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**WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

**BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR**

**California Dam No. 70-2**

**OPERATIONS MANUAL**

**Submitted to: CALIFORNIA WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD  
DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY  
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS**

**Submitted by: WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

**December 4, 1991**

# BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR OPERATIONS MANUAL

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## **PREFACE TO BRIDGEPORT OPERATIONS MANUAL**

The Walker River Irrigation District (WRID) was organized in April 1919 according to provisions of the Nevada Irrigation District Act and the Nevada Revised Statutes. The Bridgeport Reservoir, completed in 1924, was built to store water that is used to irrigate farmlands along the East Walker River and in Mason Valley, Lyon County, Nevada.

The reservoir consists of an earthen dam, an outlet structure, an emergency spillway and has an authorized storage capacity of 42,455 acre feet (AF). (Maximum decreed annual storage, which includes refill rights, is 57,000 AF). The reservoir stores and releases water from the East Walker River and its tributaries. A sport trout fishery exists within the reservoir and downstream of the reservoir in the East Walker River.

The Bridgeport dam is an earth-filled dam with concrete cut-off walls and tile drains with a concrete outlet works. Electrically operated slide gates control the flow of water from the dam. Within the gate chamber are located three sets of downstream gates, 3 feet in width, that are used to control the releases from the reservoir and also three electrically controlled gates upstream that are used for emergency purposes and for dewatering the back half of the outlet works and control gates for maintenance and inspection purposes. Additional information on the design of the dam and appurtenances is contained in the Report of Waste Discharge filed with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board by WRID on January 26, 1989.

### **Water Rights and River Administration**

The relative rights to the waters of the Walker River in Nevada and California were determined by the final decree issued by the United States District Court for the District of Nevada in United States v. Walker River Irrigation District, No. C-125 ( April 15, 1936, amended April 24, 1940) (The Federal Court Operating Decree). Those rights include storage rights and direct diversion rights. Included among the storage rights is WRID's right to store water in Bridgeport Reservoir. In addition, the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Rights, issued a License for Diversion and Use of Water (License No. 9407) to WRID on June 8, 1970, for storage in Bridgeport Reservoir.

On May 12, 1937, the United States District Court for the District of Nevada entered an order appointing five persons to "act as a board to constitute a water master or board of commissioners to apportion and distribute the waters of the Walker River, its forks and tributaries in the State of Nevada, and in the State of California, including waters for storage and stored waters in accordance with the provisions of the decree." That order resulted in appointment of commissioners from the principal geographic areas of the Walker River system, Bridgeport Meadows, Antelope Valley, Smith Valley and

Mason Valley. Thereafter, the Court entered an order appointing a sixth commissioner from the Walker River Indian Reservation.

Since that time this six-person Court-appointed United States Board of Water Commissioners has been charged with administration of the Walker River system in accordance with the Federal Court Operating Decree. The day-to-day administration of the system is delegated to a Chief Deputy Water Commissioner.

Pursuant to the Federal Court Operating Decree, water is stored in Bridgeport Reservoir during the off-season, November 1 to March 1, and at any time during the irrigation season when the decreed rights downstream of the reservoir are satisfied, including the federal reserved rights of the United States for the Walker River Paiute Tribe at Schurz. During the off-season, some water has been passed through the reservoir to satisfy the stock water and domestic needs along the East Walker River system and in Mason Valley (approximately 10 cfs). Flood waters are also passed through whenever required.

Beginning March 1 of each year, persons with direct diversion water rights from the Walker River system may begin to irrigate. These irrigators include landowners in Bridgeport Meadows above Bridgeport Reservoir, as well as landowners in Mason Valley below Bridgeport Reservoir. At this time, the flows which reach Bridgeport Reservoir are passed through to the extent required to meet the water rights of downstream users in accordance with the Federal Court Operating Decree. Generally, on April 1 of each year, delivery of stored water begins. Subject to the rules and regulations of WRID, stored water can be called for beginning on April 1.

