

March 4, 2018

To: Christopher Calfee, Deputy Secretary and General Counsel  
California Natural Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the thoughtful effort and time your organization has spent in updating CEQA and providing opportunity for public comment, which I submit below.

A. 15062 (NEW paragraph 6) and 15075 (NEW paragraph 8) and 15094 (NEW paragraph 10)

These three sections have been modified to require the individual's name whenever a public agency is involved in areas such as grants, loans, permits, licenses, etc. I would like to suggest **including the individual's title or position** (e.g., President, Owner, Operator, etc.) as this would be more informative than only the individual's name, particularly where common last names may exist in an organization or individually.

B. 15125 (NEW paragraphs 1 and 2)

This section addresses the Lead Agency identifying the "physical environmental conditions as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published..." In some cases, however, the applicant may have a better understanding of the existing environment than the lead agency, and in preparing a project description would be able to provide the input a lead agency requires to make such a determination. Therefore, would it be appropriate to include a provision that the lead agency "**may rely on the applicant's description or position regarding the existing environment?**" (either wholly or in part?)

C. 15301 (Existing Facilities)

Several small water companies (both rural and urban, and privately owned) across the nation provide drinking water from wells to local populations under 10,000, and many of these companies need to seek affordable solutions to address removal or reduction of manganese (and iron in some cases) in their drinking water. Several manufacturers have met this need by designing self-contained, pre-fabricated plants at their facilities which are then delivered as a unit on steel skids to the water company. The water company then locates the plant between the wells and the existing water storage tank and connects the treatment plant via piping. A small utility building may also be erected to house electrical controls and perform water tests as part of routine maintenance, or some water companies may locate the delivered plant inside an existing building.

Under 15301, two projects have been listed as examples of "categorically exempt" projects - paragraph (m) (addresses dams) and paragraph (o) (addresses medical waste). These would seem to be potential projects requiring environmental review; however, they have been found, under certain conditions, to be exempt.

Is it possible to include the above-discussed pre-treatment of drinking water project as another example of a "categorically exempt" project, like dams and medical waste projects have been? (The State Water Resources Board issues permits for drinking water, but the City would likely be the lead agency responsible for permits, review of zoning and other considerations and environmental review).

D. Appendix G Checklist XIX (b) – This checklist question:

"Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?"

Please note the previously discussed pre-treatment drinking water plant is **not** a "new or expanded water...facility" (**the water system has not changed, only improvement to its quality**) and nothing is relocated (**the plant is delivered to the water company site to facilitate water quality improvement**), so the checklist question does address the pre-treatment drinking water plant project.

E. Appendix M – Streamlined Review

Considering the above discussed pre-treatment of drinking water for manganese for a small water company serving less than 10,000 consumers, might this type of project (which is a public utility) **be included as a "project type" in the performance standards** (paragraph 4)?

A small water company, particularly a privately owned one, has very limited budget and resources, yet needs and desires to comply with environmental concerns. It would be very helpful for reviewers of such projects to look to a "public utilities" category which serve water to the public for guidance.

Thank you for considering this input.



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