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| To: | **California Office of Planning and Research, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Other Interested Parties** |
| From: | California Air Resources Board |
| Date: | January 10, 2022 |
| Subject: | Notice of Preparation for a Draft Environmental Document |
| Review Period: | January 10, 2022, to February 9, 2022 |

As the Lead Agency, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) will prepare an environmental document (referred to as an "Environmental Analysis" or "EA") as part of the Staff Report prepared for the proposed Amendments to the Airborne Toxic Control Measure (ATCM) for Chromium Plating and Chromic Acid Anodizing Facilities (Amendments or Proposed Project). CARB would like to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Proposed Project. If the proposed Amendments have no relevance to you or your organization, no action on your part is necessary.

Information on the project description, location, and potential environmental effects, as currently known, is contained in the attached materials, including the notice for a public workshop to be held virtually on January 20, 2022. In addition to soliciting input on the Proposed Project, this workshop will also serve as a CEQA scoping meeting to solicit input on the scope and content of the EA to be prepared for the proposed Amendments. Additional information on this Proposed Project is available for review on the *Program webpage*.

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) is available for review and comment for 30 days, per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Title 14 CCR §15082(b)). The comment period for this NOP begins January 10, 2022, and ends on February 9, 2022. Due to the limits mandated by State law, responses should be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than 5:00 PM on February 9, 2022.

Please submit your written comments to Rebecca Fancher to the following address or email:
Rebecca Fancher, Staff Air Pollution Specialist
California Office/CEQA Unit
P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, California 95812-2815
*ceqa.unit@arb.ca.gov*

In your response, please indicate the public agency or other entity you represent, and the name and phone number of a contact person.

## List of Agencies to Review

*Distribution to agencies marked with "X" below:*

| STATE AGENCIES | |
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| ❑ Boating & Waterways, Department of<br>❒ California Highway Patrol<br>☒ CalRecycle<br>☒ Caltrans<br>❑ Caltrans Planning<br>☒ Coastal Commission<br>❑ Conservation, Department of -- Oil, Gas & Geothermal Resources<br>❑ Delta Protection Commission<br>☒ Energy Commission<br>❒ Fish & Wildlife, Department of<br>☒ Food & Agriculture, Department of<br>❑ Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of<br>☒Health Services, Department of<br>☒Housing & Community Development<br>☒ Integrated Waste Management Board<br>❒ Native American Heritage Commission<br>☒ California Environmental Protection Agency<br>❑ Department of General Services<br>☒ Strategic Growth Council<br>❑ California High Speed Rail Authority<br>☒Department of Conservation – Division ofLand Resource Protection | ☒ OEHHA<br>❑ Office of Historic Preservation<br>☒ Office of Emergency Services<br>❒ Parks & Recreation, Department of<br>☒Pesticide Regulation, Department of<br>☒ Public Utilities Commission<br>❑ Regional Water Quality Control Board #_____<br>☒ Resources Agency<br>❑ SF Bay Conservation & Development Commission<br>☒State Lands Commission<br>☒ State Water Resources Control Board<br>☒ Tahoe Regional Planning Agency<br>☒ Toxic Substances Control, Department of<br>❒ University of California<br>❑ Water Resources, Department of<br>☒ Building Standards Commission<br>☒ Department of Public Health<br>❑ Tahoe Nature Conservancy<br>❑ Sierra Nevada Nature Conservancy<br>❑ Delta Conservancy<br>☒ Other: Governor's Office of Planning andResearch<br>☒ Other: California State TransportationAuthority |
| **AIR DISTRICTS** | |
| ☒ Amador County APCD<br>☒ Antelope Valley AQMD<br>☒ Bay Area AQMD<br>☒ Butte County AQMD<br>☒ Calaveras County APCD<br>☒ Colusa County APCD<br>☒ County of El Dorado AQMD<br>☒ Eastern Kern APCD<br>☒ Feather River AQMD<br>☒ Glenn County APCD<br>☒ Great Basin Unified APCD<br>☒ Imperial County APCD<br>☒ Lake County AQMD<br>☒ Lassen County APCD<br>☒ Mariposa County APCD<br>☒ Mendocino County AQMD | ☒ Monterey Bay Unified APCD<br>☒ North Coast Unified AQMD<br>☒ Northern Sierra AQMD<br>☒ Northern Sonoma County APCD<br>☒ Placer County APCD<br>☒ Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD<br>☒ San Diego County APCD<br>☒ San Joaquin Valley APCD<br>☒ San Luis Obispo County APCD<br>☒ Santa Barbara County APCD<br>☒ Shasta County AQMD<br>☒ Siskiyou County APCD<br>☒ South Coast AQMD<br>☒ Tehama County APCD<br>☒ Tuolumne County APCD<br>☒ Ventura County APCD |
| | |
| ☒ Modoc County APCD<br>☒ Mojave Desert AQMD | ☒ Yolo-Solano AQMD |
| **OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES** | |
| ☑ Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation | |

