

# Attachment C

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**TO:** Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Laguna County Sanitation District

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:** 113-240-013

**Case No.:** NA

**Location:** Unincorporated Santa Maria, California

**Project Title:** Replacement of pond blowers and mixers.

**Project Description:** Replacement of pond blowers and mixers in the high and low TDS aeration ponds. Old blowers and mixers were put into service in 2003 and had an approximate useful life of 15 years and comprise three (2 in service, 1 backup) 75 HP blowers. New technologies can provide the same service with significantly less energy requirements (two 25 HP blowers – 1 service, 1 backup). The project will upgrade these facilities, reduce energy demand and save on operating costs.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara Public Works Department, Laguna County Sanitation District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Martin Wilder, District Manager

**Exempt Status:** (Check one)

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

**Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section:** CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Existing Facilities.

**Reasons to support exemption findings:** CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 exempts the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing or licensing or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of an existing use. Consistent with this exemption, the proposed project involves the maintenance (replacement) of existing facilities that are subject to wear and

degradation. The equipment is located in existing treatment process facilities on Laguna County Sanitation District property.

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.**

Section 15301 is a Class 1 exemption; therefore, this exception is not applicable.

- (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.**

No other modifications are proposed and no cumulative impacts would occur. Therefore, this exception is not applicable.

- (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 project involves replacing old aeration blowers and mixers in existing wastewater treatment process facilities. There are no unusual circumstances associated with the project location, design or construction methods that are expected to result in a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, 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 work is located on Laguna County Sanitation District property in wastewater treatment plant facilities. No designated scenic highways occur within the project area or would be impacted by the project. Therefore, 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 work does not impact any hazardous waste sites. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

- (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 work does not disturb historical resources. Therefore, this exception does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Martin Wilder  
Phone #: (805) 739-8755 Martin Wilder, District Manager

Department/Division Representative: Martin Wilder  
Date: December 13, 2016

Acceptance Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Filed by County Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: A copy of this form must be posted at P&D 6 days prior to a decision on the project. Upon approval, this form must be filed with the Clerk of the Board and posted by the Clerk of the Board for a period of 30 days to begin a 35 day statute of limitations on legal challenges.