

**California Public Utilities Commission**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**CPUC ADOPTS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT PROCEDURES  
FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS**

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 16, 2010 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today adopted procedures for reviewing proposed construction projects by California telephone companies in order to meet environmental laws.

The new General Order (GO) 170 implements the CPUC's responsibilities under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to review possible environmental impacts of construction projects consisting of any new telephone or telegraph line; or the repair, replacement, modification, alteration, or addition to an existing telephone or telegraph line in the State. GO 170 contains a comprehensive, streamlined CEQA process that will facilitate deployment of advanced communications policy by applying the same rules to all telephone companies.

“General Order 170 is critical to promoting the development of advanced telecommunications infrastructure, particularly broadband infrastructure, by putting all carriers under our jurisdiction on a level playing field,” said Commissioner John A. Bohn. “The streamlined process we adopted will lessen the burden on carriers while ensuring that the CPUC's practices comply with the current requirements and policies of CEQA.”

The rules in GO 170 include:

- Ensuring that all telephone companies subject to the CPUC's jurisdiction will now be governed by the same set of rules. Wireless cellsites will continue to be governed by GO 159-A.
- Clarifying that the CPUC has the authority to issue discretionary permits on telecommunications projects because telecommunications infrastructure is a matter of statewide concern.

- Delineating a series of enumerated activities that, based on the CPUC's expertise in the telecommunications industry, do not rise to the level of a project and therefore, do not need to undergo CEQA review.
- Creating a streamlined process for other categorical exemptions utilizing the CPUC's existing Tier 2 Advice Letter process under GO 96-B. Other projects will go through the already-established CPUC process for full CEQA review.
- Adopting several enforcement provisions to ensure that adequate measures will be taken should there be any violations of GO 170.

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