

This story is taken from [News](#) at sacbee.com.

State cites Elk Grove for construction dirt runoff

By Mary Lynne Vellinga -- Bee Staff Writer - (*Published July 8, 2004*)

State water regulators have threatened the city of Elk Grove with fines if it doesn't improve its oversight of dirt runoff from the city's numerous construction sites.

On June 28, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board issued a notice of violation to the city, charging that it had failed to ensure construction sites met state and federal standards for controlling dirt runoff.

Board staff found that "problems had occurred at several of the city's construction sites," according to the notice of violation.

"We are trying to tell the city of Elk Grove, one of the fastest-growing cities in the nation, that they have to address storm water," said George Day, senior engineer for the water board.

The notice of violation pointed out that the city could be assessed fines of \$10,000 a day if it failed to come into compliance.

Violet Jakob, the senior engineer in charge of the city's stormwater program, said Elk Grove will do whatever it takes to satisfy the regulators. She said the city is committed to protecting its waterways, particularly Laguna Creek, from pollution.

She said the city plans to add at least one more inspector to the staff of two already devoted to storm-water issues.

While the notice issued to the city points to problems at several construction sites, a May incident involving Laguna Creek prompted the water quality board to act, said Christine Palisoc, an environmental scientist at the board.

In that case, developer Chris Vrame was cited by the regional board for allowing dirt to fall into Laguna Creek during construction of Bell South, a development of 96 houses, a shopping center and offices on the site of a former state fish hatchery at Elk Grove Florin and Bond roads.

The board issued a notice of violation against Bell South on May 26. The day before, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ordered Vrame to stop discharging fill

dirt into a 700-foot section of creek.

"They failed to provide adequate erosion controls," Day said.

Jakob agreed that the developer failed to control erosion on site, but said it wasn't the city's fault.

"They started work without notifying the city," she said. "Before the city could stop it, the developer went out and started to do the clearing."

Vrame, the developer, blamed the problem on a contractor, who he said failed to properly install a plywood fence to protect the creek while crews built up the banks for flood control.

"He basically screwed up and didn't follow the plan," Vrame said. "As soon as we saw what happened, we stopped work."

Regardless of who was to blame, the incident upset community members seeking to preserve Laguna Creek.

"This was actually a pretty pristine site," Elk Grove activist Sarah Johnson said of the spot where the pollution occurred.

"We all fought hard for the preservation of the creek, and the city's plans were supposed to take care of that."

About the Writer

The Bee's Mary Lynne Vellinga can be reached at (916) 321-1094 or mlvellinga@sacbee.com.

Go to : [Sacbee](#) / [Back to story](#)

[Contact Bee Customer Service](#)

[Advertise Online](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Help](#) | [Site Map](#)

[News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Business](#) | [Politics](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Lifestyle](#) | [Travel](#) | [Women](#)

[Classifieds](#) | [Homes](#) | [Cars](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Shopping](#)

[GUIDE TO THE BEE:](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Bee Events](#) | [Community Involvement](#)

[Sacramento Bee Web sites]

Sacbee.com | SacTicket.com | Sacramento.com

[Contact sacbee.com](http://Contact.sacbee.com)

This article is protected by copyright and should not be printed or distributed for anything except personal use.

The Sacramento Bee, 2100 Q St., P.O. Box 15779, Sacramento, CA 95852
Phone: (916) 321-1000

Copyright © The Sacramento Bee