

## Appendix A CEQA Guide Checklist and Flow Chart

This Checklist and Flow Chart are provided to assist Lead Agencies and project proponents in complying with the “El Dorado County Air Pollution Control District Guide for Determining the Significance of Air Quality Impacts,” under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). *It is provided for convenience and should not be used as a substitute for carefully reviewing and following the Guide itself.*

A. Overview – Under CEQA, if a proposed project is determined to have “significant” air quality impacts, a detailed Environmental Impact Report, or EIR, must be prepared to describe those impacts and suggest alternatives or mitigation. If the impacts are not significant a Negative Declaration can be prepared; or a Mitigated Negative Declaration can be prepared if significant impacts can be reduced or eliminated through mitigation. Project significance is determined through an Initial Study conducted early in the project approval process. For most projects, the District will be a commenting agency rather than the Lead Agency, but in either capacity the District will uniformly apply the significance criteria laid out in the Guide.

The Guide contains **quantitative criteria** for judging the air quality significance of a project, as follows:

- For emissions of **ROG and NOx**, a project is significant if it will result in construction or operation emissions greater than 82 lbs/day. The Guide contains detailed instructions for calculating ROG and NOx mass emissions for comparison against these criteria.
- For emissions of **PM<sub>10</sub>, CO, SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, and other pollutants**, a project is significant if construction or operation emissions will result in ambient pollutant concentrations in excess of the applicable national or state ambient air quality standard (AAQS). The Guide specifies how emissions of these pollutants are to be calculated and then used to determine resulting ambient concentrations for comparison against the AAQS. Special standards for ozone, CO, and visibility apply in the **Lake Tahoe Air Basin** portion of the county.
- If a project will result in emissions of **toxic air contaminants** (TACs), it will be considered significant if it causes a cancer risk greater than 1 in 1 million (10 in 1 million if best available control technology for toxics is used) or a non-cancer Hazard Index greater than 1. In addition, the project must demonstrate compliance with all applicable District, state, and U.S. EPA regulations governing toxic and hazardous emissions.

There are detailed steps specified in the Guide to aid in the calculation of project emissions and comparison against the significance criteria, as well as lists of mitigation steps that can be applied to render a project not significant. The Guide also specifies how **cumulative impacts** of a project are to be determined and evaluated for significance, and how emissions should be evaluated for significance against the following **qualitative criteria**:

- The significance criteria listed in **Appendix G** to the CEQA guidelines (14 CCR secs. 15000-15387).
- **Odors** that may cause a public nuisance.
- **Sensitive receptors**, such as hospitals, day care centers, and elder housing.
- Compliance with applicable **District rules and regulations**.
- Federal “**conformity**” requirements for both transportation and non-transportation type projects.

B. Checklist Steps – The District recommends that the following general sequence be used under its CEQA Guide.

#### PRELIMINARY STEPS

- ↳ Determine **preliminary project configuration**.
- ? **Consult** with the District.
- ? Determine the applicability of any **District rules and regulations**.  
(Note: compliance with District rules and regulations will help reduce emissions but will not necessarily cause emissions to be insignificant under CEQA.)
  - Permit requirements. (See Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1 of the Guide; refer to District Regulation V.)
  - Prohibitory rules. (Refer to District Regulation II.)
- ? Undertake project **mitigation** based on consultation compliance with regulatory requirements
- ↳ Determine **proposed project configuration**.

#### CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS

- ? Evaluate **construction emissions** as specified in Chapter 4 of the Guide.
- Conduct **project screening** to determine whether the project can be classified as less than significant for one or more pollutants without the need for detailed calculations or modeling. See Section 4.2.
  - Where project screening does not apply, or if calculation of actual emissions is desired, follow the steps in Section 4.3 for completing **Table 4.10** to estimate emissions of ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and CO from the operation of construction vehicles and equipment, fugitive dust, asphalt paving, and architectural coating activities, and worker commute trips. For ROG and NO<sub>x</sub>, the estimated emissions can be compared directly against the 82 lbs/day significance criteria; for PM<sub>10</sub> and CO, unless screening assumptions apply, estimated emissions must be converted to ambient concentrations through modeling or another method approved by the District, for comparison against the applicable AAQS.
  - Evaluate emissions for any **toxic impacts** (see Chapter 7). Pay special attention to particulate emissions from Diesel engines and fugitive dust emissions in areas of the county with ultramafic (asbestos-containing) minerals.
  - Evaluate emissions for **cumulative impacts** (see Chapter 8).
  - Evaluate emissions against the following **qualitative criteria**: odors, sensitive receptors, compliance with District rules and regulations.
  - If necessary, implement **mitigation** measures in Section 4.4 and re-calculate emissions using Table 4.13.

#### OPERATION EMISSIONS - ROG and NO<sub>x</sub>

- ? Evaluate **ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from project operation** as detailed in Chapter 5.
- Conduct **project screening** to determine whether the project can be classified as less than significant without the need for detailed calculations or modeling. See Section 5.2.
  - Where project screening does not apply or where actual emissions calculation is desired, use Table 5.3 and the methodologies in Section 5.3 to sum together ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from stationary sources, motor vehicle operation and energy use, and subtract any deductions or credits to generate **net operation emissions**.
  - **Compare** net operation emissions with the 82 lbs/day criteria.

- If appropriate, undertake **mitigation** measures to get emissions under the significance criteria, as explained in Section 5.4, using Table 5.5 for the calculations. Off-site mitigation may also be possible, as explained in Section 5.5.

#### OPERATION EMISSIONS – CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and Other Pollutants

- ? Evaluate **CO, PM<sub>10</sub> and other emissions from project operation** as detailed in Chapter 6.
  - Conduct **project screening** to determine whether the project can be classified as less than significant for one or more pollutants without the need for detailed calculations or modeling. See Section 6.3.1.
  - Where project screening is not applicable, or where actual calculation of emissions is desired, determine **applicable AAQS** from Appendix B.
  - Determine **background pollutant levels** from Figures 6.1 through 6.7 as explained in Section 6.3.3.
  - Using the methods specified in Sections 6.3.2 through 6.3.5 and Appendix D, **determine ambient concentrations** resulting from operation emissions for each pollutant and combine with background levels, as shown in Table 6.2.
  - If the projected combined pollutant concentrations exceed an AAQS, undertake **mitigation** per the instructions in Section 6.5
- ? Refer to Section 6.4 for special instructions regarding **transportation projects**.

#### OPERATION EMISSIONS - OTHER CRITERIA

- ? Evaluate any impacts on **visibility**, for comparison against the applicable visibility standards (see Appendix B and Section 6.3.2).
  - ↳ Evaluate emissions for any **toxic impacts** (see Chapter 7). Pay special attention to any asbestos emissions and particulate emissions from Diesel engines.
  - ↳ Evaluate emissions for **cumulative impacts** (see Chapter 8).

- ↳ Evaluate the project for compliance with EPA **conformity** regulations (see Chapter 9).
- ↳ Evaluate emissions under the **qualitative criteria**: odors, sensitive receptors, District rules and regulations.
- ↳ Undertake **mitigation** to reduce or eliminate any significant impacts under the applicable criteria for these other impacts.

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See the attached **flow chart** for a graphic description of the process for evaluating projects for air quality impacts used in this Guide.