

Public Notice
Notice of Exemption



To: Santa Clara County
Clerks Office, Business Division
110 West Tasman Drive
San Jose CA 95134

From: Santa Clara Valley Water District
5750 Almaden Expressway
San Jose CA 95118-3686
Telephone (408) 265 2600

Project Title: Tree of Heaven Removal at South County Maintenance Yard

Project Location—Specific: 13805 Llagas Avenue

Project Location-City: Morgan Hill

Project Location-County: Santa Clara

Project Purpose: Removal of invasive tree of heaven trees

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Santa Clara Valley Water District

Name of Agency or Person Carrying Out Project: Santa Clara Valley 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)(c); 15269(b)(c)];
- ☒ Categorical Exemptions Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: The project qualifies for a Class 4 exemption under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §15304:

The proposed vegetation management activities would kill and remove tree of heaven from the facility. This is consistent with the Class 4 exemption that permits minor public alterations in the condition of land, water, and vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Although the project would remove trees, the trees are invasive and are not considered scenic.

None of the conditions noted under the CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 will occur.

Description of Project:

The invasive tree of heaven is a growing management issue at the South County Yard. Left unmanaged, tree of heaven will damage the hardscape and buildings, so treatment is necessary before tree of heaven spreads throughout the facility, damages infrastructure, and spreads beyond Valley Water-owned lands. Several large trees grow along the southern fenceline, one large tree is in the middle of the parking area, and several suckers and saplings are scattered throughout the facility, growing in cracks in concrete and near buildings.

Two herbicide-based approaches are proposed to remove these trees. Trees under about 6" DBH (diameter at breast height) would be treated with basal bark triclopyr. This is a treatment in which herbicide is painted or sprayed onto the lower 12-15" of the bark including the root crown using an oil-based herbicide. Trees greater than 6" DBH would be treated with hack-and-squirt treatment with concentrated imazapyr. This treatment involves using a small hatchet to make shallow cuts into the cambium around the trunk while leaving intact strips of bark

so that conductive tissues can continue to push herbicide down into the root system. Removal efforts would start in August or September. A crew of 3-4 applicators would finish the initial treatment in half a day.

Tree of heaven requires multiple years of sustained management efforts. About 30 days after the initial treatment, an inspection would determine whether follow-up treatment is needed that season. Two treatments per season for the first three years is typical, though stubborn trees may require additional treatments. Dead biomass (peeling bark, fungi, no nearby suckers) may be removed after a year of showing no signs of life.

Lead Agency: Santa Clara Valley Water District
Contact Person: Michael Martin

Area Code/Telephone/Extension
(408) 630-3095

Signed by:

Signature: 7283D3FF50BD4AE...

8/25/2026
Date: _____

Title: Michael Martin
Senior Water Resources Specialist

cc: CEQA Administrative Record