

CEQA exemptions for water projects inserted into budget bill

By David Siders and Jeremy B. White, Sacramento Bee

Some drought-related groundwater and water recycling projects would gain exemptions from the California Environmental Quality Act under late-emerging legislation at the Capitol.

The exemption, contained in a budget-related trailer bill, offers a narrower exemption than a broader one Gov. Jerry Brown originally proposed. Lawmakers appeared to be nearing a deal Thursday, after pushing back on Brown's initial proposal.

The language would exempt certain groundwater replenishment projects and the development of building standards by state agencies for recycled water systems. It would also exempt from CEQA the adoption of stricter conditions in the issuance of permits for wells.

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