

District, Notice of Exemption Standard Operating Procedure

November 22, 2024

This District Notice of Exemption (NOE) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) describes (1) the reasons why CalGEM Districts file a NOE, (2) the types of Projects for which District staff will file a NOE, (3) instructions for completing an NOE using a template, and (4) the filing of an NOE with the State Clearinghouse (SCH).

I. Why CalGEM Districts file a NOE for projects exempt from CEQA

The primary reason CalGEM requires District staff to file an NOE when conducting the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review is to increase public transparency. This reason is consistent with the overall goals of CEQA which are to:

- Inform Decision Makers
- Prevent or Reduce Impacts
- Promote Interagency Cooperation
- Encourage Public Participation
- Disclose Agency Decisions

It is CalGEM's policy that Districts file a NOE on a Project the same day that a permit(s) is issued for all NOIs in a Project. If District staff is not able to file a NOE on the same day a Project is issued a permit(s), staff should consult with the CEQA Program.

Filing an NOE on a Project limits the Statute of Limitations to 35 days. If a NOE is NOT filed, the Statute of Limitations is 180 days.

II. Types of Projects District Staff Review and File a NOE on

District staff have received training on, and been instructed to conduct the CEQA review on, the following types of projects:

1. Reworks intended to address an integrity issue(s)
2. Reworks to address a mechanical integrity failure
3. Sidetracks
4. Sidetracks intended to address an integrity issue(s)

If a Project meets the requirements for a CEQA exemption, District staff will file a NOE on the Project. If staff reviews a Project, and based on the training staff has received, staff does not think a Project meets the requirements for an exemption, staff will forward the Project to the CEQA Program, Unit 1 for additional CEQA review.

District staff should issue all the permits in a grouping on the same day and file the NOE with the SCH on that day. If all permits cannot be issued on the same day, staff should raise this issue at Thursday's CEQA and District Q&A meetings.

III. Instructions for Completing a CalGEM NOE Template

District staff have three NOE Templates (Template) to use for filing an NOE with the SCH. When drafting a NOE using the Template follow the instructions in the Template. Note that blue text is instructional and green text is example language to use. Once staff have completed a draft of a NOE, staff should delete all instructional and example language and change all font color to black.

Sections of the NOE Template to be completed:

Project Title: This is the name of the Project. District will follow the “Districts Project Title for NOEs” procedure to create a Project name for a NOE.

Project Applicant: The CEQA Program has a list of standardized operator names that are used for NOEs. District staff will use the version of an operator’s name that is in the “Districts Operators and Abbreviated Names List.” If District staff encounter an operator name in WellSTAR that is not on the List, staff should email Jan Perez in the CEQA Program to determine an abbreviation for the operator.

Project Location: List the County(ies), Oil field(s), Public Land Survey System, section, township and range, and the latitude and longitude of the first well location in the Project.

Project Description: Draft a brief project description using the project description submitted with the application in WellSTAR, Tab 10 - CEQA Information, or as an attachment uploaded as part of the application in WellSTAR.

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: In this section add information requested in blue instructional text from the Project’s project description to the template language. Additionally, verify that text in green is accurate. If the text in green does not accurately describe the project or aspects of the project, stop work on the NOE and raise the issue at the next Thursday CEQA and District Q&A meeting.

Certified and Date: When all the NOIs listed on a NOE are passed on the same day, District staff will convert the NOE to a .pdf document and then sign and date the NOE using DocuSign. Staff will file the NOE with the SCH on the same day that the District issues a permit(s) for the Notice of Intention(s) (NOI) listed in the NOE.

IV. Filing a NOE with the State Clearinghouse

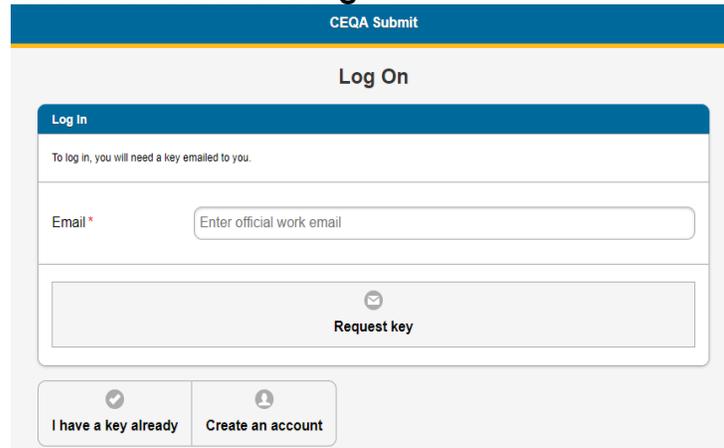
All NOIs listed on a NOE should be issued permits on the same day. The same day that permits are issued, staff will file a NOE with the SCH. Follow the instructions in Attachment 1. Steps to File a NOE with the State Clearinghouse.