# Project Description and Environmental Effects

A copy of an Initial Study is not attached because CARB complies with the CEQA through its regulatory program certified by the California Secretary for Natural Resources under Public Resources Code section 21080.5 (14 CCR 15251(d)). Public agencies with certified regulatory programs are exempt from certain CEQA requirements, including but not limited to, preparing environmental impact reports, negative declarations, and initial studies (14 CCR 15250).

The EA will evaluate the potential for impacts to the environment as a result of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project and the nature of potential impacts that could result from the Proposed Project are described below.

## Project Title

Amendments to the Chromium Plating and Chromic Acid Anodizing Facilities Regulation.

## Project Location

The Proposed Project has statewide applicability.

## Project Description

In 1986, CARB identified hexavalent chromium as a toxic air contaminant (TAC). Hexavalent chromium was determined to be an extremely potent human carcinogen with no known safe level of exposure. Hexavalent chromium plating, or simply chromium plating, is the electrical application of a coating of chromium onto a surface for decoration, corrosion protection, or durability. An electrical charge is applied to a tank (bath) containing an electrolytic salt (chromium anhydride) solution. The electrical charge causes the chromium metal particles in the bath to fall out of the solution and deposit onto objects placed in the plating solution. The most familiar type of chromium plating is the decorative chromium plating process which provides a bright, shiny finish onto objects such as wheels and plumbing fixtures. During chromic acid anodizing, an oxidation layer is generated on the surface of the part. These electrolytic processes cause mists containing hexavalent chromium to be ejected from the plating tank which is eventually emitted into the outdoor air. Exposure over a lifetime to very low hexavalent chromium concentrations can substantially increase a person’s chance of developing cancer.

The Proposed Project would require the use of the trivalent chromium plating process for all decorative and functional hard chromium plating facilities. The proposed complete phase-out dates for the use of hexavalent chromium at electroplating and chromic acid anodizing facilities are as follows:

- Beginning two years after the effective date of the Amendments, CARB staff are proposing that all decorative plating facilities must convert to the use of trivalent chromium or cleaner alternative or stop using hexavalent chromium.
- Beginning after two years after the effective date of the Amendments, CARB staff are proposing that no person shall install or operate any new functional hard hexavalent chromium electroplating facility in the state.
- Beginning after 15 years after the effective date of the Amendments, CARB staff are proposing that all functional hard hexavalent chromium electroplating facilities must transition to trivalent chromium or another cleaner hexavalent chromium-free alternative, or stop using hexavalent chromium.

Organizations representing the functional hard hexavalent chromium industry have the option to present periodic technology reviews to CARB staff. These technology reviews will assess the feasibility of alternatives to hexavalent chromium that are less toxic than trivalent chromium or control options that will provide equivalent or better emission reductions to that of trivalent chromium.

Beginning after two years after the effective date of the Amendments, functional hard hexavalent chromium facilities will be required to comply with additional emission control requirements, such as building enclosures, housekeeping requirements, best management practices, air pollution control techniques, and compliance monitoring parameters.

## Probable Environmental Effects:

The EA will evaluate the potential for impacts on the environmental resource areas found in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Potential adverse impacts would be associated with the reasonably foreseeable compliance response related to the regulation, which may include but are not limited to decorative and functional hard platting facilities shifting chrome plating work out of the state, which may increase hexavalent chromium emission in out-of-state communities and the number of heavy-duty trucks transporting hexavalent chromium platted parts into the state; and a temporary increase in construction air pollutant emissions in state communities associated with the modification of existing facilities. The reasonably foreseeable compliance responses associated with the Chrome Plating Regulation could potentially adversely or beneficially affect the following resource areas, which will be further evaluated in the EA:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural and Forest Resources
- Air Quality and Odors
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology, Seismicity, and Soils
- Greenhouse Gases
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials

- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

Potential cumulative impacts and potential for growth inducement will be evaluated in the EA, as well as alternatives, including the No Project Alternative.