

CEQAnet Guidance

Introduction

This guidance was created to assist the public in participating in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. This will specifically help with how to access information related to solid waste activities under the authority of the California Department of Resources, Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) provides land use and planning resources, assessments for climate risk, economic development, and long-range research. The State Clearinghouse (SCH), a division within OPR, manages CEQAnet and coordinates the state level review of CEQA-related environmental documents.

[CEQAnet](#) is an online statewide database where environmental documents are posted and publicly available. The SCH is responsible for:

- Distributing environmental documents to state agencies for review and comment.
- Advising and assisting government agencies and the public on the environmental review process.
- Maintaining records of all environmental documents and notices that it receives for public access.
- Managing the CEQAnet online database.

State agencies are required to post and circulate CEQA documents through the SCH. Projects that will require a state agency approval must be submitted to the SCH for distribution to the appropriate state agencies. Local county clerk's offices also receive CEQA documents and accessing those documents through each county varies. Some offices may have both hard copies and digital copies of environmental documents, while others may only have hard copies available.

Guidance provided here is only intended for projects available through CEQAnet. It is recommended to contact the [County Clerk's office](#) within a specific county for more information on how CEQA documents are posted and where such documents have been made publicly available.

For questions about the SCH or the CEQA process, refer to <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/Home/Contact> for the most recent contact information.

Navigating CEQAnet

One of the key functions of the SCH is to receive CEQA documents and distribute them to state agencies and make related information publicly available through the CEQAnet online database, such as:

- Supportive environmental documents
- State/federal comment letters

Important note: The documents on CEQAnet are posted in the manner they were received. The SCH does not verify the adequacy of environmental documents or confirm the inclusion of supportive material when these documents are uploaded.

CEQAnet provides key information related to a project, such as:

- Project Summary Information
- Contact Information
- Location Information
- Supportive Project-Related Environmental Documents
- Unique Project Identification Number known as the State Clearinghouse Number (SCH#)

There are three methods to search for projects using CEQAnet:

- **Method 1** involves reviewing recent postings.
- **Method 2** utilizes a Google-based internet search function.
- **Method 3** involves the advanced search function.

By utilizing these methods, the user can search the CEQAnet database for project related information (see image below, Figure 1).

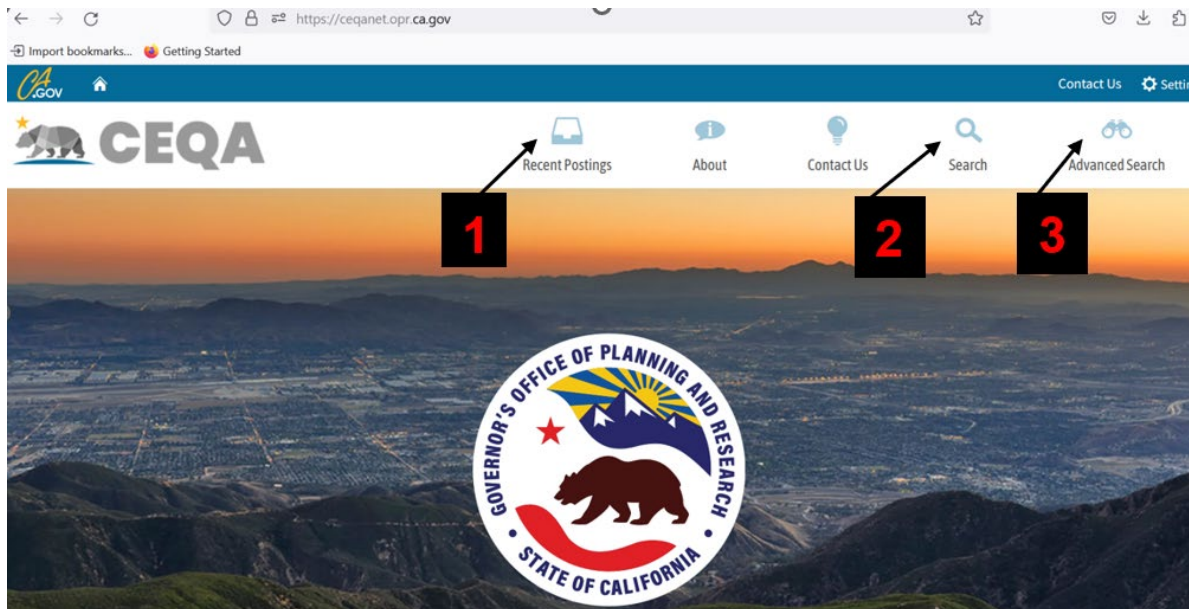


Figure 1, CEQAnet webpage search functions: (1) Recent Postings, (2) Search, (3) Advanced Search