The irrigation season ends on September 15 of each year for Bridgeport Meadows and on October 31 of each year for the rest of the Walker River system.



## **INTRODUCTION TO OPERATIONS MANUAL**

This Operations Manual details the day-to-day actions to be taken by the Walker River Irrigation District to provide for release flows for icing conditions; repair and maintenance to the dam, outlet works, or reservoir; irrigation and non-irrigation season; and ramping at the beginning and end of the irrigation season.

The manual has been prepared in compliance with California's State Water Resources Control Board's Order WR 90-18 and California Regional Water Quality Control Board's Clean-up and Abatement Order 6-89-154.

The Operations Manual applies to California Water Rights License No. 9407.

## NOTICE LIST

### CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD LAHONTAN REGION

2092 Lake Tahoe Boulevard  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150  
Contact Person: Mr. Harold Singer, Executive Officer  
Phone: (415) 393-2041

### CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES DIVISION OF SAFETY OF DAMS

P. O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-001  
Contact Person: Mr. Vernon H. Persson  
Phone: (916) 445-9248

### CALIFORNIA STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS

P. O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000  
Contact Person: Mr. Roger Johnson, Assistant Division Chief  
Phone: (916) 657-1985

### CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Inland Fisheries  
407 West Line Street  
Bishop, CA 95670  
Contact Person: Darrell Wong  
Phone Number: (619) 872-1172

**WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
OPERATIONS MANUAL  
BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR**

**SECTION A  
OPERATIONS TO SET RELEASE FLOWS**

**1. ICING CONDITIONS**

**1.1 Minimum Flow to Prevent Icing**

To prevent formation of frazil/anchor ice in the East Walker River downstream of Bridgeport Reservoir, during November 1 through March 1 of each year, and based on the forecasted minimum 24-hour air temperature as provided by the National Weather Service, the District will request the U.S. Board of Water Commissioners to provide water, by deferring a part of the District's entitlement to store water or by making releases from storage, in an amount sufficient to supply the following continuous releases:

<u>FORECASTED TEMPERATURE (F)</u>	<u>REQUIRED RELEASE FLOW (cfs)</u>
0 and Greater	20 cfs
Less than 0	30 cfs

The District's operator prior to 4:00 PM each day, will obtain from the National Weather Service the forecasted minimum 24-hour air temperature. Whenever the forecast calls for a minimum temperature of less than zero degrees (F) for the following 24 hours, the District shall immediately request the U.S. Board of Water Commissioners to increase the release to 30 cfs following the appropriate ramping procedure, and to maintain that release until the air temperature is forecasted to be zero degrees or higher, and the temperature as measured at Bridgeport Reservoir by the District reaches zero degrees or higher.

**1.2 Notice Requirements**

Notice need not be provided.



## **2. REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE TO THE DAM, OUTLET WORKS, OR RESERVOIR**

### **2.1 Inspections of Dam and Outlet Works**

Inspections of the outlet works, from upstream of the front gates, through the upstream transition section, and following out the intake grates to the inlet tube, shall be performed routinely every five years. The inspection shall be made through the use of divers and underwater cameras.

Inspections of the outlet works, from the backside of the front gates out to the end of the outlet tube at the discharge pool, shall be performed routinely every five years. The inspection shall be made by shutting the front gates in chambers number one and two and opening the control gates wide open. The front gate in chamber number three shall remain open while minimum flows, as required, are released from the control gate in chamber three. The inspectors will be lowered into the closed off chambers to make their inspections. The downstream transition section and the length of the outlet tube from the gate chamber to the discharge pool shall be inspected at this time. Each of the gates shall be inspected by repeating the above steps.

Visual inspection of the exterior of the outlet works shall routinely be made during low reservoir conditions.

All parties (see Notice List) shall be notified by mail at least 30 days in advance of any inspection.

