

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Public Works Department, Resource Recovery and Waste Management

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

APN: 059-140-023 **Case No.:** Not Applicable

Location: South Coast Recycling and Transfer Station, 4430 Calle Real, Santa Barbara, California 93110

Project Title: South Coast Recycling & Transfer Station Tipping Pad Repair and Pit Fill Project

Project Description: The South Coast Recycling and Transfer Station (SCRTS) Tipping Pad Repair Project consists of repairing and replacing deteriorated sections of the approximately 2.4-acre concrete tipping pad and backfilling an existing asphalt-paved ramp. Over time, the tipping pad sustains damage from constant wear caused by heavy equipment operation, creating potential safety hazards for workers. The project is necessary to maintain the facility's structural integrity and ensure continued safe operation.

Repairs to the tipping pad will involve identifying and addressing cracked or damaged concrete sections through saw-cutting, dowel bar installation, concrete placement, and grinding to restore structural integrity. The project includes demolition and replacement of a 4,482 square foot section of failing concrete. In addition, the project includes the filling in of a loading pit (pit 7) that was used for loading transfer trucks in the past but is no longer in use. This project includes filling the loading pit with clean earthen fill and installing a new 3,200 square foot reinforced concrete slab that matches the existing surrounding surface to provide more space for the SCRTS sorting operations. As part of this work, there may be a need to abandon or relocate utilities within the project area.

The project will take place entirely within the existing footprint of the facility, with construction activities occurring in phases to minimize disruption to operations. Refer to **Figure 1** for the designated construction site within the existing footprint.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Santa Barbara County Public Works Department, Resource Recovery and Waste Management Division.

Exempt Status: (Check one)

- ☐ Ministerial
- ☐ Statutory Exemption
- ☒ Categorical Exemption
- ☐ Emergency Project

_____ Declared Emergency

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section: Section 15301 (Existing Facilities), CEQA Guideline Section 15302 (Replacement or Reconstruction), CEQA Guideline Section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land)

Reasons to support exemption findings:

The SCRTS is a Large Volume Transfer/Processing Facility and Chipping and Grinding Facility operating through a permit (42-AA-0014) issued by Santa Barbara County Environmental Health Services, the Local Enforcement Agency for CalRecycle. The SCRTS Tipping Pad Repair Project consists of repairing and replacing deteriorated sections of the tipping pad and backfilling an existing asphalt-paved ramp within the existing facility footprint. The project qualifies for categorical exemptions under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 (Class 1), 15302 (Class 2), and 15304 (Class 4) as follows:

1. CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Class 1) – Existing Facilities

The operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use, is categorically exempt under this section.

The SCRTS has been operation since 1967 providing waste collection, management and recycling services to the residents of the Santa Barbara County south coast. Consistent with this exemption, the proposed project involves maintenance and repairs to the existing tipping pad, including saw-cutting, dowel bar installation, concrete replacement, and grinding. The project does not expand the footprint or capacity of the facility. All activities will occur within the previously developed area, ensuring continued safe operation without altering or expanding existing use.

2. CEQA Guidelines Section 15302 (Class 2) – Replacement or Reconstruction

The replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities, where the new structure will be located on the same site and have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced, is categorically exempt under this section.

The project involves the replacement of damaged concrete sections with an equivalent material, maintaining the same size and function. The backfilling of the existing ramp and resurfacing with an 8-inch reinforced concrete pavement section does not change the operational capacity of the facility. No expansion of use is proposed, and the project solely serves to restore the structural integrity of the tipping pad.

3. CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 (Class 4) – Minor Alterations to Land

Minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees, are categorically exempt under this section.

The project includes minor grading to backfill and level the existing unused loading pit. There will be no excavation or significant changes to topography outside the developed footprint. No vegetation or sensitive environmental resources will be affected by the project activities.

There is no substantial evidence that there are unusual circumstances (including future activities) resulting in (or which might reasonably result in) significant impacts which threaten the environment. The exceptions to the categorical exemptions pursuant to Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines are:

- a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located -- a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.**

The project is entirely within the existing operational area of the SCRTS, a developed waste management facility. No work will occur in an environmentally sensitive area or impact any designated critical resources. Thus, this exception does not apply.

- b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.**

The project consists of maintenance and repair activities within the facility's existing footprint and does not contribute to cumulative environmental impacts. No foreseeable related projects in the vicinity would result in significant cumulative effects when considered with this project. Thus, this exception does not apply.

- c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.**

The proposed repairs involve concrete replacement and minor grading, with no anticipated significant effects on the environment. The project does not introduce new land uses, substantial earthwork, or hazardous materials beyond what is already present in normal operations. Best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented to control dust, noise, and stormwater runoff. Therefore, no significant environmental effects are expected, and this exception does not apply.

- d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.**

The project is entirely within an existing waste management facility and does not involve modifications to scenic resources, such as trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings, within a designated state scenic highway. As a result, this exception does not apply.

- e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.**

The proposed project is located at the SCRTS, a portion of which lies within the disposal footprint of the Foothill Closed Landfill. The landfill operated as a municipal solid waste facility from the 1940s to approximately 1966. The project site is not identified as a hazardous waste site. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

- f) (f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.**

The project does not involve modifications to, or demolition of structures or features listed in the California Register of Historical Resources or otherwise considered historically significant. The tipping pad and associated infrastructure do not qualify as historic resources. Grading will only take place in areas previously disturbed by construction of the SCRTS. Consequently, this exception does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Liam Gunst, Civil Engineering Associate

Phone #: (805) 882-3625

Department/Division Representative: John Viggianelli, Engineering Environmental Planner

Date: July 30, 2025

Acceptance Date:

Date Filed by County Clerk:



Figure 1. Site Map