

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

To: County Clerks for the Counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino; and Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation – State Clearinghouse

From: South Coast Air Quality Management District
21865 Copley Drive
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Project Title: Proposed Amended Rule 223 – Requirements for Confined Animal Facilities

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.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: Rule 223 controls ammonia and volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from large confined animal facilities (LCAFs). Proposed Amended Rule 223 (PAR 223) is designed to implement Control Measure BCM-08 from the 2024 PM2.5 Attainment Plan and comply with federal Clean Air Act Most Stringent Measures requirements by reducing the applicability thresholds for dairy, poultry, and duck farms to 500 milking cows, 400,000 chickens, and 400,000 ducks, respectively. Implementation of PAR 223 will require up to 12 additional dairy facilities to obtain South Coast AQMD permits and select from a menu of mitigation measures to reduce emissions from their operations, many of which are currently being implemented as best practices or as required by other rules and regulations. As a result, very few, if any, physical modifications are expected to occur. No additional chicken or duck farms currently exceed the proposed thresholds. Implementation of PAR 223 is anticipated to benefit public health and ambient air quality by reducing ammonia emissions by 0.17 ton per day by 2029.

Public Agency Approving Project:
South Coast Air Quality Management District

Agency Carrying Out Project:
South Coast Air Quality Management District

Exempt Status:

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption

CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment

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. PAR 223 will achieve ammonia and VOC emission reductions primarily from dairies becoming permitted and implementing mitigation measures. This can be accomplished with minimal to no physical modifications because the affected LCAFs are currently implementing many of the required mitigation measures via best management practices or other rules and regulations. Thus, it can be seen with certainty that implementing the proposed project would not cause 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 15308 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment, because PAR 223 is intended to further protect or enhance the environment by improving public health and air quality through anticipated reductions in ammonia emissions. Further, there is no substantial evidence indicating that any of the exceptions to the categorical exemption set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 – Exceptions, apply to the proposed project.

Date of Project Approval:

South Coast AQMD Governing Board Public Hearing: September 5, 2025

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FROM CEQA (concluded)

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Date Received for Filing: _____

Signature: _____



September 5, 2025

Kevin Ni
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Planning, Rule Development, and
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