### **2.2 Repairs to Outlet Works**

UPSTREAM OF THE FRONT GATES, UPSTREAM TRANSITION SECTION, INLET CONDUIT AND INLET GRATES--The entire outlet works are to be dewatered to allow repairs to this segment of the reservoir outlet works. The latest technology available shall be used to install a temporary cofferdam to permit internal repairs under dry conditions. If the situation arises where repair is required, a Portadam or other type of cofferdam will be used. Synthetic plastics will be draped over steel supporting members. The hydraulic loading on the membrane will seal the reservoir water out.

During repairs, release flows as required shall be maintained by pumping reservoir water over the dam into the discharge pool.

DOWNSTREAM OF THE FRONT GATES, CONTROL GATES, GATE CHAMBERS, SIPHONS AND PART OF THE DOWNSTREAM TRANSITION NEAR PIER SECTION--Subject to the area requiring repair, that portion of the gate chamber



shall be dewatered. A temporary dam shall be constructed out of timbers and rubber sealers. Elevated walkways shall be placed in the outlet conduit to provide access to the work area. The walkways shall be constructed to allow required release flows to pass underneath without interference. If the repair is minor, access shall be by elevator located in one of the tower shafts.

During repairs, release flows as required shall be maintained by releasing reservoir water through whichever control gate is not involved in the repair process.

**DOWNSTREAM TRANSITION AND OUTLET CONDUIT**--This section shall be dewatered by putting the water in a closed pipe. A flanged pipe coupler shall be mounted in one of the control gate slots and sealed. The coupler may be manifolded and the water put into several pipes as needed. The pipes shall carry the water past the work area and discharge into the downstream pool.

During repairs, release flows as required shall be maintained by releasing reservoir water through the closed pipe and regulated by the front gate.

All parties (see Notice List) shall be notified by mail at least 60 days in advance of any repairs to the outlet works. All parties shall be notified by phone at least 48 hours in advance of any anticipated problems and shall be notified immediately by phone upon discovery of any threat to the integrity of the dam or outlet works. Written notice shall follow within 14 days.

### **2.3 Repairs to the Discharge Pool**

The discharge pool will be dewatered by shutting the control gates. Any water remaining in the pool will be pumped into the nearby irrigation ditch and allowed to percolate into the pasture soils.

After the control gates are shut and prior to dewatering the pool, the fish will be encouraged to swim downstream and remain in the East Walker. Large nets and swimmers will attempt to chase the fish out of the deep water. As the pool is pumped the remaining fish will be netted, put into a nearby fish truck and transported to sites on the East Walker River selected by the CF&G. In lieu of this procedure, the District instead may follow any other reasonable alternative method approved by the California Department of Fish and Game.

To prevent any deleterious material, concrete residue, silt or sand from getting into the East Walker River, straw dams with filter cloth draped over the bales shall be constructed. Fish screens shall be installed to halt any fish from swimming above that point where pump water is being discharged below the work area.

During repairs, release flows as required will be pumped over the dam and discharged directly below the work area into the East Walker River.

All parties (see Notice List) shall be notified by mail at least 60 days in advance of any repairs to the discharge pool.

### **3. SEASONAL RELEASES**

The District will request the U.S. Board of Water Commissioners to provide, by deferring part of the District's storage entitlement or by making releases from storage, sufficient water for the following releases:

#### **3.1 Non-Irrigation Season**

A continuous minimum release of not less than 20 cfs from Bridgeport Reservoir shall be maintained at all times. The District's operator, prior to 4:00 PM each day, will obtain from the National Weather Service the forecasted minimum 24-hour air temperature. Whenever the forecast calls for a minimum temperature of less than zero degrees (F) for the following 24 hours, the District shall request the U.S. Board of Water Commissioners to immediately increase the minimum continuous release to 30 cfs, in accordance with the appropriate ramping procedure, and shall maintain that release until the air temperature is forecasted to be zero degrees or higher, and the temperature as measured at Bridgeport Reservoir by the District reaches zero degrees or higher.

Inflows in excess of the continuous minimum release shall be stored in Bridgeport Reservoir according to the rights of Walker River Irrigation District as described and provided for in the Federal Court Operating Decree.

