



# Employee Water Quality Training

## Agricultural Water Quality Program

### University of California Cooperative Extension, San Diego County

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### Greenhouse and Nursery Water Quality Requirements

The greenhouse and container nursery industry in San Diego County is faced with an ever-increasing number of regulations and inspections related to water quality. Each year, every greenhouse or nursery operation is inspected for compliance by our County Agriculture, Weights and Measures Department.

Numerous aspects of the nursery or greenhouse operation are inspected and any violations are generally given a short time (30-90 days) to be remedied, depending on the difficulty and expense associated with fixing the problem, and the imminent threat to water quality posed by the violation.

One requirement of the growers is employee training. If a nursery or greenhouse operation has 10 or more employees, they are required to provide annual water quality training to their employees. No specific training was specified, only that it apply to their growing operation, and that attendance and training must be documented. Growers were unsure of how to train their employees and how to make the training meet the requirements of the local enforcement agency.



Lack of good ventilation can add to water quality problems.

### Challenges to Employee Training

Many local greenhouse and nursery producers are feeling the pinch of needing a dedicated individual to handle the regulatory requirements faced by their nurseries. Development of a water quality training program was one additional chore that most growers did not have time or qualifications for.

In addition, most of the employees requiring training are Spanish speaking, making development of materials and training programs difficult for the growers themselves.



Retention pond for capture of irrigation runoff is considered a good practice.



Removal of excessive standing water to a location where it will not flow into a stream or other water body is an appropriate management practice.



Monitoring of greenhouse conditions will assist growers in appropriate application of irrigation water, and is a practice greenhouse employees should be familiar with.

### Training Modules-English and Spanish Versions

We produced 10 training modules that cover all of the points that will be inspected in the greenhouse and nursery annual water quality inspection. Each module is available in either English or Spanish, and is downloadable from our website, [www.cesandiego.ucdavis.edu](http://www.cesandiego.ucdavis.edu). Training can be completed using each module at a different time, or all at once. The training modules include an introduction and additional information on a particular topic, and then have a section entitled "Take a Look Around", the is intended to provide the grower with an opportunity to take the employees around the greenhouses or nursery and look at field conditions, pointing out Best Management Practices, or areas where improvement is needed. The modules cover the following topics:

1. Introduction to Agricultural Water Quality
2. Site and Emergency Information
3. Employee Training and Annual Review
4. Hazardous Materials
5. Waste Management
6. Vehicles and Equipment
7. Outdoor Non-production Areas
8. IPM and Pesticide Use
9. Nutrient and Fertilizer Management
10. Irrigation and Runoff management.

#### For More Information:

You can download the training modules from our website at [www.cesandiego.ucdavis.edu](http://www.cesandiego.ucdavis.edu). Go to "Agricultural Water Quality Program" and then to "Grower Resources". If you would like to contact us, please e-mail to: [vmellano@ucdavis.edu](mailto:vmellano@ucdavis.edu) or call (760)752-4724.

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