

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

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**To:** Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate  
Innovation – State Clearinghouse  
1400 Tenth St, Suite 222  
Sacramento, CA 95814-5502

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

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**Project Title:** Proposed Amended Rule 1144 – Metalworking Fluids and Direct-Contact Lubricants

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**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.

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**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** Rule 1144 limits volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from the use of metalworking fluids and direct-contact lubricants at industrial facilities. The primary objective of Proposed Amended Rule (PAR) 1144 is to partially implement control measure CTS-01: Further Emission Reductions From Coatings, Solvents, Adhesives, and Lubricants of the 2022 Air Quality Management Plan to phase out the use of para-Chlorobenzotrifluoride (pCBtF) and *tert*-Butyl Acetate (t-BAc) in metalworking fluids and direct-contact lubricants due to toxicity and public health concerns. PAR 1144 includes: 1) a prohibition pertaining to the manufacture, sale, and use of metalworking fluids and lubricants with more than trace levels of pCBtF and t-BAc at future effective dates; 2) sell-through and use-through provisions to ensure that manufacturers, distributors, and end users are provided with adequate time to transition to products without pCBtF and/or t-BAc, if needed; 3) prohibitions of other toxic compounds in metalworking fluids and lubricants; and 4) revisions for clarity and harmonization with other South Coast AQMD VOC rules, streamlined administrative requirements, minor editorial changes and removal of outdated rule provisions. Implementation of the proposed project is not expected to result in a change in VOC emissions relative to baseline conditions because compliant formulations of metalworking fluids and direct-contact lubricants that do not contain pCBtF or t-BAc are currently available and capable of meeting the established VOC emission limits. The primary benefit of phasing out pCBtF and t-BAc is the reduced risk of exposure to these toxic chemicals by workers, nearby receptors and the public.

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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 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption

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**Reasons why project is exempt:** South Coast AQMD, as Lead Agency, has reviewed the proposed project (PAR 1144) 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. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment because: 1) PAR 1144 is not expected to result in a change in VOC emissions relative to baseline conditions; and 2) compliant formulations that do not contain pCBtF and t-BAc are commercially available and the sell-through and use-through provisions provide sufficient time to find suitable replacements, which will prevent stranded assets and the generation of waste. Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption.

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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FROM CEQA (concluded)

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**Date of Project Approval:**

South Coast AQMD Governing Board Public Hearing: April 3, 2026

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**Date Received for Filing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:**



*April 3, 2026*

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Kevin Ni  
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Planning, Rule Development, and  
Implementation