Inflows in excess of those that satisfy the terms and conditions of the Walker River Irrigation District's water right to store in Bridgeport Reservoir shall be passed through the reservoir as described and provided for in the Federal Court Operating Decree and Nevada water right appropriations to the Department of Wildlife.

#### **3.2 Irrigation Season**

A continuous minimum release of not less than 20 cfs from Bridgeport Reservoir shall be maintained at all times. Releases in excess of continuous minimum release shall be as required according to the terms and conditions of the Federal Operating Decree, and daily stored water demands by the individual



users within the Walker River Irrigation District. Inflows in excess of those that satisfy the terms and conditions of the Walker River Irrigation District's water right to store in Bridgeport Reservoir will be passed through the reservoir, as described and provided for in the Federal Operating Decree and Nevada water right appropriations to the Department of Wildlife.

#### **4. FLOW RAMPING**

##### **4.1 Ramping Schedule**

The District will request the United States Board of Water Commissioners to order releases of stored water or defer the storage of water so that the following ramping requirements, as measured at USGS Gage No. 1029300 are satisfied:

Table No. 1

FLOW RAMPING SCHEDULE  
BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR RELEASES  
INTO  
EAST WALKER RIVER

10 TO 100 CFS

Three flow changes per 24 hours at 2-hour intervals;  
 $\pm$  0.20 foot maximum increase or decrease in outside staff  
gage reading (vertical change in water surface) per flow  
change.

100 to 325 CFS

Three flow changes per 24 hours at 1-hour intervals;  
 $\pm$  0.30 foot maximum increase or decrease in outside staff  
gage reading per flow change.

Greater than 325 CFS

Chief Deputy Water Commissioner's discretion. <sup>1</sup>

##### **4.2 Emergency**

The District shall request the Chief Deputy Water Commissioner to notify all parties on notification list before making any emergency releases that are

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<sup>1</sup> The Chief Deputy Water Commissioner has total flexibility in the determination of the incremental change and frequency of change in the releases from the reservoir when flood water events occur. Any flows that are required in excess of maximum irrigation demand (325 cfs) shall be determined on the basis of the characteristics of the storm. Expected storms are analyzed on the basis of intensity, duration and snowpack on the ground prior to the precipitation event.



conditions. However, if the precipitation event requires immediate action, the Chief Deputy Water Commissioner must take the necessary steps to assure the safety of the dam.

#### **4.3 Notice Requirements**

The following is a list of agencies are to be notified when releases other than those prescribed in the Operations Manual are required.

##### **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

Inland Fisheries  
407 West Line Street  
Bishop, CA 93514  
Contact Person: Darrell Wong  
Phone: (619) 872-1172

##### **STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD**

Division of Water Rights  
P. O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Contact Person: Roger Johnson, Assistant Division Chief  
Phone: (916) 657-1985

**WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
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**SECTION B  
OPERATIONS TO MAINTAIN MINIMUM POOL DURING  
SPECIFIC WATER YEAR CLASSIFICATIONS  
AND  
DURING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE TO DAM,  
OUTLET WORKS OR RESERVOIR**

**1. WATER YEAR MINIMUM POOLS**

On April 1 of each year, WRID shall make its annual allocation to District farmers, so that the following minimum pools will be retained in Bridgeport Reservoir through October 31.

**1.1 Dry Year Less Than 75% of Normal Snowpack**

A minimum pool of not less than 600 acre feet shall be maintained during a water year in which the percentage of the average April 1 total snowpack water content as measured at the Virginia Lakes Ridge Snowcourse by the Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, is at or less than 75%.

