

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

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<b>To:</b> County Clerks for the Counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino; and Governor's Office of Planning and Research – State Clearinghouse	<b>From:</b> South Coast Air Quality Management District 21865 Copley Drive Diamond Bar, CA 91765
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**Project Title:** Proposed Amended Regulation III – Fees, which includes Proposed Amended Rule (PAR) 301 – Permitting and Associated Fees, PAR 303 – Hearing Board Fees, PAR 304 – Equipment, Materials, and Ambient Air Analyses, PAR 304.1 – Analyses Fees, PAR 306 – Plan Fees, PAR 307.1 – Alternative Fees for Air Toxics Emissions Inventory, PAR 308 – On-Road Motor Vehicle Mitigation Options Fees, PAR 309 – Fees for Regulation XVI and Regulation XXV, PAR 311 – Air Quality Investment Program (AQIP) Fees, PAR 313 – Authority to Adjust Fees and Due Dates, PAR 314 – Fees for Architectural Coatings, PAR 315 – Fees for Training Classes and License Renewal, PAR 316 – Fees for Rule 2305, and PAR 316.2 – Fees for Rule 2306

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**Project Location:** The proposed project is located within the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (South Coast AQMD) jurisdiction, which includes the four-county South Coast Air Basin (all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties), and the Riverside County portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin and the non-Palo Verde, Riverside County portion of the Mojave Desert Air Basin.

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**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** Regulation III establishes the fee rates and schedules to recover South Coast AQMD's reasonable costs of regulating and providing services, primarily to permitted sources. Amendments to Regulation III are proposed which include: 1) an increase of most fees by 3.0 percent (%) consistent with the California Consumer Price Index (CPI); 2) an amendment Rule 301 to introduce new fees for optional Rule 212(c) public notice distribution fees; 3) an amendment to Rule 316 to include new post-reporting deadline fees related to implementation of Rule 2305 (WAIRE Program); and 4) administrative changes in Regulation III that include clarifications, deletions, insertions, or corrections of existing rule language, and an extension of the 2026 Annual Emission Reporting (AER) submission deadline, which have no fee impact. The proposed project will ensure that the South Coast AQMD will have the necessary resources to provide cost recovery while implementing rule requirements through issuance and implementation of permits.

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<b>Public Agency Approving Project:</b> South Coast Air Quality Management District	<b>Agency Carrying Out Project:</b> South Coast Air Quality Management District
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**Exempt Status:**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption  
CEQA Guidelines Section 15273 – Rates, Tolls, Fares, and Charges

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**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FROM CEQA (concluded)**

**Reasons why project is exempt:** South Coast AQMD, as Lead Agency, 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. The proposed amendments to Regulation III are statutorily exempt from CEQA requirements pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15273 – Rates, Tolls, Fares, and Charges, because the proposed new and increased fees involve charges by public agencies for the purpose of meeting operating expenses and financial reserve needs and requirements. In addition, the proposed amendments to Regulation III which have no fee impact and are strictly administrative in nature are exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption, because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment.

**Date of Project Approval:** South Coast AQMD Governing Board Public Hearing: May 2, 2025

**CEQA Contact Person:**

Jivar Afshar

**Phone Number:**

(909) 396-2040

**Email:**[jafshar@aqmd.gov](mailto:jafshar@aqmd.gov)**Proposed Amended Regulation****III Contact Person:**

Albert Ochoa

**Phone Number:**

(909) 396-3497

**Email:**[aochoa@aqmd.gov](mailto:aochoa@aqmd.gov)**Date Received for Filing:** \_\_\_\_\_**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_*May 2, 2025*

Kevin Ni

Program Supervisor, CEQA

Planning, Rule Development, and  
Implementation