Method 1

The first method involves selecting the “[Recent Postings](#)” icon (figure 2), which allows the user to scroll through the list of recently submitted projects. The key parameters to identify a project include:

- SCH#
- Environmental Document Type
- Lead/Public Agency
- Date Received
- Title of Project (see image below).

Important note: Recent postings only display projects from the last 14 days of publications, so older projects may not appear in this search.



SCH Number	Type	Lead/Public Agency	Received	Title
[REDACTED]	NOE	California Department of Parks and Recreation	7/11/2023	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	NOE	California Department of Transportation, District 4 (DOT)	7/11/2023	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	NOD	San Lorenzo Valley Water District	7/11/2023	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	NOD	California Department of Water Resources (DWR)	7/11/2023	[REDACTED] 4,

Figure 2, CEQAnet webpage highlighting parameters under the search function “Recent Posting.”

Method 2

The second method is to select the “[Search](#)” icon, which allows users to enter search criteria and scroll through the results (Figure 3). To make the search more specific, users can:

- Encase phrases or keywords within double quotes (e.g., “solid waste”, or “solid waste” and “landfill”).
- Join multiple keywords or phrases using a plus symbol (e.g., “solid waste” + “landfill”).

This method provides more focused results, but it may take up to 30 days for recently submitted CEQA documents to be recognized by the internet browser, Google.

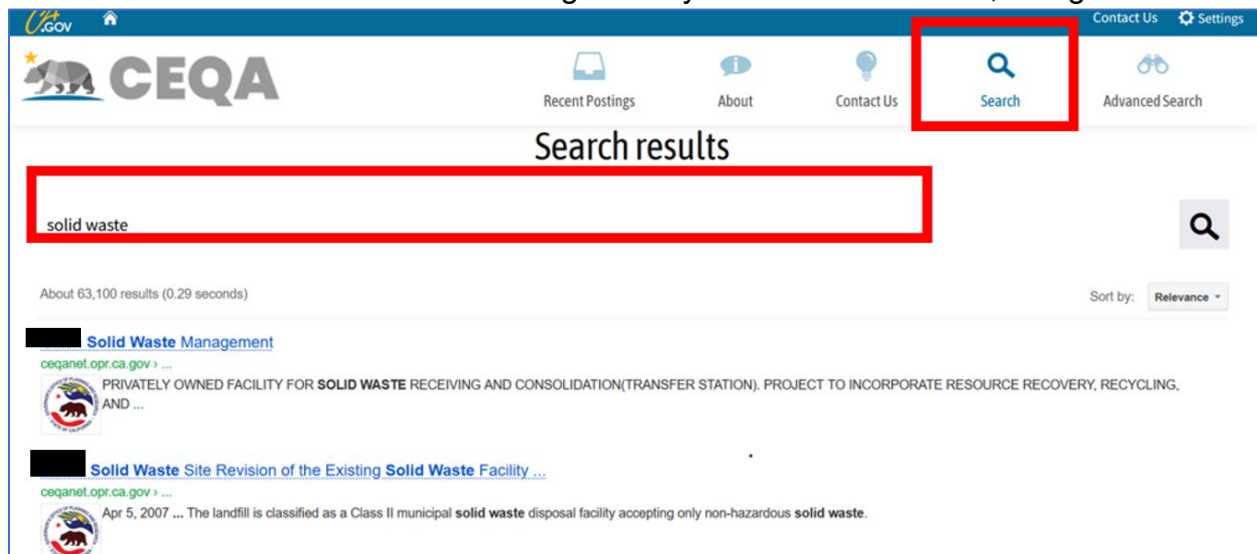


Figure 3, CEQAnet webpage highlighting parameters under the search function “Search.”

