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# Laguna . . .

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Rawson believes that "the Laguna has never looked so good (in recent history) with all the aeration and bacterial treatment that was done."

Following the discharge, officials at the Regional Water Quality Control Board issued a cleanup and abatement order for the city and Barlow to initiate the cleanup. Bob Tancreto, a senior engineer with RWQCB, said that the remediation was

successful and complete. He said a hearing on the incident will be on the RWQCB board's January agenda. The board could take some type of enforcement action, including civil penalties. The water board staff is still completing its report on the incident.

Wickham said when the remediation was complete, the water in the Laguna was clear enough that you could see the bottom of the channel.

He theorizes that the spill might have been relatively minor, and that the break in the

underground pipe disturbed organic matter at the bottom of the Laguna, mixing it with the rest of the water and contributing the "black water" condition that existed.

Regardless of the cause or severity of the spill, Barlow "takes responsibility" for the incident, said Alyssa Barlow Shott, the company's vice president. She said that even before the discharge occurred the company had been working on reducing its wastewater and developing plans to use the wastewater to irrigate landscap-

ing on site and possibly in the Laguna Park. "We would be really excited to be part of the (Laguna) project," she said.

Wickham said that the plant has already significantly reduced its water use with different processing methods. He said that in September of 1995 the plant used 105,000 gallons of water per day. This year it used 45,000 gallons of water per day. "That's why some of these numbers that are being thrown around (by critics about the spill) are not valid," Wickham said.

Rawson and Wickham said that "potentially all of the wastewater from the plant could be used for irrigation."

For example, Rawson said about 200 trees planted in the right configuration could utilize most of the plant's wastewater.

Barlow will participate, along with the city of Sebastopol and other community groups, in the Laguna Awareness Day on Nov. 16, during which there will be lectures, tours and a tree planting ceremony.

Wickham said the area adjacent to the old sewer ponds

would be well suited for a redwood habitat, leading down to oak savannah near the Laguna. "In a way it fits what the Laguna plan was originally about," he said.

He said the Barlows would welcome such a "private-public partnership" that could benefit the Laguna and the company.

"We're hoping we can do it without interjecting ourselves into the debate and interfering with what they're doing," said Wickham.

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