

WRITTEN NARRATIVE OF PROPOSED PROJECT

(a) Description of project, proposed use, square footage

The Orange County Sanitation District (OC San) is implementing Project No. J-124, Digester Gas Facilities Rehabilitation (referred to herein as the proposed project) at both Plant No. 1 Fountain Valley facility and Plant No. 2 Huntington Beach facility.

At both plants, the solid matter in raw wastewater is separated from the liquid waste and then conveyed to anaerobic digesters, where the solid waste is broken down, or “digested”, by microorganisms. During the digestion process, a gas composed mostly of methane, known as digester gas, is generated. Once generated, the digester gas is cleaned and compressed within digester gas facilities, before being conveyed to onsite power generation facilities, where it is used as a renewable fuel source. In the event that compressor or power generating equipment is not available at Plant 2, the gas is diverted to either Plant No. 1 or to an onsite flare station, where it is safely burned.

At Plant No. 2, the digester gas facilities equipment responsible for cleaning and compressing the digester gas requires rehabilitation, which includes replacement of aging equipment, to meet current and future process needs. The gas compressor building that houses the existing equipment will undergo structural and architectural upgrades such as seismic bracing and roof membrane replacement. In addition, existing flare station equipment will be upgraded to comply with newly adopted air quality regulations and a new electrical building will be constructed between the flares and gas compressor building. Gas piping modifications will be made to connect new equipment with existing digester gas facilities.

(b) Reasons for initiating application

The original CUP and CDP permits for this project were approved on May 20, 2021 (CUP No. 20-025 and CDP No 20-028) to obtain a Coastal Development Permit and request at the time a height variance for the proposed J-124 facilities.

This new permit application was initiated when the project was changed since the May 2021 permit approval. The May 2021 permit included provisions for building a new approximately 11,500 sf, 54.5 ft tall building. The project is now rehabilitating the existing facility. However, a much smaller electrical building (1,504 sf and 22 ft tall) will be built. This new building will not be an occupied building – mostly containing electrical gear, control panels, remote monitoring, etc.

Based on correspondence with City of Huntington Beach in December 2025, a new CDP application is required.

(c) Description of surrounding uses

The surrounding area consists of natural landscapes and scenic views, including landforms, vegetation, and water features, as well as unique elements of the built environment. The proposed Project is located in Orange County, with the Pacific Ocean located south of the project site and the cities of Fountain Valley to the north, and Costa Mesa and Newport Beach to the south and southwest. The built environment of the area is dominated by low-lying residential and commercial buildings with local views of the Pacific Ocean.

This Project is located in the City of Huntington Beach with the inland area characterized as relatively flat with little topographic relief and with a sequence of mesas and small bays along the coast. Major roadway corridors in the proposed Project vicinity include the Brookhurst Street and Pacific Coast Highway (PCH).

The Orange County Sanitation District's (OC San) Plant No. 2 Huntington Beach facility is bounded by Hamilton Avenue to the north and Brookhurst Street to the west; Brookhurst Street runs adjacent to the property in a northwest to southeast manner. To the east of the project site is the Santa Ana River and Santa Ana River Trail; to the south of the project site is Pacific Coast Highway and the Pacific Ocean. The Talbert Marsh is located directly adjacent and south of Plant No. 2. Residential neighborhoods are located to the north and west across Brookhurst Street and east of the project site across the Santa Ana River.

(d) Description of population served by proposed project

The Orange County Sanitation District (OC San) is a public agency that provides wastewater collection, treatment, disposal, and recycling services for approximately 2.6 million people in central and northwest Orange County. OC San is a special district that is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of 25 board members appointed from 20 cities, 4 special districts, and 1 representative from the Orange County Board of Supervisors. OC San owns and operates over 380 miles of regional sewer pipes, 15 pump stations, and two operating facilities that treat wastewater from residential, commercial, and industrial sources.