Method 3

The third method is to select the “[Advanced Search](#)” icon, users can identify key components of the project (Figure 4 and 5). This method does not allow terms to be searched. Rather, the user must identify key parameters to search for a project such as:

- SCH#
- Date ranges
- Type of environmental document
- Public agency roles
- County
- City
- Local action
- Project issues
- Development type

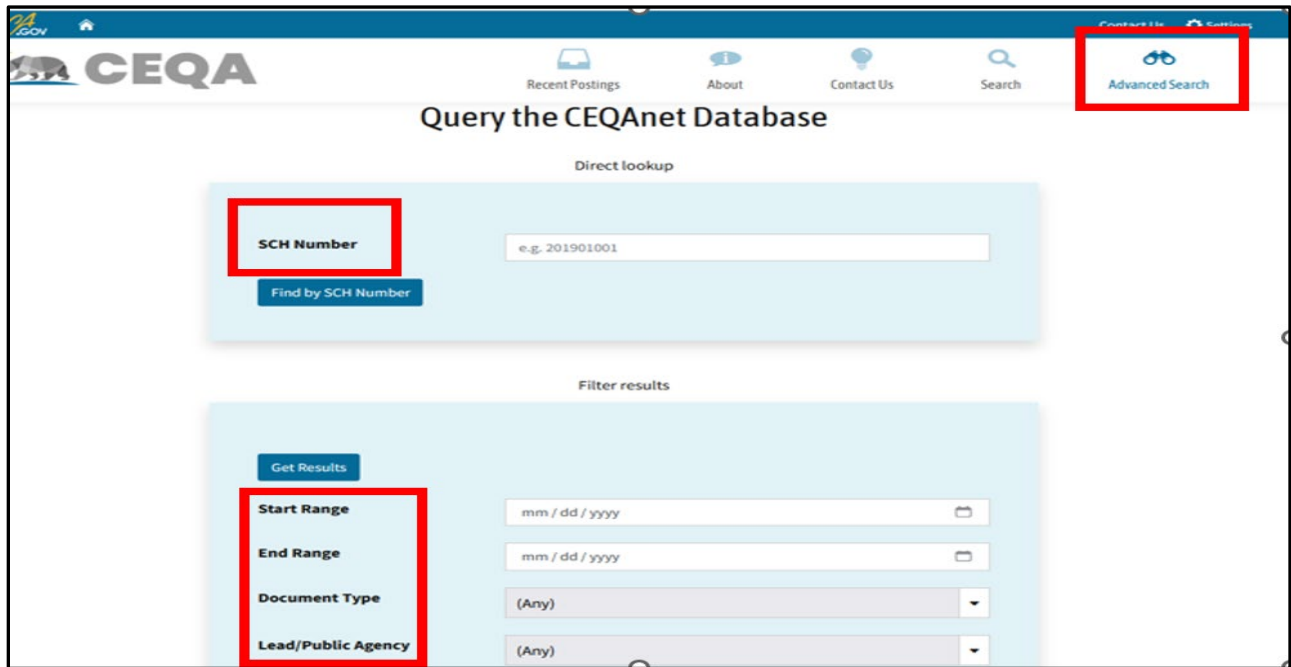


Figure 4, CEQAnet webpage highlighting parameters under the search function “Advanced Search.”

