2024-2025 KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY



WASCO STATE PRISON

Clean Water, Cool Air, and a "Pawsitive" Change

Release Date

October 17, 2024

WASCO STATE PRISON Clean Water, Cool Air, and a "Pawsitive Change"

SUMMARY:

Wasco State Prison (WSP), like all prisons in the state, is a city on its own. Within its walls is a complex of departments and facilities pulling together. Notably, are the water treatment plant, the California Prison Industries Authority (CALPIA), the Plant Operations Department and special programs. The water treatment plant supplies the entire facility with water that exceeds the quality of surrounding areas. CALPIA is an impressive operation serving five prisons and at least two state hospitals with laundry services. The air temperature is maintained at comfortable levels. There are many special programs available to the prison population. However, the one currently missing is the successful Marley's Mutts "Pawsitive Change" program. Together, these departments are contributing to a well-run institution.

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

The Grand Jury is required by Penal Code §919(b) to inquire into the condition and management of public prisons within the county. In addition, the Grand Jury may research and investigate complaints concerning the prison system.

METHODOLOGY:

The Grand Jury interviewed administrators and staff at WSP, including staff at the Reception Center (RC), Receiving and Release (R&R), and inmates in the RC housing units. The Grand Jury also toured the permanent inmate housing units.

In addition, the Grand Jury visited the on-site water treatment system and reviewed the results of the water reports (Appendix A) for July 2024. The Grand Jury also reviewed the local television station's investigative reports regarding contaminants in the prison drinking water. The daily water reports were investigated by KERO (23ABC) on June 19, and June 28, 2024.

The administrative staff provided the Grand Jury with Inside Temperature Records (Appendix B) for the months of June and July.

DISCUSSION OF FACTS:

Construction of Wasco State Prison began in the late 1980s with construction completed in 1990. It was built to house RC inmates who were sentenced by a court of law to a prison sentence longer than one year. There are only two men's Reception Centers in the entire California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), both of which are in Kern County. The other RC is the North Kern State Prison located in Delano, California. Each of these facilities house approximately 2,500 reception inmates at any given time.

The inmates are assessed according to their mental, dental, physical health, and any relevant accessibility issues. Once this process is complete, the inmates are assigned and transferred to a permanent institution. A few inmates remain at WSP because they have a special skill or have requested to remain at WSP to facilitate visits with their families. Transfers occur every day through R&R, usually because the inmate was recently assigned (endorsed) to another prison for their remaining term, or because of social or legal factors that require placement at a different prison or are returning from outside treatment or court appearances.

- A. The processing of inmates arriving at the RC for assessment and transfer to a permanent institution usually takes 60-90 days. A delay may occur because the inmate has a medical, dental or mental health issue. Additionally, an inmate could have another charge pending that needs to be resolved before the transfer.
- B. There are approximately 230 inmates assigned to the minimum-security housing unit. These inmates usually work in the community and are supervised by staff when in a public setting. There are inmates who are classified as medium custody (permanent level III/IV) that are not eligible for work outside the institution walls. Their ineligibility is a result of either their commitment offense (Violent or Sex Offense), years left for them to serve, or both.
- C. The permanent level III and IV inmates have a variety of jobs inside the institution including the professional laundry service run by CALPIA. The jobs at CALPIA usually require technical skills and are better paying than a janitor or a culinary worker at the institution. The skills attained working for CALPIA are intended to improve the inmate's ability to acquire gainful employment when they are paroled.
- D. All the housing units are equipped with evaporative coolers, not air conditioners. Each day the housing unit staff records the temperatures to ensure that they are within an acceptable range established by medical staff. The Inside Temperature Records reflect that the housing units in both the permanent inmate housing and Reception Center were never above 82 degrees.
- E. The water used by WSP comes from its own water treatment system located on the grounds of the institution. In response to complaints of contaminants in the water, a granular activated carbon system was installed to filter degraded fertilizer 1, 2, 3-Trichloropropane (1, 2, 3-TCP) and other contaminants from the water. The contaminant levels from 1, 2, 3-TCP are the lowest in the entire agricultural area surrounding the prison. Data collected from the treatment plant verifies this information.
- F. Prior to COVID-19, WSP offered the "Pawsitive Change" program to qualified inmates. This program provided inmates the opportunity to become American Kennel Club (AKC) accredited trainers. The program also improved the morale and attitude of the inmate handlers as well as the inmates in the assigned yard. This training and fostering program is active in other institutions and has proven to create a positive experience for the inmate handlers, the dogs, and the general population of the facility.

