near former agricultural zones. However, average nitrate levels throughout the Basin meet the RWQCB standard.

3.2.1.1.2 Volatile Organic Compounds

Plumes of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) have been identified in the Basin within the vicinity of the former El Toro Marine Corps Base and Irvine, the Forebay region of the Basin within the vicinity of Fullerton, and at one IRWD well located in Santa Ana. Contamination at the former El Toro Marine Corps Base is associated with Trichloroethylene (TCE), a type of VOC with an MCL of 0.005 mg/L, which was previously utilized as aircraft cleaning solvent on the base. In Santa Ana, concentrations of TCE, PCE, and perchlorate have been detected at IRWD Well No. 3. As discussed below, projects designed to reduce the VOCs to acceptable levels are scheduled for implementation, and therefore no future water reliability impacts are anticipated.

There is also a VOC plume along the Santa Ana River, starting in the southern part of Orange County. OCWD is currently monitoring the plume. Based on available data, the plume is limited in vertical extent to the shallow aquifers. OCWD will continue to monitor the plume and respond appropriately as needed.

3.2.1.1.3 Methyl Tertiary-Butyl Ether (MTBE)

MTBE, a gasoline additive, is commonly found at leaking underground fuel tanks and in surface water (lakes and reservoirs) allowing recreational motorized boats. Hundreds of documented leaking underground fuel tanks are present within OCWD's management area. Most tank owners do not have groundwater cleanup programs in place to remove MTBE. MTBE is very soluble in water and has a low affinity for soil particles resulting in the rapid migration of contaminant plumes.

In May 2000, Department of Healthy Services established the primary MCL for MTBE at 13 µg/L based on the healthy risks. Two drinking wells that were previously removed from OCWD service due to other contaminants had been found to have MTBE exceeding that level. A secondary drinking water standard of 5 µg/L was also adopted. The use of MTBE as an oxygenate in gasoline was required by the Environmental Protection Agency to reduce air pollution. However, MTBE was completely phased out as a gasoline oxygenate after December 31, 2003.