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Welcome to Water World

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## Environmental activists sue Pacifica for alleged ocean pollution

Our Children's Earth Foundation (OCE) filed a complaint in federal court against the city of Pacifica for alleged sewage discharges.

The organization contends that since 2004 Pacifica allegedly discharged thousands of gallons of raw or inadequately treated sewage into the ocean from the Calera Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and from leaky pipes systemwide and therefore violated the federal Clean Water Act, and Pacifica's locally issued permits regarding discharges.

Neither the Environmental Protection Agency nor California regulatory agencies, both notified of the concerns of OCE, addressed the concerns, the complaint states.

Specifically, the federal complaint alleges Pacifica discharged sewage water containing pollutants at a location different from the one for which it had a permit and in violation of the permit that regulates spills.

The complaint also alleges inadequately treated sewage overflowed or spilled from the sewer lines, manholes, pump stations and other equipment into private residences and businesses, streets, storm drains, streams and the ocean. Poor maintenance practices led to the spills, the complaint alleges.

The poor practices the complaint alleges include allowing grease to build up, sediment and debris to accumulate and roots to intrude, as well as pump station equipment failures and broken sewer lines.

The pollutants allegedly released include fecal coliform, ammonia, copper and cyanide, among others, the complaint states.

The lawsuit seeks declaratory and injunctive relief, meaning OCE seeks an order stating Pacifica is at fault and one that forces Pacifica to stop doing the alleged polluting. It also seeks fines for Pacifica to pay, up to \$32,500 per day, for alleged Clean Water Act violations, plus attorneys fees and costs.

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