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SEBASTOPOL, CA

City ordered to halt discharges into Laguna

Leaking sewer ponds spill apple waste

by Barry W. Dugan
Sonoma West Editor

SEBASTOPOL — State water quality officials have ordered the city and a local apple processor to fix a series of leaks in two former sewer ponds after stored apple wastewater was illegally discharged into the Laguna de Santa Rosa.

It is unknown how much wastewater made its way into the Laguna, and whether any damage was caused because floodwaters served to dilute the wastewater.

The two ponds, located next to the Sebastopol Community Center, were found to be discharging the apple

wastewater during the recent heavy rains, according to the state Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The agency issued a Cleanup and Abatement Order Feb. 2 after officials discovered apple wastewater leaking into the Laguna, according to Bob Tancreto, of the RWQCB.

Tancreto said the leaks occurred between pond 3, which is used by the Barlow Company to store apple

wastewater when a nearby irrigation field cannot be used, and pond 4, which is used for overflow. But wastewater was also found to be leaking into pond 5, an abandoned (Please see *Laguna* page A8)



HIGH WATER — Floodwaters flowed over a levy that separates former sewer pond 5 (at right) and pond 4, where apple wastewater was being stored. The Laguna de Santa Rosa, which can be seen beyond pond 4, apparently inundated pond 5. The city recently removed fill from pond 5 as part of an ordered reclamation project.