

**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

Project Title: Proposed Amended Rule 1118 – Control of Emissions from Refinery Flares

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 1118 contains requirements for flares operated at petroleum refineries and related operations, including requirements to submit notifications and reports, monitor emissions, meet emissions targets, and maintain a public inquiry hotline. Proposed Amended Rule (PAR) 1118 utilizes the information gathered from the previous amendments in 2017 and proposes to establish: 1) a more stringent annual sulfur dioxide (SO₂) performance target threshold for all facilities which will reduce emissions of sulfur oxides (SO_x); 2) a new annual nitrogen oxides (NO_x) performance target for clean service flares at hydrogen production plants; 3) new requirements for clean service flares at refineries (e.g., flares for liquified petroleum gas tanks); 4) an adjustment to mitigation fees annually based on the most recent consumer price index; and 5) updated and standardized reporting requirements for facilities through the flare event notification system. Finally, PAR 1118 removes outdated rule language and reorganizes the rule structure to ensure consistency with recently amended or adopted rules. PAR 1118 will be applicable to 12 facilities with 31 flares, and to comply with PAR 1118 requirements, installations of the following are expected: 1) continuous flow meters (CFMs) on three flares; 2) one refrigeration/chiller for one flare; and 3) replacement of an existing flare system with one new flare system. Implementation of PAR 1118 is expected to result in emission reductions of 10.1 tons per year of NO_x, 16.6 tons per year of SO₂ and 3.8 tons per year of VOC by 2029 which will benefit public health and ambient air quality. In addition, SO₂ is a precursor to the formation of PM_{2.5}; therefore, the SO₂ emission reductions will result in approximately 3.3 tons of PM_{2.5} reduced per year.

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

Reasons why project is exempt: South Coast AQMD, as Lead Agency, has reviewed the proposed project (PAR 1118) 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 analysis of the anticipated physical changes that may occur as a result of implementing the proposed project indicates that the construction activities and associated emissions are expected to be minimal. 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.

Date of Project Approval: South Coast AQMD Governing Board Public Hearing: April 5, 2024

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Date Received for Filing: _____

Signature: _____



April 5, 2024

Kevin Ni
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Planning, Rule Development, and Implementation