

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: Tertiary Membrane Replacement

Project Description: Replacement of worn filtration membranes at the Laguna County Sanitation District Wastewater Reclamation Plant. The membranes are plant equipment that wear and are subject to periodic replacement.

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 filtration membranes in existing process tanks 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 therefore 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 worn filtration membranes 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, District Manager
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Department/Division Representative: Joddi Leipner
Date: January 7, 2014

Acceptance Date: _____

Date Filed by County Clerk: _____