After a NOE has been submitted to the SCH, the SCH will send a confirmation email to staff that the NOE has been posted on CEQA net. Once the email is received, District staff will upload a copy of the NOE to each WellSTAR form ID for wells listed on the NOE.

Attachment 1. Steps to File a NOE with the State Clearinghouse

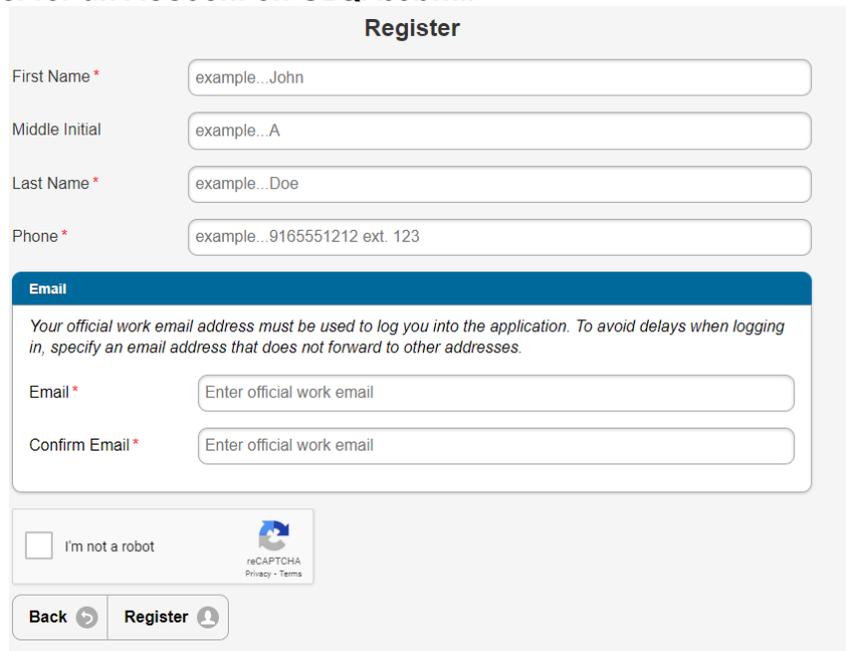
If District staff have not used CEQASubmit before they will need to “Create an account.” To request access as a Submitter for the Department of Conservation, go to <https://ceqasubmit.opr.ca.gov> (Figure 1) to create an account. Then complete the registration process (Figure 2).

Figure 1. CEQA Submit Authenticate and Log-in



The screenshot shows the 'Log On' page of the CEQA Submit application. At the top, there is a blue header with the text 'CEQA Submit'. Below the header, the page title is 'Log On'. A blue box labeled 'Log In' contains the text 'To log in, you will need a key emailed to you.' Below this, there is an 'Email *' field with a placeholder 'Enter official work email'. A 'Request key' button with an envelope icon is positioned below the email field. At the bottom of the page, there are two buttons: 'I have a key already' with a checkmark icon and 'Create an account' with a person icon.

Figure 2. Register for an Account on CEQASubmit



The screenshot shows the 'Register' page of the CEQA Submit application. The page title is 'Register'. There are four input fields: 'First Name *' (example...John), 'Middle Initial' (example...A), 'Last Name *' (example...Doe), and 'Phone *' (example...9165551212 ext. 123). Below these fields is a blue header labeled 'Email' with the text: 'Your official work email address must be used to log you into the application. To avoid delays when logging in, specify an email address that does not forward to other addresses.' Below this, there are two 'Email *' fields, both with a placeholder 'Enter official work email'. At the bottom, there is a reCAPTCHA section with an 'I'm not a robot' checkbox and a reCAPTCHA logo. Below the reCAPTCHA, there are two buttons: 'Back' with a left arrow icon and 'Register' with a person icon.

Log into your account on CEQA Submit and request a key. <https://ceqasubmit.opr.ca.gov> The State Clearinghouse (SCH) will send an email with a set of numbers (key); enter the numbers into the User Key box. Then click on “Log On” button (Figure 3).

Figure 3. CEQASubmit Log-in

CEQA Submit

Log On

Log In

To log in, you will need a key emailed to you.

Email *

Request key

I have a key already Create an account

On the next page, click on “Add Document” (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Add Document

CEQA Submit

CEQA Submit

Start

Add Document

My Documents 66

Find Document

Request Access 5 Approved

On the next page click on “Add New Project – Generate SCH Number” if the NOE is not associated with an environmental document (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Add New Project – Generate SCH Number

CEQA Submit

Add Document

Select an Option

Existing Project - Enter SCH Number	➤
Add New Project - Generate SCH Number	➤

On the next page click on “NOE – Notice of Exemption” (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Select Document Type: NOE – Notice of Exemption

CEQA Submit

Select a Document Type to Add

Document Types	
NOD - Notice of Determination	➤
NOE - Notice of Exemption	➤
NEG - Negative Declaration	➤
MND - Mitigated Negative Declaration	➤

On the next page enter the name of the Project on the “Title” and “Document Description.” The “Title” is the “Project Title” name on the NOE. “Document Description” is the “Project Description” on the NOE. Then click “Save & Continue” (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Add Document & Project

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add Document & Project" within a "CEQA Submit" header. The form contains four main input fields: "Public Agency" with a dropdown menu showing "(Select an Agency)"; "Document Type" with a dropdown menu showing "Notice of Exemption (NOE)"; "Title" with a text input field containing the placeholder "Enter Project Title - Do Not Insert Document Type"; and "Document Description" with a larger text area containing the instruction "Enter the most recent description of the proposed project – this will be displayed as the overall project summary on CEQAnet." At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Cancel" with a minus sign icon and "Save & Continue" with a plus sign icon.

The next page that will appear is the Document Root page. On this page you will complete information for the following sections: Complete the following sections:

- Attachments
- Contact
- Counties
- Location Details
- Notice of Exemption
- Action (which you'll complete last)

Click on Attachments (Upload Project Documents) (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Document Root

CEQA Submit

Document Root

Selected Document

(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01
California Department of Conservation (DOC)
Created - 11/28/2023
Your Name

Unsubmitted

- + Navigation
- + Actions
- + Project Details
- + Document Details
- + Attachments (Upload Project Documents) 0
- + Contacts 0
- + Regions 0
- + Counties 0
- + Cities 0
- + Location Details
- + Notice of Exemption 0
- + County Clerk(s) 0

On the Attachment Add page, upload a .pdf copy of the signed NOE by either dragging and dropping the file to the “Select File(s) to Upload” box or click on “Choose Files” and upload the NOE. Check the ADA box then click the “Upload” button (Figure 9). Once the file is uploaded, click the Back button, which will take you back to the Document Root page (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Attachment Add

CEQA Submit

Attachment Add

Selected Document

(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01
California Department of Conservation (DOC)
Created - 11/28/2023
Your Name Unsubmitted

Select File(s) to Upload: Choose Files No file chosen

Category * (Categorize each individual or batch of supporting documents)

Attachments will be published on CEQANet with this document. State and federal agencies must comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements related to the Americans with Disabilities Act for documents posted and made available on internet websites. Local agencies must comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements related to the Americans with Disabilities Act for documents posted and made available on internet websites.

Back Upload

Note:

- Attachments will be published on the portal with this document. Any attachment submitted through CEQA Submit must be made accessible to those with disabilities. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) accepts no responsibility for the content or accessibility of this document.

To Prevent Delays:

- Ensure the [required](#) documents are uploaded
- Ensure all supporting documents are uploaded in a single submission
- Ensure all uploads are categorized correctly
- Ensure all **uploads** and **scanned** documents are [Optical Character Recognition](#) (OCR)
- Drag and drop functionality does not work for folders. If required, create an archive (example... [A zip folder](#))
- Reference the [CEQA Database User Guide](#) (Quick Resource Guide section)

From the Document Root page, click on Contacts. The information you enter here will appear with the NOE listing on the SCH website. Some of the information to complete this section can be found on the completed NOE for the Project (Figure 10).

Full Name: Your first and last name

Authority: Department of Conservation, CA Geological Energy Management Division

Job Title: Your civil service classification. i.e., associate engineer, associate governmental program analyst.

Phone: Use the number your District has assigned to use when filing a NOE.

Email: Use the District assigned email for filing a NOE.

Address: Enter your District's main office address

City: Enter your District's main office city

State: CA

Zip: Enter your District's main office zip code

Contact Types: Lead/Public Agency

Click Save and then the Back button, which will take you back to the Document Root page (Figure 8).

Figure 10. Add Contact

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add Contact" within a "CEQA Submit" interface. At the top, a blue header bar contains the text "CEQA Submit". Below this, the form title "Add Contact" is centered. A "Selected Document" box displays "(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01" along with "California Department of Conservation (DOC)", "Created - 11/28/2023", and "Your Name" (with a redacted name). An "Unsubmitted" button is visible in the top right of this box. The form fields are as follows: "Full Name" (text input with "Your name"), "Authority" (text input with "Department of Conservation, CA Geological Energy Management Division"), "Job Title" (text input with "Your civil service classification"), "Phone" (text input with "(916) 445-9686"), "Email" (text input with "CEQA@conservation.ca.gov"), "Address 1" (text input with "715 P Street, MS 1803"), "Address 2" (empty text input), "City" (text input with "Sacramento"), "State" (dropdown menu with "California" selected), and "Zip Code" (text input with "95814"). Below the address fields is a "Contact Types" section with the instruction "(Select all that apply)". It contains four checkboxes: "Lead/Public Agency" (checked), "Project Applicant", "Parties Undertaking Project", and "Responsible Agency". At the bottom of the form are "Back" and "Save" buttons.

From the Document Root page, click on Counties. Check the county in which the Project is located. If more than one county, check all counties that apply. Information is on the NOE Template for the Project and can also be found in WellSTAR (Figure 11). Click Save and then the Back button, which will take you back to the Document Root page (Figure 8).

Figure 11. Counties

The screenshot displays a web interface for submitting CEQA documents. At the top, a blue header reads "CEQA Submit". Below it, the page title "Counties" is centered. A section titled "Selected Document" contains the following information: "(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01", "California Department of Conservation (DOC)", "Created - 11/28/2023", and "Your Name". An "Unsubmitted" button is located to the right of this information. Below the document details are two buttons: "Back" with a left-pointing arrow and "Save" with a right-pointing arrow. A search bar labeled "Filter Counties..." is positioned below the buttons. Underneath the search bar, the text "Counties: (Select all that apply)" is displayed. A list of counties follows, each with an unchecked checkbox: Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, and El Dorado.

From the Document Root page, click on Location Details. Add the location details that apply to the Project. In most cases you will complete the following:

Coordinates: Latitude and Longitude for the first well in the Project. Information is on the NOE.

Section, Township and Range: For the first well location in the Project. Information is on the NOE.

(Figure 12).

Click Save and then the Back button, which will take you back to the Document Root page (Figure 8).

Figure 12. Location Details

The screenshot shows a web form titled "CEQA Submit" with a sub-header "Location Details". At the top, a blue bar contains the text "CEQA Submit". Below this, a white box displays "Selected Document" information: "(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01", "California Department of Conservation (DOC)", "Created - 11/28/2023", and "Your Name". An "Unsubmitted" button is located in the top right of this box. The main form area consists of several input fields with labels on the left and example text inside the fields:

- Cross Streets: example... Lee Road and West Beach Street
- Coordinates: examples...38.3326, 121.4547; 38 19 57.4, 121 27 16.9
- Zip Code: example...95814
- Total Acres: example...10
- Jobs: Enter number of potential jobs created by project
- Parcel Number: example...018-391-03
- State Highways: Enter State Highway within 2 miles
- Railways: Enter Railways within 2 miles
- Airports: Enter Airports within 2 miles
- Schools: Enter Schools within 2 miles
- Waterways: Enter Waterways within 2 miles
- Township: example...31N
- Range: example...4W
- Section: example...14
- Base: (empty field)
- Other Location Info: (empty field)
- Other Information: (empty field)

At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: "Back" with a left-pointing arrow and "Save" with a right-pointing arrow.

From the Document Root page, click on Notice of Exemption. Enter each exemption from the NOE Template that was applied to the Project on the Exemption page. The page allows one exemption entry at a time, so once you've entered an exemption, click Save and Back. From the Document Root page, click Notice of Exemption to add another exemption (Figures 13a, 13b, and 13c).

For each exemption complete the following using the information in the "Reasons Why Project is Exempt" in the Project's NOE Template.

Exemption Status: From the dropdown menu select Statutory Exemption or Categorical Exemption.

Type, Section Number or Code Number: Enter the statute or code section for the applicable exemption.

Reasons why the project is exempt: Copy and paste the whole reason for each exemption from the "Reasons Why Project is Exempt" in the Project's NOE Template.

Once all exemptions have been entered, click Save and then the Back button, which will take you back to the Document Root page (Figure 8).

Figure 13a. Add Exemption Status

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add Exemption Status" within a "CEQA Submit" interface. At the top, a blue header bar contains the text "CEQA Submit". Below this, the main heading "Add Exemption Status" is centered. The form is divided into several sections:

- Selected Document:** A blue-bordered box containing the text "(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01", "California Department of Conservation (DOC)", "Created - 11/28/2023", and "Your Name". A "Submitted" button is visible on the right side of this box.
- Exempt Status *:** A dropdown menu with the placeholder text "(Select an Exempt Status)".
- Type, Section Number or Code Number *:** A text input field with the placeholder text "examples...Class 4; California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15304".
- Reasons why project is exempt *:** A larger text input field with the placeholder text "example...This project involves minor private alterations, which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees, or adversely impact sensitive plant or wildlife species."

At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: "Back" with a left-pointing arrow and "Save" with a right-pointing arrow.

Figure 13b. Notice of Exemption: Add additional NOEs

CEQA Submit

Notice of Exemption

Selected Document

(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01
 California Department of Conservation (DOC)
 Created - 11/28/2023
 Your Name Unsubmitted

+ Add Exemption Status

Select an Exemption Status

<p>Statutory Exemption <i>Emergency Projects PRC § 21080(b)(4); 14 CCR § 15269(c)</i> As the CEQA lead agency for the proposed Project, CalGEM has determined that the proposed Project is exempt from further environ...</p>	✕
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Figure 13c. Notice of Exemption: Completed

CEQA Submit

Notice of Exemption

Selected Document

(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01
 California Department of Conservation (DOC)
 Created - 11/28/2023
 Your Name Unsubmitted

+ Add Exemption Status

Select an Exemption Status

<p>Categorical Exemption 14 CCR § 15301 Class 1 – Existing Facility: The proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Class 1" (14 CCR § 15301) exemption ...</p>	✕
<p>Categorical Exemption 14 CCR § 15302 Class 2 – Replacement or Reconstruction: The proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Class 2" (14 CCR § 15...</p>	✕
<p>Categorical Exemption 14 CCR § 15303 Class 3 – New Construction/Conversion of Small Structures: The proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Clas...</p>	✕
<p>Categorical Exemption 14 CCR § 15307 Class 7 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources: The proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQ...</p>	✕
<p>Categorical Exemption 14 CCR § 15308 Class 8 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment: The proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQA ...</p>	✕
<p>Statutory Exemption PRC § 21080(b)(4); 14 CCR § 15269(c) Emergency Projects: As the CEQA lead agency for the proposed Project, CalGEM has determined that the proposed Project is exempt...</p>	✕

From the Document Root page, click on Action and select Submit Document (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Action: Submit Document

CEQA Submit

Document Root

Selected Document

(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01
California Department of Conservation (DOC)
Created - 11/28/2023
Your Name Unsubmitted

+ Navigation

- Actions

Submit Document ➤

Delete Document ➤

On the next page check the box that you understand the document will become part of the public record and the box that you certify that the attached document is true and correct. Next click Confirm Submit, doing so will take you back to the Document Root page (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Submit Document

CEQA Submit

Submit Document

Selected Document

(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01
California Department of Conservation (DOC)
Created - 11/28/2023
Your Name Unsubmitted

I understand that this document will become part of the public record.

I certify that the attached document is true and correct.
I understand that the date of posting on CEQAnet is deemed to be the date of public posting under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Note: The date a document is published to CEQAnet is deemed to be the date of public posting under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Cancel ➤ Confirm Submit ✔

At the top of the Document Root page, you'll see that the document has been submitted. The filing process is completed. You can logoff CEQA Submit or file another document with the SCH (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Document Submitted: Document Root (Read Only)

CEQA Submit

Document Root (Read-Only)

Selected Document

(New SCH Number) - NOE - OG Oil Inc. 102003-01

California Department of Conservation (DOC)
Created - 11/29/2023
Your Name

Submitted

- + Navigation
- + Actions
- + Project Details
- + Document Details
- + Attachments (Upload Project Documents) 1
- + Contacts 1
- + Regions 0
- + Counties 1
- + Cities 0
- + Location Details
- + Notice of Exemption 6
- + County Clerk(s) 0