:   | 49%         | 51%         |
| Leaking vehicles   | 8%          | 14%         |
| Garden Care Products   | 6%          | 12%         |

The entire survey results are available on the City's website at

[http://www.stocktongov.com/MUD/General/stormwater/stormwater\\_main.cfm](http://www.stocktongov.com/MUD/General/stormwater/stormwater_main.cfm)

For further information on the community survey or to learn more about how to protect our local waterways, please call 937-8791.

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