FINDINGS:

The Grand Jury finds that:

- F1. The temperature in the housing units is maintained no higher than 82 degrees which satisfies mandated requirements.
- F2. Evaporative coolers are state-of-the-art, more cost-effective than air conditioning, and provide a healthier humidity level. Evaporative coolers cost about one-half as much to install as central air conditioners and use about one-quarter as much energy¹.
- F3. The treatment facility's water is potable. Staff and inmates drink the water supplied by the water treatment system and the culinary department cooks with the same water.
- F4. The jobs at CALPIA require technical skills resulting in better pay than a janitor or a culinary worker earns at the institution. The skills attained working for CALPIA improve the ability for inmates to secure gainful employment upon release.
- F5. The "Pawsitive Change" Program had previously been beneficial to the institution and the community.

COMMENTS:

The Grand Jury thanks the Wasco State Prison staff and Marley's Mutts for their time and information. The tour was very informative and instrumental for our findings and recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION:

The 2024-2025 Grand Jury recommends that:

R1. Wasco State Prison continues working with Marley's Mutts to affect the return of the "Pawsitive Change" program no later than January 31, 2025. (Finding #5)

NOTES:

- The Wasco State Prison should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public view.
- Persons wishing to receive an email notification of newly released reports may sign up at: https://www.kerncounty.com/government/other-agencies/grand-jury
- Present and past Kern County Grand Jury Final Reports and Responses can be accessed on the Kern County Grand Jury website https://www.kerncounty.com/government/other-agencies/grand-jury

¹ Evaporative Coolers | Department of Energy (https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/evaporative-coolers)

RESPONSE DEADLINE:

REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS FROM:

- Warden, Wasco State Prison
 - o Findings #1 through #5
 - o Recommendation #1

RESPONSES ARE REQUIRED PURSUANT TO PENAL CODE §§933(c) AND 933.05 TO:

- PRESIDING JUDGE SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF KERN 1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 212 BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301
- FOREPERSON
 KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
 1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
 BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Cal. Penal Code §929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable.

Por favor hable con alguien que lo pueda traducir.

The Wasco State Prison Water System Has levels of 1,2,3-TCP
Above Drinking Water Standards

Our water system recently falled a drinking water standard. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what you should do, what happened, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. The standard for 1,2,3-Trichloropropane (1,2,3-TCP) is equivalent to 0.005 ug/L (micrograms per liter). Water sample results received in Second Quarter, 2024 showed 1, 2, 3-TCP levels ranging from 0.09 ug/L to 0.021 ug/L from these sources well # 1 & well # 2 Compliance with the 1, 2, 3-TCP maximum contaminant level (MCL) is based on an annual average. The average level of 1, 2, 3-TCP over the last year ranged from N/D to 0.025 ug/L, which is above the standard or MCL for 1, 2, 3-TCP.

What should I do?

You do not need to use an alternative (e.g., bottled) water supply.

- This is not an immediate risk. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. However, some people who drink water-confaining 1, 2, 3-trichloropropane in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- If you have other health issues concerning the consumption of this water, you may wish to consult
 your doctor.

What happened? What was done?

On December 14, 2017, a regulation change enacted a new Maximum contaminant level (MCL) for 1,2,3 – TCP. Recent monthly tests have shown a level of 1,2,3, - TCP above the standard of 0,005 ug/L CDCR is researching the appropriate treatment solution to address this situation.

We anticipate resolving the problem within 3 years. Quarterly testing and notification will continue. We are currently in the process of installing a GAC system to remove the 1, 2, 3-TCP from the potable water.

For more information, please contact:

[Name of Contact]			
[Phone Number] or		1,100	Total and
[Mailing Address]			

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this public notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

Secondary Notification Requirements

Upon receipt of notification from a person operating a public water system, the following notification must be given within 10 days [Health and Safety Code Section 116450(g)]:

- SCHOOLS: Must notify school employees, students, and parents (if the students are minors).
- RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY OWNERS OR MANAGERS (including nursing homes and care facilities): Must notify tenants.
- BUSINESS PROPERTY OWNERS, MANAGERS, and OR OPERATORS: Must notify employees
 of businesses located on the property.

This notice is being sent to you by the Wasco State Prison Water System in compliance with the California Domestic Water Quality and Monitoring Regulations as a means of keeping the public informed.

