

January 9, 2009

Ms. Mary Nichols, Chair  
California Air Resources Board  
1001 "I" Street  
Sacramento, California 95812

**Subject: Comments on the ARB CEQA GHG Guidance Published in December 2008**

Dear Ms. Nichols:

The purpose of this letter is to provide comments on the California Air Resources Board (ARB) "Preliminary Draft Staff Proposal for Recommended Approaches for Setting Interim Significance Thresholds for Greenhouse Gases under the California Environmental Quality Act", dated October 24, 2008, and the presentation on the same topic (including CEQA performance standards) dated December 9, 2008. AMEC Geomatrix Consultants Inc. (AMEC) works with a number of clients in construction and other industries on CEQA-related issues and offers these comments in light of that experience.

**Comments about ARB Draft Staff Proposal (October 24, 2008):**

- 1) In the interim while performance standards for operational emissions from industrial projects are being developed, industrial projects that are below the ARB significance thresholds for industrial projects and that comply with AB32 standards for percent reduction relative to business as usual, where control standards and business as usual are as defined by ARB in the AB32 scoping plan and subsequent regulatory documents, should be considered to have less than significant impacts.
- 2) The proposal language should be clarified to specify that projects with zero net GHG emissions are not required to comply with performance standards.
- 3) The option of demonstrating equivalency with performance standards should be retained and emphasized. Where implementing a performance standard is shown to be not technically feasible at a specific location, on-site mitigation or concurrent GHG reduction projects (at on-site or off-site locations) should be considered equivalent if these measures generate the same quantity of GHG emission reductions as the performance standard would have.

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- 4) Technical feasibility and cost should be considered in the development of all performance standards, both now and in the future, and a specific process for soliciting public input to the performance standards, similar to the existing SCAQMD Best Available Control Technology (BACT) process should be defined and followed by ARB.
- 5) The proposal language should be clarified to specify that, to bring the project GHG emissions below significance thresholds, it is possible to use **any** of the following methods, in addition to application of performance standards (required regardless):
  - Minimization or mitigation of project emissions
  - On-site concurrent GHG reduction project
  - Off-site concurrent GHG reduction project.

**Comments about Performance Standards in ARB Presentation, December 9, 2009:**

Construction standard--recycling and/or salvaging 75% of non-hazardous demolition waste and using recycled materials for 20% of construction materials:


- It is necessary for ARB to include in their documentation the quantified GHG reduction due to the use of recycled versus new materials (e.g. per ton of total construction materials used).
- Waste recycling costs may be high and use of recycled materials difficult to implement for smaller jobs or jobs at long distances from a reliable supply of recycled materials.

Commercial transportation standard—Use of transportation demand management with 20% trip reduction and other commercial transportation standards:

- These provisions should be limited to commercial projects with a certain number of employees and to urban areas with mass transit, because it is difficult to implement trip reduction when there are few employees and no mass transit.

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me via email at [anne.mcqueen@amec.com](mailto:anne.mcqueen@amec.com) or via phone at 949-574-7082.

Sincerely yours,  
AMEC Geomatrix, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne McQueen".

Anne McQueen, Ph.D., P.E.  
Senior Engineer