

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

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**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

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**Project Title:** California Joint Electric Truck Scaling Initiative

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**Project Location:** The proposed project is located at the following four existing facilities: 1) National Freight Inc. (NFI), 2009-2011 South Cucamonga Avenue, Ontario, CA 91764, San Bernardino County; 2) NFI, 1991 South Cucamonga Avenue, Ontario, CA 91764, San Bernardino County; 3) NFI, 7201 Rosecrans Ave, Paramount, CA, 90723, Los Angeles County; and 4) Schneider, 329 Durfee Avenue, South El Monte, CA, 91733, Los Angeles County.

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**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** In response to a joint solicitation of a grant funding opportunity issued by the California Air Resources Board and the California Energy Commission, GFO-20-606 Zero-Emission Drayage Truck and Infrastructure Pilot Project, which requires fleets to deploy at least 50 Class 8 zero emission trucks and charging/fueling infrastructure to support these trucks, the South Coast AQMD is proposing a project which will replace 100 existing diesel-fueled on-road trucks with battery electric trucks, install fast-charging infrastructure, a solar energy system and battery storage, microgrid, and networking software. The following summarizes the various project elements that will be implemented at the four existing facilities:

NFI – Ontario: At the 2009-2011 South Cucamonga Avenue location: 1) 50 existing diesel-powered on-road trucks will be replaced with 50 commercial Class 8 Heavy-Duty Battery Electric Trucks (HDBETs); 2) 34 Direct Current Fast Chargers (DCFCs), either rated at 175 kilowatts (kW) or 350 kW each, will be installed; and 3) 2.529 megawatts (MW) of battery storage capable of providing five MW-hours of electricity, microgrid, and networking software will be installed. At the 1991 South Cucamonga Avenue location, one MW solar energy system capable of producing 1.5 million kW-hours of electricity annually will be installed.

NFI – Paramount: Five DCFCs rated at 175 kW each will be installed.

Schneider: 1) 50 existing diesel-powered on-road trucks will be replaced with 50 commercial Class 8 HDBETs; and 2) 16 DCFCs rated at 350 kW each will be installed.

No permits are required for replacing diesel-powered on-road trucks with commercial Class 8 HDBETs. For the installation of DCFCs: 1) the City of Ontario Building Department requires a ministerial permit to be issued per installation location; 2) the City of Paramount requires a site plan and electrical permits; and 3) the County of Los Angeles requires an electrical permit from the Public Works Building and Safety Division. For the installation of the solar energy system, which includes battery storage, microgrid, and networking software, the City of Ontario will issue permits upon final approval of Site Development Plan Application (File No. PDEV20-027) and issuance of a Grading Permit.

Implementation of the proposed project will require the following construction activities: 1) minor trenching/soil disturbance to install electrical conduit for the fast-charging infrastructure at three facilities; 2) the delivery and placement of prefabricated DCFCs at three facilities; minor paving and concrete activities to restore the previously disturbed surfaces; and 3) rooftop installation of solar panels and ground-level installation of associated battery storage and associated equipment at one facility. Additionally, each HDBET will be equipped with onboard data collectors to collect data such as vehicle miles travelled, hours of operation, battery performance, etc. The data collected will be used to measure performance and provide assistance for conducting further research about HDBETs and the supporting infrastructure. Since the 100 diesel-fueled on-road trucks are part of the national fleets for NFI and Schneider, they will be permanently relocated for use outside of California. Implementation of the proposed project is estimated to annually reduce 8,247 metric tons of greenhouse gases, and 5.00 tons of weighted emission reductions comprised of 2.62 tons of nitrogen oxides, 0.14 ton of volatile organic compounds, and 0.11 ton of particulate matter.

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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FROM CEQA (continued)

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**Public Agency Approving Project:**  
South Coast Air Quality Management District

**Agency Carrying Out Project:**  
South Coast Air Quality Management District

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**Exempt Status:**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption  
CEQA Guidelines Section 15268 – Ministerial Projects  
CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(a) – Existing Facilities  
CEQA Guidelines Section 15303(d) – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures  
CEQA Guidelines Section 15304(f) – Minor Alterations to Land  
CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 – Information Collection  
Public Resources Code Section 21080.35 – Installation of a Solar Energy System

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**Reasons why project is exempt:** In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), South Coast AQMD staff 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. South Coast AQMD staff contacted each planning department with jurisdiction over the four facilities where fast-charging equipment and infrastructure are proposed to be sited (e.g., City of Ontario for the two NFI – Ontario facilities, City of Paramount for the NFI – Paramount facility, and County of Los Angeles for the Schneider facility). The City of Ontario and the City of Paramount planning departments indicated that installations of fast-charging equipment and infrastructure are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15268 – Ministerial Projects. The County of Los Angeles indicated that installations of electric vehicle charging stations are categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities. In addition to the aforementioned exemptions, the installation of the solar system and associated equipment on the roof of an existing building or at an existing parking lot is not subject to CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.35. In addition, the City of Ontario has indicated that the environmental impacts associated with the installation of the solar energy system were previously reviewed as part of the General Plan Amendment for which The Ontario Plan Environmental Impact Report was previously certified by the Ontario City Council on January 27, 2010 (File No. PGPA06-001) such that no additional CEQA document is required.

Because the physical changes that may occur at the four existing facilities as a result of implementing the proposed project would only require minimal construction activities, South Coast AQMD staff has determined that 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 15301(a) – Existing Facilities, because the installation of fast-charging infrastructure and the placement of prefabricated DCFCs at three facilities and the installation of solar panels and ground-level installation of associated battery storage equipment at one facility only involve minor physical modifications or alterations associated with electrical conveyances. Further, because new construction or the conversion of small structures associated with the installation of electrical conveyances at all four facilities and solar panels and associated battery storage equipment at one facility may be needed, the proposed project is also categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303(d) – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures. Similarly, because minor paving and concrete activities to restore the previously disturbed surfaces associated with the installation of electrical conveyances at three facilities and solar panels and associated battery storage equipment at one facility is anticipated, the proposed project is also categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304(f) – Minor Alterations to Land. Finally, because the overarching purpose of this pilot project is to collect data to verify the emissions reduction benefits of the use of HDBETs and supporting infrastructure, the proposed project is also categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 – Information Collection. There is no substantial evidence indicating that any of the exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply to the proposed project pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 – Exceptions. Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FROM CEQA (concluded)

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**Date of Project Approval:**

February 12, 2021

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**Date Received for Filing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_



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Planning, Rule Development, and Area Sources