State Water System ID: 1510801

Date Distributed 5//14

APPENDIX

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Public Water System Name:	Wasco State Prison	System Number	1510801
Compliance Order No.:	03 12 18R 026	Violation of:	123 - TCP MCL
Calendar Quarter:	Second Quarter	Date Prepared:	04/24/2024
authority to implei Please attach add via electronic ma Visalia District (20 Oth day of each o	be prepared and signed to ment the directives of the Cor- litional sheets as necessary. If to	npliance Order and the The quarterly progres for the Divis esno, CA 93704). It is	Corrective Action Plan, so report should be sent ton of Drinking Water - to be submitted by the
unit has been to specifications for	son has submitted a Cap and nstigated to meet the comp construction of Carbon Air hange Proposal	pliance date. A permi	anent plan and Gac uni
Well # 1 is in the	in the reporting quarter: lead position as of August 1	4, 2019, due to its lov	ver concentration of 1,2,3
well # 2 back in quarter.	service. Both well 1 & 2 ex	ceeded the MCL for 1	,2,3, TCP for the second
asks remaining	to complete:		
removal of 1,2,3, the Gac vessels	2022, construction commend TCP. As of this report date, have been set with influer % complete with work pendir	the cement foundation it and effluent piping	has been completed and
nticipated comp	liance date: 7/1/262	24	
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ignature:		Date: 4/23	124

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Compliance Order Number: 03_12_18R_026 Name of Water System: Wasco State Prison

System Number: 1510801

Attach a copy of the public notice distributed to the water system's customers.

When completed this form was sent to dwpdist12@waterboards.ca.gov for the Division of Drinking Water, Visalia District 12, 265 W. Bullard Ave., Suite 101, Fresho, CA 93704 serves as certification that public notification to water users was completed as required by Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Sections 64463-64465.

Public notification for failure to comply with the 4.2.3-TCP MCL was conducted on:

Notifica	tion was made on April 24, 2024	
For the	Second Quarter 2024	linsert month or quarter and year].
To sum that app	marize report delivery used and goo bly and fill-in where appropriate:	d-faith efforts taken please check all items below
For Co	mmunity and non-transient non-com	nunity public water systems
☐ The	notice were distributed by mail or di	ect delivery to each customer on:
mailing home p	or direct delivery or persons served patients, prison inmates, etc.): osted the notice at the following con eeded, please attach a list of location	to reach persons not likely to be reached by a by a transient public water system (renters, nursing spicuous locations served by the water system. (If is). All housing units, offices, libraries, medical areas wspaper or newsletter of general circulation (ettach a
U P	opy of the published notice, including	name of newspaper and date published).
□ P	osted the notice on the Internet at w	ww
	Other method used to notify custome	s
I hereb Certifie	by certify that the above information is do by: Printed Name	s factual.
	Signature 4/25/3024	
that an purpos to exce	y person who knowingly makes any fals e of compliance with the Safe Drinking \ ted five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for ea	alth and Safety Code, Sections 116725 and 116730 state e statement on any report or document submitted for the Vater Act may be liable for, respectively, a civil penalty not ch separate violation or, for continuing violations, for each a fine of not more than \$25,000 for each day of violation, and one year, or by both the fine and imprisonment

APPENDIX: B

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INSIDE TEMPERATURE RECORD

CDCR 2031 (04/18) From May 1° through October 31°, the warden shall designate staff to be responsible to monitor and log the INSIDE ambient air temperature in all non-air-conditioned housing units where an inmate on the heat risk list may be housed. (Note: Air-conditioned housing units will also be monitored when the air conditioner is malfunctioning). Using an accurate thermometer on the highest location in the housing unit (e.g., top tier) where an inmate on the heat risk list is housed. The inside air temperature is to be taken every three (3) hours, seven (7) days a week. Temp. Reading Location: (e.g., 1^{et} tier, 2nd tier, 3rd tier, etc.) D1 Housing Unit: 6001 when the inside air temperature reaches Immediately notify the Watch Commander at extension 90 degrees and again at 95 degrees. Monday Date Time Temp. Name (Print) Name (Print) Date Time Temp. 0300 772 0300 72 0600 0600 0900 6/3/24 0900 1200 1200 1500 1500 1800 1800 2100 2100 2400 2400 Thursday Wednesday Name (Print) Date | Time Temp. Time Temp. Name (Print) Date. 0300 0300 0600 0500 :0900 6/6/24 0900 6/5/24 1200 1200 1500 1500 1800 1800 2100 2100 2400 2400 Saturday Friday Name (Print) Time Name (Print) Date Temp. Time 0300 0300 0600 0600 730 6/8/24 0900 0900 740 6/7/24 1200 750 1200 1500 1500 1800 1800 2100 2100 2400 2400 72 Notes Sunday Date | Time Name (Print) Temp. 0300 0600 6/9/24 0900 34 1200 1500 1800 2100 2400

