



**HUGH NGUYEN**  
CLERK - RECORDER

BIRTH AND DEATH RECORDS  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES  
MARRIAGE LICENSES/RECORDS  
NOTARY REGISTRATION  
ORANGE COUNTY ARCHIVES  
PASSPORTS  
PROPERTY RECORDS

May 14, 2026

SANTA MARGARITA WATER DISTRICT  
26111 ANTONIO PKWY  
RCHO SA MARGARITA, CA 92688

Office of the ORANGE COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER  
**Memorandum**

SUBJECT: EIR NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

The attached notice was received, filed and a copy was posted on 5/14/2026

**It remained posted for 30 (thirty) days.**

HUGH NGUYEN  
CLERK - RECORDER  
In and for the County of ORANGE

By: 516 - Deputy

**Public Resource Code 21092.3**

The notice required pursuant to Sections 21080.4 and 21092 for an environmental impact report shall be posted in the office of the County Clerk of each county \*\*\* in which the project will be located and shall remain posted for a period of 30 days. The notice required pursuant to Section 21092 for a negative declaration shall be so posted for a period of 20 days, unless otherwise required by law to be posted for 30 days. The County Clerk shall post notices within 24 hours of receipt.

**Public Resource Code 21152**

All notices filed pursuant to this section shall be available for public inspection, and shall be posted **\*\*\* within 24 hours of receipt** in the office of the County Clerk. Each notice shall remain posted for a period of 30 days.

\*\*\* Thereafter, the clerk shall return the notice to the local **lead** agency \*\*\* within a notation of the period it was posted. The local **lead** agency shall retain the notice for not less than nine months.

Additions or changes by underline; deletions by \*\*\*

NORTH COUNTY BRANCH OFFICE  
WELLS FARGO BUILDING  
222 S. HARBOR BLVD., STE 110  
ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA 92805

ORANGE COUNTY  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIONSOUTH  
601 N. ROSS STREET  
SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92701

OLD ORANGE COUNTY  
COURTHOUSE  
211 W. SANTA ANA BLVD. ROOM 201  
SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92701

SOUTH COUNTY BRANCH OFFICE  
LAGUNA HILLS CIVIC CENTER  
24031 EL TORO ROAD, SUITE 150  
LAGUNA HILLS, CALIFORNIA 92653



ORANGE COUNTY  
CLERK-RECORDER  
CEQA-FILING COVER SHEET

20-05-14/2026-0414

202685000575

**FILED**

May 14, 2026

HUGH NGUYEN  
CLERK - RECORDER

By Andy  
Deputy clerk

THIS SPACE FOR CLERK'S USE ONLY

Complete and attach this form to each CEQA Notice filed with the County Clerk-Recorder

TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

Project Title

WELL 5 PRS RELOCATION

**Check Document being Filed:**

- Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) or Negative Declaration (ND)
- Notice of Exemption (NOE)
- Other (Please fill in type):

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE ORANGE  
COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER ON 05/14/2026  
Posted 05/14/2026 Removed \_\_\_\_\_  
Returned to agency on \_\_\_\_\_  
DEPUTY 516

Filing fees are due at the time a Notice of Determination/Exemption is filed with our office. For more information on filing fees and No Effect Determinations, please refer to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 753.5.





10. Lead Agency Contact Person: Telephone:	Santa Margarita Water District
11. If filed by applicant: Attach Certificate of Determination (Form "B") before filing.	
12. Was a public hearing held by the Lead Agency to consider the exemption? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If yes, the date of the public hearing was:	

Date: 5/12/2026

*Patricia Butler*

Signature

Name: *Patricia Butler*

Title: *Chief Engineer*

Signed by Lead Agency  
Santa Margarita Water District

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing:

(Clerk Stamp Here)

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

**FILED**

MAY 14 2026

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: *At* DEPUTY





State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife  
**2026 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT**  
 DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/26) Previously DFG 753.5a

