

## Notice of Exemption

Fee Exempt per Government Code Section 6103

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** Department of Water Resources  
SLFD 31770 Gonzaga Rd  
Gustine, CA 95322

**Lead Agency:** California Department of Water Resources

**Project Title:** Automatic Transfer Switch Installation in California Aqueduct Reach 2B

**Project Location City & County:** Merced County

**Project Location – Specific:** Work will occur within the enclosed area around an existing communications tower on the left side of Reach 2B of the California Aqueduct in the vicinity of milepost 60.53. The project is located about 3.59 miles south of the intersection of Interstate 5 and California State Route 140.

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** American Tower Services LLC requests encroachment permission to install an automatic transfer switch (ATS) onto existing telecommunication tower equipment. All work will occur in the Department of Water Resources' right of way. An existing H-frame contains electrical equipment, and the H-frame is connected via conduit to an existing generator. The ATS will be a new component to the H-frame, and will not replace any existing components. After it is installed onto the H-frame, the ATS will be connected to the conduit. Then, a new conduit will be installed to also connect the ATS switch to an existing County of Merced meter. Through these two connections, the ATS will sense any power outages at the meter, and it will automatically turn on the generator to ensure that communication services can continue in the event of a power outage.

The ATS will be installed to the existing H-frame and conduit. Then, an approximately 100-foot-long by 1-foot-wide by 2-foot-deep area will be excavated. This excavation will start at the base of the H-frame, travel about 80 feet south, and then travel about 20 feet west until it ends at the base of the existing County of Merced meter. Next, three-inch diameter Schedule 40 Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) piping will be placed into the bottom of the entire length of the excavation; underground electrical wiring will be inserted through the entire length of the PVC piping. Finally, the wiring will be connected to the new ATS and the existing meter. Once all electrical work is completed, the excavation will be backfilled and compacted to original contours.

American Tower Services LLC and the County of Merced will benefit from this project.

### Exempt/Suspend Status:

- Ministerial (§21080[b][1]; 15268)
- Declared Emergency (Proclamation of a State of Emergency Due to Drought)
- Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080[b][4]; California Code of Regulations §15269[c])

Categorical Exemption: 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15305(b)(Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations – Issuance of Minor Encroachment Permits)

Statutory Exemptions:

**Reasons Why Project Is Exempt:** American Tower Services LLC requests permission to encroach in the Department of Water Resources right-of-way to install a new ATS onto existing equipment. This work will allow existing communications equipment to continue operating in the event of a power outage, but it will create negligible expansion of use. Work will occur in an area with an average slope of less than 20 percent and it will not result in any changes in land use or density. Department of Water Resources will issue an encroachment permit for this work. Categorical Exemption 15301 (Existing Facilities) and Categorical Exemption 15305(b) (Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations — Issuance of Minor Encroachment Permits) apply.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Department of Water Resources

**Contact Person:** Cody Nelson

**Telephone:** (209) 827-5190

**Signature:** Cody Nelson **Date:** 11/7/2023 **Title:** Planner Scheduler/UC Supv.

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant