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

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

Project Title: Proposed Amended Rule 1302 – Definitions

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: California Senate Bill (SB) 1383 requires the increased diversion of organic waste from landfills, whose owners/operators have the option of conducting open composting via windrows or enclosed composting vented to emission control equipment. While windrow composting does not require a South Coast AQMD permit, an enclosed composting operation is subject to: 1) Rule 1133.3 – Emission Reductions from Composting Operations, which requires emissions to be routed to emission control equipment; 2) Regulation II – Permits, which requires a permit to operate the emission control equipment; and 3) Regulation XIII – New Source Review, which requires the purchase of emission offsets. Rule 1302 – Definitions, contains key terms used throughout Regulation XIII, such as the term Essential Public Service, which currently includes the construction and operation of a landfill gas control or processing facility that may otherwise now be subject to organic waste diversion requirements in SB 1383. Any facility which qualifies as an Essential Public Service obtains emission offsets from the Priority Reserve at no charge. The purpose of Proposed Amended Rule 1302 (PAR 1302) is to expand the definition of Essential Public Service to include composting operations subject to Rule 1133.3 that are vented to emission control systems which are capable of achieving at least an 80 percent emission reduction by weight (e.g., aeration systems or enhanced emission controls) and provide access to the emission offsets from the Priority Reserve. While PAR 1302 will not require or result in emission reductions or require the installation of air pollution control equipment, certain composting operations will benefit from qualifying as an Essential Public Service and obtaining emission offsets from the Priority Reserve, so long as all applicable criteria are satisfied, by eliminating the costs of purchasing emission offsets from the open market.

Public Agency Approving Project:	**Agency Carrying Out Project:**
South Coast Air Quality Management District	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 1302) 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 implementation of PAR 1302 may have a significant adverse effect on the environment because the proposed project includes clarifications and administrative changes without requiring any physical modifications. 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: August 7, 2026		
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Date Received for Filing: _____ **Signature:** *August 7, 2026*

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