Notice shall be provided prior to April 15 of each year of the end of season projected minimum pool in acre feet. The following is a list of agencies that shall be notified:

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

Inland Fisheries  
407 West Line Street  
Bishop, CA 95670  
Contact Person: Darrell Wong  
Phone: (619) 872-1172

**STATE WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD - LAHONTAN REGION**

P. O. Box 9428  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 95731  
Contact Person: Harold Singer, Executive Officer  
Phone: (415) 393-2041

### **1.2 Normal Year - Between 75% and 115% of Normal Snowpack**

A minimum pool of not less than 2,000 acre feet shall be maintained during a water year in which the percentage of the average April 1 total snowpack water content as measured at the Virginia Lakes Ridge Snowcourse is between 75% and 115%, except during recovery years. Notice need not be provided.

### **1.3 Wet Year - Greater Than 115% of Normal Snowpack**

A minimum pool of not less than 2,000 AF acre feet shall be maintained during a water year in which the percentage of the average April 1 total snowpack water content as measured at the Virginia Lakes Ridge Snowcourse is greater than 115%. Notice need not be provided.

### **1.4 Recovery Year - Normal Year Immediately Following a Dry Year**

A minimum pool of not less than 600 AF acre feet shall be maintained during a water year in which the percentage of the average April 1 total snowpack water content as measured at the Virginia Lakes Ridge Snowcourse is between 75% and 115% and the previous year was at or less than 75%.

(Notice is the same as in paragraph 1.1)

## **2. MINIMUM POOLS DURING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE TO DAM, OUTLET WORKS OR RESERVOIR**

### **2.1 Notice Requirements**

Notice shall be provided by WRID prior to any repairs and maintenance to dam, outlet works or reservoir when it is required to lower the minimum pool to the 600 AF level. All parties on the NOTICE LIST shall be notified by mail.

### **2.2 Drawdown Below 600 Acre Feet**

If the reservoir must be drawn down below the 600 acre feet level, WRID shall follow the procedures in Section 1601 of the California Fish and Game Code, and comply with the terms and conditions of any waste discharge permit or other order of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, and any recommendations or orders of the California Division of Safety of Dams.



**WATER QUALITY MONITORING AND REPORTING:** WRID shall sample daily for the parameters and at the locations set forth in Section C.

**FISHERY MONITORING AND REPORTING:** Daily visual inspections shall be made of the physical condition of the fish in the reservoir and downstream in the East Walker.

### **2.3 Inflow Control Measures**

To stabilize the prescribed stored water surface during repairs inflows to the reservoir will be pumped over the dam and into the discharge pool.

**WALKER RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
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BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR**

**SECTION C  
OPERATIONS TO MAINTAIN AND MONITOR WATER QUALITY  
IN BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR  
AND DOWNSTREAM OF THE DAM IN THE EAST WALKER RIVER**

**1. SAMPLING AND INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS**

**1.1 Visual Inspections**

Visual inspections shall be made of the Bridgeport Reservoir and East Walker River to Murphy Pond. The frequency of the inspections shall be in accordance with Paragraph 1.4 below. The visual inspection shall include walking the first 0.5 mile downstream from the reservoir outlet. The remaining downstream area shall be visually inspected at the following sites:

- 1) Highway 182 Bridge
- 2) Near the spring on the west side of the highway
- 3) Stream Station No. 5 from the 1989 sampling program
- 4) Murphy Pond

The visual inspections shall, at a minimum, note any of the following:

- 1) Algae blooms
- 2) Other conditions contributing to turbidity or suspended sediment increases (e.g. upstream cattle crossings) in the discharge.
- 3) Dead or distressed fish. Fish should be generally identified (e.g. trout vs. carp) and the location of the fish noted (e.g. in the stream vs. on the bank).
- 4) Dead or distressed riparian wildlife

**1.2 Sampling Locations**

Samples shall be collected from Bridgeport Reservoir and from the East Walker River at the following locations. The frequency of the sampling shall be in accordance with Section 1.4, below.

