

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

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| 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 |
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Project Title: Proposed Rule 444.1 – Particulate Matter Emission Reductions from Forestry and Agricultural Waste (PR 444.1); Proposed Amended Rule 401 – Visible Emissions (PAR 401); Proposed Amended Rule 404 – Particulate Matter – Concentration (PAR 404); Proposed Amended Rule 405 – Solid Particulate Matter - Weight (PAR 405); Proposed Amended Rule 219 – Equipment Not Requiring a Written Permit Pursuant to Regulation II (PAR 219); and Proposed Amended Rule 222 – Filing Requirements for Specific Emission Sources Not Requiring a Written Permit Pursuant to Regulation II (PAR 222)

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: PR 444.1, PAR 401, PAR 404, PAR 405, PAR 219, and PAR 222 (proposed project) provide a pathway for air curtain incinerators (ACIs) and prescribed fire vehicles to be used for wildfire prevention and to reduce particulate matter (PM) emissions from forestry and agricultural waste. The proposed project will partially implement Best Control Measure 20: Application of All Feasible Measures (BCM-20) from the South Coast Air Basin Attainment Plan for the 2012 Annual PM2.5 Standard and objectives in Chapter 5e of the Eastern Coachella Valley (ECV) Community Emission Reduction Plan (CERP) by allowing and regulating the use of alternative, lower emitting, vegetative fuel reduction technologies, compared to the open burning of forestry and agricultural waste. PR 444.1 establishes requirements for ACIs and prescribed fire vehicles used to reduce vegetative waste. PAR 401, PAR 404 and PAR 405 include an exemption to allow the use of technologies regulated by PR 444.1. PAR 219 includes an exemption for some ACIs, prescribed fire vehicles, and associated air pollution control equipment not subject to Title V from South Coast AQMD permitting requirements. PAR 222 includes a requirement for ACIs and prescribed fire vehicles that are exempt from permitting to be registered with the South Coast AQMD. Allowing the use of ACIs and prescribed fire vehicles within South Coast AQMD jurisdiction will support wildfire prevention efforts and protect public safety by providing additional tools that are capable of reducing vegetative waste with fewer PM emissions than other technologies.

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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 15269(c) – Emergency Projects: Specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt: South Coast AQMD, as Lead Agency, has reviewed the proposed project (PR 444.1, PAR 401, PAR 404, PAR 405, PAR 219, and PAR 222) 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 project seeks to reduce and manage vegetative fuel loads of forestry and agricultural waste in order to prevent wildfires and protect public safety by allowing the use of optional ACIs and prescribed fire vehicles, which have fewer PM emissions than what would occur by conducting open burning. Thus, the proposed project consists of actions necessary to prevent or mitigate wildfire-related emergency conditions which are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(c) – Emergency Projects: Specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency.

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FROM CEQA (concluded)

Date of Project Approval:

South Coast AQMD Governing Board Public Hearing: June 5, 2026

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Date Received for Filing: _____

Signature: _____



June 5, 2026

Kevin Ni
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Planning, Rule Development, and
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