

# Asphalt Plant Greenlit Upstream From Calaveras River Water Treatment Plant

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VALLEY SPRINGS (CBS13) — A proposed asphalt plant near the Calaveras River could lead to contaminated drinking water for people in the area.

The plant is proposed along the river, near New Hogan Dam in Valley Springs.

The county water district says the plant got the greenlight without its knowledge. A few feet downstream from the plant is the water treatment plant that takes in Calaveras River water.

The water district found out last week that the county told Ford Construction, the company that runs the quarry, that it can develop asphalt. The hot plant would use chemicals to make it.

The water district quickly filed an appeal with the county.

“Our concern would be if that dust is transported into that water. It could potentially change the pH of the water which could create a lot of problems in our ability to treat the water given the process we have in place now,” general manager David Eggerton said.

A local community advocacy group, My Valley Springs, is also upset residents weren't informed of the asphalt proposal.

“We feel that puts that water in jeopardy,” Joyce Techel said. “This requires a review of their existing permits and an environmental impact report as far as I'm concerned.”

Planning Director Peter Maurer says his department didn't approve the plant because he says a new permit wasn't necessary under the area's zoning codes.

“My job is to interpret the code and apply the code evenly mannered. The way I read the code, it's allowed,” he said.

Ford Construction Company will still need approval from air quality control to build the asphalt plant, but now that's on hold.