

**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 Planning and Research – State Clearinghouse	From: South Coast Air Quality Management District 21865 Copley Drive Diamond Bar, CA 91765
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Project Title: Proposed Amended Rule 1173 – Control of Volatile Organic Compound Leaks and Releases from Components at Petroleum Facilities and Chemical Plants

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 1173 was amended in response to objectives in the Wilmington, Carson, West Long Beach Community Emission Reductions Plan and to implement the 2022 Air Quality Management Plan Control Measure FUG-01: Improved Leak Detection and Repair, both of which are committed to improved leak detection requirements in South Coast AQMD rules. Proposed Amended Rule 1173 (PAR 1173) proposes further reduction of volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from components by requiring the use of enhanced leak detection technology at greater frequencies and establishing lower leak standards. PAR 1173 also introduces contingency measures to partially satisfy federal Clean Air Act contingency requirements for applicable ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards in the South Coast AQMD's jurisdiction. PAR 1173 includes the following provisions that would: 1) make VOC leak standards more stringent for light liquid pumps and compressors as well as valves, fittings, and other devices to reduce baseline VOC emissions associated with those components; 2) require optical gas imaging (OGI) inspections monthly; 3) introduce contingency measures as defined by the federal Clean Air Act; 4) update recordkeeping and reporting requirements; 5) add two new test methods; and 6) formalize inspection requirements and make VOC leak standards more stringent for fin fans. PAR 1173 is expected to reduce VOC emissions by 740.1 tons per year or 2.03 tons per day, which would benefit public health.

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

Reasons why project is exempt: South Coast AQMD, as Lead Agency, has reviewed the proposed project (PAR 1173) 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. Since the focus of PAR 1173 is to achieve VOC emission reductions through more stringent VOC leak standards and by requiring frequent OGI inspections, which can be accomplished without physical modifications, it can be seen with certainty that implementation of PAR 1173 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.

Date of Project Approval: South Coast AQMD Governing Board Public Hearing: November 1, 2024

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Date Received for Filing: _____

Signature: _____



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