

Notice of Exemption

TO: Office of Planning and Research 1400 FROM: California Energy Commission
Tenth Street, Room 212 Sacramento, 715 P Street
California 95814 Sacramento, California 95814

Project Title: Alternative Calculation Method (ACM) Reference Manual

Project Location: 715 P Street Sacramento, California 95814

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

Public Resources Code, section 25402.1(e) directs the California Energy Commission (CEC) to certify an energy conservation manual for use by designers, builders, and contractors of residential and nonresidential buildings no later than 180 days after approval of the updates to Part 6 and Part 1 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (Energy Code).

To implement the requirement of section 25402.1(e), CEC staff developed an energy conservation manual that is comprised of several documents, including alternative calculation method reference manuals, compliance manuals, a data registry requirements manual, and other compliance documents, all of which contain information to assist designers, builders, and contractors in meeting the 2025 Energy Code, including forms, charts, and other data.

The CEC developed updated content for the Alternative Calculation Method Reference Manual (ACM Reference Manual), which document the modeling methods used in the 2025 compliance software used to demonstrates performance compliance with the 2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards.

The CEC certified the ACM Reference Manual at the September 9, 2026, CEC Business Meeting.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Energy Commission

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: _____

☐ Statutory Exemption: State code number: _____

☒ Other: Common Sense (Sec. 15061(b)(3)).

Reasons why the project is exempt:

The ACM Reference Manual is not a project because it does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, section 15061(a)). The CEC certifies the ACM Reference Manual to assist interested persons with compliance software, pursuant to Public Resources Code, section 25402.1(e). The ACM Reference Manual document modeling methods used in the 2025 compliance software to demonstrate compliance with the 2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which were previously adopted on September 11, 2024, and approved by the California Building Standards Commission on December 17, 2024. The ACM Reference Manual does not impose any new requirements and, therefore, has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Accordingly, the ACM Reference Manual does not meet the definition of a project under CEQA.

Further, even if the ACM Reference Manual was considered a "project," it would not be subject to CEQA under the "common sense" exemption (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, section 15061(b)(3)) because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the action may have a significant effect on the environment. The ACM Reference Manual acts as a reference and instructional guide for compliance software used to demonstrate compliance with the 2025 Energy Code. The ACM Reference Manual contains no new requirements to comply with the 2025 Energy Code. Thus, it can be seen with certainty that the ACM Reference Manual does not have the potential to have a significant effect on the environment.

Lead Agency Contact Person

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Date: 9/21/2026

Title: Deputy Director, Building Standards



Signed by the Lead Agency

Date received for filing by