## LOCATION

## COMMENTS

East Walker River near  
bridge by the airport

Sample shall be a grab  
sample taken from the rapidly  
flowing portion of the river

At the discharge of Bridgeport  
Reservoir

Sample shall be a grab sample  
and represent the water  
leaving the reservoir

East Walker River downstream  
of the reservoir at the USGS  
gaging station

Sample shall be a grab  
sample taken from the rapidly  
flowing portion of the river

East Walker River downstream  
of the reservoir at the  
Hwy 182 bridge

Sample shall be a grab  
sample taken from the rapidly  
flowing portion of the river

East Walker River immediately  
upstream of Murphy's Pond

This station will only be used  
for continuous temperature  
recording

### **1.3 Water Quality Parameters**

Samples shall, at a minimum, be analyzed for the following water quality parameters:

#### PARAMETERS

#### UNITS

Turbidity (grab)

NTU

Temperature (grab)

C

Temperature (continuous)

C

Dissolved Oxygen (grab)

mg/l

The maximum daily temperature will be obtained from continuous temperature recorders at the USGS station, the airport bridge station and at a station just above Murphy Pond. Grab samples should routinely be collected at the time of expected lowest dissolved oxygen concentration (8:00 AM to 10:00 AM). The sampling program should also include samples that represent the average conditions and worst-case conditions of the monitoring period based upon historical observations.



## 1.4 Frequency

The frequency of visual inspections and sampling at all locations shall at a minimum be the following and shall be determined by reservoir level and discharge turbidity level, as specified in the table below. The discharge turbidity level shall be monitored on a weekly basis. If any weekly discharge turbidity sample is greater than 30 NTU, then all stations shall be monitored on a daily basis until the discharge turbidity level decreases to below 30 NTU, as specified in the table below.

In the event that the reservoir must be drawn down below 600 acre feet, notice shall be provided the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Department of Fish and Game at least two weeks in advance of the drawdown. An alternative monitoring and reporting program will be developed and submitted to the Executive Officer for approval for the time period that the reservoir remains below 600 acre feet.

<u>RESERVOIR LEVEL</u>	<u>DISCHARGE TURBIDITY LEVEL</u>		
	<u>&lt;10 NTU</u>	<u>10-30 NTU</u>	<u>&gt;30 NTU</u>
> 3000 AF	MONTHLY	WEEKLY	DAILY
1000-3000 AF	WEEKLY	WEEKLY	DAILY
600-1000 AF	WEEKLY	WEEKLY	DAILY

Turbidity samples shall also be taken from all sampling stations, except for the sampling station immediately upstream of Murphy Pond, within 24 hours of any significant increase in reservoir inflow rate. A "significant" increase is defined as any increase of 200 cubic feet per second (cfs) or more during a 24-hour period.

## 2. REPORTING

### 2.1 Reporting Period November 1 Through April 30

For the time period of November 1 through April 30 two reports shall be submitted to the Regional Board, one on February 15 and one on May 15. Each report shall contain the results of the appropriate daily, weekly or monthly visual inspections and sampling as noted above. In reporting the data shall be arranged in a concise form for quick review by the Regional Board. Each report shall also include the following:

- 1) For the following month or quarter, predicted reservoir storage (acre feet), inflow and outflow rates (cfs), and maximum and minimum reservoir storage for each month.
- 2) For the reporting month or quarter, actual weekly average reservoir storage, inflow and outflow rates, and maximum and minimum reservoir storage for each month.
- 3) For the reporting month or quarter, a record of precipitation events.
- 4) Name and telephone number of an individual who can answer questions about the report.

## **2.2 Reporting Period May 1 Through October 31**

Monthly reports shall be submitted no later than the 15th day of the following month for the time period of May 1 through October 31. Each report shall contain all of the material described in paragraph 2.1, above.

## **2.3 Annual Report**

An annual report shall be submitted summarizing the data collected for the previous year. The data shall be presented in tabular and graphical form. Reports shall be due April 15 of each year.

## **2.4 Notice Requirements**

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board shall be informed at least 48 hours in advance of any anticipated water quality problems and shall be notified immediately by telephone upon discovery of any threat to water quality or adverse effects upon beneficial uses. Written notification shall follow within 14 days.