RECEIPT NUMBER:  
 30-05/14/2026-0414  
 STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER (If applicable)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY SANTA MARGARITA WATER DISTRICT	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL	DATE 05/14/2026
COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING ORANGE COUNTY	DOCUMENT NUMBER 202685000575	
PROJECT TITLE  WELL 5 PRS RELOCATION		

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME SANTA MARGARITA WATER DISTRICT	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER (949) 459-8420
PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS 26111 ANTONIO PARKWAY	CITY RSM	STATE CA
		ZIP CODE 92688

PROJECT APPLICANT (Check appropriate box)

- Local Public Agency   
  School District   
  Other Special District   
  State Agency   
  Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

- Environmental Impact Report (EIR) \$ 4,227.50 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND) \$ 3,043.75 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW \$ 1,437.25 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Exempt from fee  
      Notice of Exemption (attach)  
      CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)  
 Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)  


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 Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only) \$ 850.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 County documentary handling fee \$ 50.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

PAYMENT METHOD:

- Cash   
  Credit   
  Check   
  Other   
 TOTAL RECEIVED \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 0.00

SIGNATURE  X <i>Andy</i>	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE  Xiaoxi Zhou Deputy Clerk
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# Notice of Exemption

# Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency): Santa Margarita Water District  
26111 Antonio Parkway, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

County Clerk

County of: ORANGE

(Address)

Project Title: Well 5A - PRS Relocation and Abandonment Project

Project Applicant: Santa Margarita Water District

Project Location - Specific:

27802 Calle Aroyo, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

Project Location - City: San Juan Capistrano

Project Location - County: Orange

### Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project consists of the relocation and replacement of an existing below-grade pressure reducing vault and its associated piping and valves within an existing District easement. The existing underground vault will be abandoned in place after all existing interior piping and valves have been disconnected and removed. A new above-ground pressure reducing station, consisting of new piping, valves, and appurtenances, will be installed on a new concrete pad or crushed-rock improved surface at a nearby location within the same District easement. A new perimeter security fence will be installed around the above-ground assembly. Tie-ins to the existing District water main will require limited excavation and minor removal of small, non-native ruderal vegetation at the connection points, all of which will occur entirely within the existing District easement. The project area is generally cleared of vegetation and is located approximately 200 feet from a normally low flow creek; no work will occur within the creek, its bed, bank, or channel, and no work will occur within any riparian canopy. The project does not increase the capacity or change the operational function of the pressure reducing station. It replaces aging infrastructure with new equivalent infrastructure in a configuration that is safer and more accessible for maintenance personnel. The purpose of the project is to replace aging, deteriorated water distribution infrastructure and to relocate the pressure reducing facility from a below-grade confined space vault to an above-ground configuration. The above-ground configuration eliminates confined-space entry hazards for maintenance personnel, improves operational access for inspection and repair, reduces the risk of in-service failure of aged piping and valves, and improves long-term reliability of the District's water distribution system in this service area. The beneficiaries include the District's water customers served by this segment of the distribution system, who will continue to receive reliable water service with reduced risk of outages and pressure disruptions. District operations and maintenance personnel, who will benefit from safer above-ground access that eliminates confined-space entry, and the general public.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Santa Margarita Water District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Santa Margarita Water District

### Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 2- Replacement, Class 1 Existing Facilities
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Reasons why project is exempt:

Class 2 exempts the replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity. This project meets that description and qualifies for the exemption. The project replaces existing pressure reducing infrastructure with new equivalent infrastructure of the same purpose and capacity. While the new above-ground station will be located a short distance from the original below-grade vault, both the existing and replacement facilities are within the same District easement and serve the identical function in the distribution system, consistent with the "same site" standard as applied to linear and utility facilities. Class 1 Exemption. To the extent the project involves the operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of an existing public utility facility, Section 15301(b) specifically applies to "existing facilities of both investor and publicly owned utilities used to provide... water... or other public utility services." The project involves no expansion of use or capacity.

### Lead Agency

Contact Person: Santa Margarita Water District Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 9494596420

### If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Patricia Butler Date: 5/13/2026 Title: Chief Engineer

- Signed by Lead Agency      Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

