



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Stricter Oversight Sought for Sativa Water

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas called on the California State Water Resources Control Board in Sacramento to appoint a representative to exercise “vigorous oversight” of Sativa Water District after many of its 1,600 customers in Willowbrook and Compton reported brown water running through their taps in April.

In a letter to the Water Board’s executive director, Eileen Sobeck, the Supervisor credited state regulators and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health with confirming that there are currently no violations of “primary” water standards within Sativa’s jurisdiction. The Supervisor noted, however, that there have been “secondary” water quality violations related to increased levels of manganese and for turbidity.

“These troublesome incidents underscore the longstanding deficiencies associated with Sativa’s lack of proper fiscal management and operational capacity,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. “Simply put, Sativa has not demonstrated an adequate ability to address its deferred maintenance challenges or to provide high quality water to its customers in a sustainable manner going forward.”

He added that while the County is assessing potential alternative water providers, the Water Board should monitor Sativa closely. “I write to respectfully request that the State Board immediately take all appropriate steps to exercise vigorous oversight of Sativa, including selecting a representative for that purpose, to ensure proper fiscal and operational activities are occurring during the period in which Sativa is still responsible

for providing water to its customers,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said. “A competent representative selected by the Water Board for this purpose could help regain the public’s trust and facilitate stability and oversight during this tumultuous period.”

When Sativa customers first expressed alarm about the brown water running through their taps, [Supervisor Ridley-Thomas filed an urgency motion](#) to conduct an investigation, take immediate steps to prevent any serious risks to public health, and determine whether appropriate management and governance of the water district is in place to address Sativa’s infrastructure issues. At his direction, the County also [distributed approximately 20,000 gallons of bottled water](#) to residents of Willowbrook and Compton.

When Sativa flushed its pipes after an extended period without proper maintenance, the lingering sediment caused intermittent discoloration and cloudiness in the water supply. Testing, however, found that the water does not pose a health risk and meets the standards of the Water Board.

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