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Attachment B

OF #37

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA INSIDE TEMPERATURE RECORD CDCR 2031 (04/15)

From May 1" through October 31", the warden shall designate staff to be responsible to monitor and log the INSIDE ambient air temperature in all non-air-conditioned housing units where an immate on the heat risk first may be housed. (Note: Air-conditioned housing units will also be monitored when the air conditioner is malfunctioning).

Using an accurate thermometer on the highest location in the housing unit (e.g., top tier) where an immate on the heat risk list is housed. The inside air temperature is to be taken every three (3) hours, seven (7) days a week.

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Immediately notify the Watch Commander at extension ______ when the inside air temperature reaches 90 degrees and again at 95 degrees.

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Notes

From May 1st through October 31st, the warden shall designate staff to be responsible to monitor and log the INSIDE ambient air temperature in all non-air-conditioned housing units where an inmate on the heat risk list may be housed. (Note: Air-conditioned housing units will also be monitored when the air conditioner is malfunctioning).

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA INSIDE TEMPERATURE RECORD CDCR 2011 (04/15)

DISTRIBUTION: Original: Institution Heat Plan Coordinator

From May 1st through October 31st, the warden shall designate staff to be responsible to monitor and log the INSIDE ambient air temperature in all non-zir-conditioned housing units where an inmate on the heat risk list may be housed. (Note: Air-conditioned housing units will also be monitored when the air conditioner is malfunctioning).

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INSIDE TEMPERATURE RECORD CDCR 2031 (04/18)

From May 1st through October 31st, the warden shall designate staff to be responsible to monitor and log the INSIDE ambient air temperature in all non-air-conditioned housing units where an inmate on the heat risk list may be housed. (Note: Air-conditioned housing units will also be monitored when the air conditioner is malfunctioning).

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risk list is housed. The inside oir temperature is to be taken every three (3) hours, seven (7) days a week-Temp. Reading Location: (e.g., 1° tier, 2° tier, 3° tier, etc.) Institution: 4WSP Housing Unit: 41 6001 when the inside air temperature reaches immediately notify the Watch Commander at extension 90 degrees and again at 95 degrees. Tuesday Monday Name (Print) Date Time Temp. Date | Time Temp. Name (Print) 10 0300 0300 0600 30 0600 80 0900 0900 80 1200 1200 80 1500 1500 1800 1800 2100 2100 2400 2400 Thursday Wednesday Name (Print) Date Time Name (Print) Date Time Temp. 80 0300 0300 80 0600 0600 20 80 0900 0900 1200 1200 1500 1500 1800 1800 2100 2100 2400 80 2400 Saturday Friday Name (Print) Date | Time Temp. Name (Frint) Date, Time Temp. 1/0300 0300 0600 0600 0900 0900 1200 1500 1800 2100 2100 50 2400 2400 Notes Sunday Name (Print) Date | Time Temp. 0300 | 80 0600 80 0900 50 1200 8 0

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DIVISION OF ADULT INSTITUTIONS

WASCO STATE PRISON – RECEPTION CENTER P.O. Box 8800 Wasco, CA 93280 (661) 758-8400



February 24, 2025

Honorable John W. Lua, Presiding Judge Kern County Superior Court 1415 Truxton Avenue, Suite 212 Bakersfield, Ca 93301

This letter is in response to the 2024-2025 Kern County Grand Jury Final report on Wasco State Prison. We are thankful for the visit and agree with all the findings made by the Grand Jury. Additionally, Wasco State Prison will continue to welcome the "Pawsitive Change" program whenever they are available to reimplement the program. Currently, the Division of Rehabilitative Program intends to award Wasco State Prison an Innovative Programming Grant to provide rehabilitative programming beginning July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028, which will include Marley's Mutts Dog Rescue.

If you have any further requests or concerns regarding this response, please contact Salvador Sanchez, Administrative Assistant/ Public Information Officer at (661) 758-8400 extension 5013.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian Pfeiffer

Warden

Wasco State Prison-Reception Center

