

Attachment D

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Public Works Department, Resource Recovery and Waste Management

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

APN: Multiple Case No.: Not Applicable

Location: County-operated facilities (Landfill, Transfer Stations and the Community Hazardous Waste Center) throughout Santa Barbara County (All Supervisorial Districts)

Project Title: Solid Waste Tipping Fees, Maximum Franchised Collection Rates, and New Cuyama Parcel Fees for FY 2025/26 - All Supervisorial Districts

Project Description: Adoption of a resolution setting fee schedules for solid waste handling and disposal fees at County operated facilities, and setting maximum franchised solid waste collection rates in the unincorporated area.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Santa Barbara County Public Works Department, Resource Recovery and Waste Management Division.

Exempt Status: (Check one)

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section: CEQA Guideline Section 15273. (a) (1), (2) (3), and (4) Rate, Tolls, Fares, and Charges.

Reasons to support exemption findings:

CEQA does not apply to the establishment, modification, structuring, restructuring, or approval of rates, tolls, fares, or other charges by public agencies which the public agency finds are for the purpose of meeting operating expenses, purchasing or leasing supplies, equipment, or materials, meeting financial reserve needs and requirements and obtaining funds for capital projects, necessary to maintain service within existing service areas. Tipping fees at County solid waste facilities are set each year based on the actual cost of providing the service the prior fiscal year, as well as complying with the Resource Recovery & Waste Management Division's long-term financial pro forma for funding its debt obligations, capital, regulatory

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compliance, and closure/post-closure requirements associated with its solid waste management system. Consistent with the requirements of this exemption, the proposed fees are for the purpose of meeting ongoing operational expenses, debt obligations and not for system expansion. In FY 25/26 the mechanism to set the rate charged at the Tajiguas Landfill is established in the regional agreements between the County and the participating jurisdictions and in the financing documents for the construction and operation of the ReSource Center (formerly the Tajiguas Resource Recovery Project). During FY 25/26, the proposed rate will increase from \$189 to \$196.50 per ton. As a capital project, the Resource Center was separately reviewed under CEQA in 12EIR-00000-00002 certified by the Board of Supervisors on July 12, 2016 and Addendum dated August 11, 2017 (revised October 26, 2017), considered by the Board of Supervisors on November 14, 2017 along with other Addendums and 15162 determinations for various project description changes. Most other rates for waste handled at County facilities are proposed to increase by an average rate of 7.28%. A new capital project, the Tajiguas Landfill Capacity Increase Project, commenced construction in FY24/25 and is largely funded by the Division's capital reserves. This project was separately reviewed under CEQA in 23EIR-00001 certified by the Board of Supervisors on March 19, 2024. For the FY 25/26 maximum franchised collection rates, the mechanism to adjust these rates is defined in each agreement. The average collection rate increase is approximately 3.54%.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Jeanette Gonzales-Knight, Deputy Director, RRWMD

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Department/Division Representative: John Viggianelli, Engineering Environmental Planner

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Date: April 15, 2025

Acceptance Date:

Date Filed by County Clerk: 6/4/2025