

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FROM THE
CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)**

To: Governor's Office of Planning and Research -
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth St, Suite 222
Sacramento, CA 95814-5502

From: South Coast Air Quality Management District
21865 Copley Drive
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Project Title: 2021 PM10 Maintenance Plan for the South Coast Air Basin

Project Location: The proposed project is located in the four-county South Coast Air Basin portion of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) jurisdiction. The South Coast Air Basin includes all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: In 2010, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) requested the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) to redesignate the South Coast Air Basin (Basin) attainment status for the 1987 24-hour average PM10 National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS), which is attained when fewer than four exceedances of 150 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) are recorded in a three-year period at each monitor, and submitted a PM10 maintenance plan. On July 26, 2013, the U.S. EPA approved the PM10 maintenance plan and redesignated the Basin as attainment with this standard. Section 107(d)(3)(E) of the federal Clean Air Act requires a subsequent maintenance plan to be submitted to U.S. EPA eight years after an attainment redesignation to provide for maintenance of the applicable NAAQS for an additional 10 years after the period covered by the first maintenance plan. As such, the South Coast AQMD has developed the 2021 PM10 Maintenance Plan for the 12-year period from 2023 to 2035, which includes: 1) a maintenance demonstration that the South Coast Air Basin will continue to attain the 1987 24-hour average PM10 NAAQS; 2) verification of continued attainment; 3) a commitment to a future monitoring network; 4) a contingency plan with provisions for implementation in the event of any future NAAQS violations of the 1987 24-hour average PM10 NAAQS; 5) a description of PM10 sources, concentration trends, and emission controls; and 6) an analysis of past NAAQS exceedances of the 1987 24-hour average PM10 NAAQS during the first maintenance period.

Public Agency Approving Project:
South Coast Air Quality Management District

Agency Carrying Out Project:
South Coast Air Quality Management District

Exempt Status:

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption

CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment

Reasons why project is exempt: South Coast AQMD, as Lead Agency, has reviewed the proposed project pursuant to: 1) CEQA Guidelines Section 15002(k) – General Concepts, the three-step process for deciding which document to prepare for a project subject to CEQA; and 2) CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 – Review for Exemption, procedures for determining if a project is exempt from CEQA. Since the proposed project relies on the continued implementation of existing regulations and programs by the South Coast AQMD and California Air Resources Board to reduce emissions without proposing new requirements that would involve physical changes, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment. Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption. The proposed project is also categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment, because the proposed project is designed to further protect or enhance the environment by demonstrating in the 2021 PM10 Maintenance Plan how attainment with the 1987 24-hour average PM10 NAAQS will be maintained. Further, there is no substantial evidence indicating that any of the exceptions to the categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to the proposed project.

Date of Project Approval: South Coast AQMD Governing Board Hearing: June 4, 2021

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Date Received for Filing: _____

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