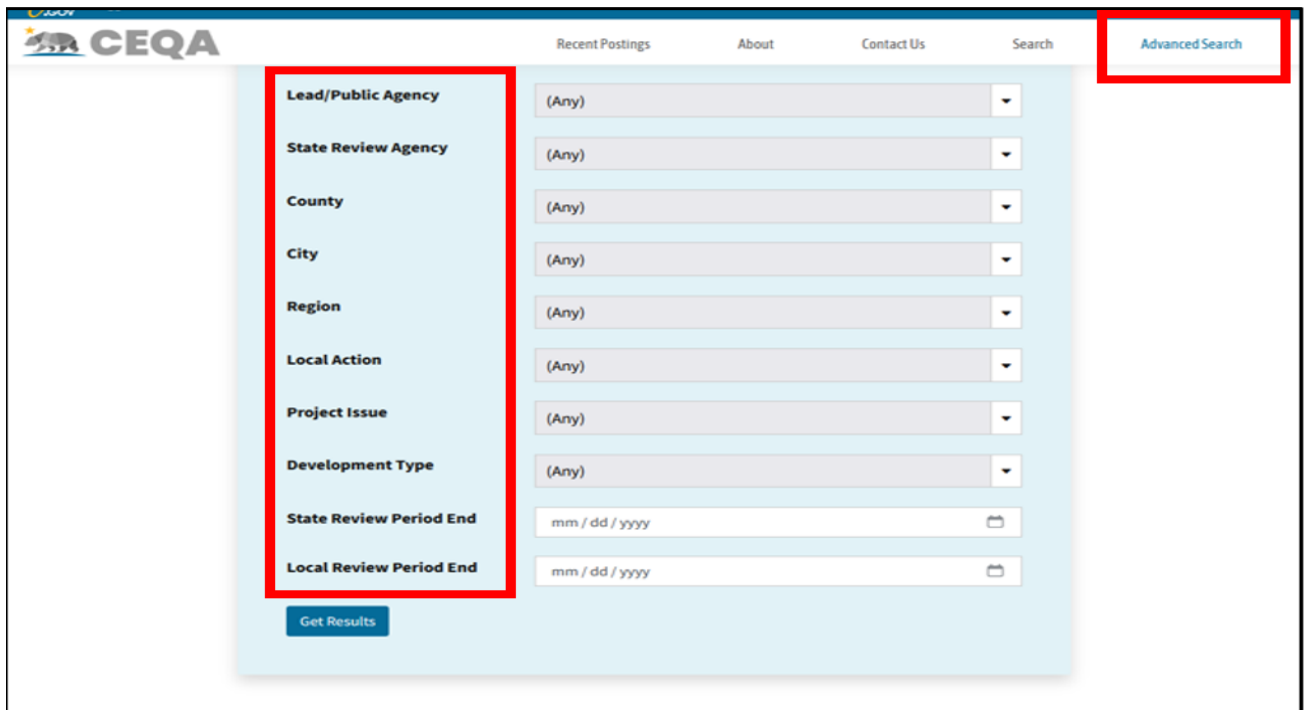


Figure 5, CEQAnet webpage highlighting parameters under the search function “Advanced Search.”

The “Advanced Search” function provides the most granular search by eliminating unrelated projects not included in the parameters.

Scenario Examples - How to use CEQAnet to locate environmental documents for a compost project.

The following scenario examples show how to effectively search for a CEQA project within the CEQAnet online database using the three methods.

Each scenario example demonstrates how individuals can effectively search for a CEQA project within the CEQAnet online database using the “Recent Postings”, “Search”, or “Advanced Search” functions.

Scenario

Imagine you came across a notice posted on your local community board about a proposed compost operation near your neighborhood. You want to learn more about the project, and you are aware that associated environmental documents are available on the CEQAnet online database. Navigating such a massive database may seem daunting, but by utilizing the search abilities within CEQAnet, the process can be expedited.

Scenario Example using Method 1 - “Recent Postings”:

To quickly and easily find the most current CEQA-related projects, scan through the recent posting list. This method works well if there is only one compost project undergoing a CEQA review. However, if multiple composting projects are listed and there is uncertainty, Method 3 may be the preferred option to find a specific project by applying filters.

Scenario Example using Method 2 - “Search”:

Another way to locate the proposed composting project is by using keywords associated with the project in the “Search” function. This method is the quickest way to access project-related environmental documents if you know the name of the business or the project's title. It's worth noting that searching for a general term like “compost” may yield more projects than intended. Therefore, Method 3 may be a better option in this scenario.

Scenario Example using Method 3 - “Advanced Search”:

Within this last scenario, using the “Advanced Search” function, predefined parameters are used to filter results. It is recommended to use as many parameters as possible to narrow down the results. The most useful parameters, especially if the user is aware of a project is within their own community, are “City”, “County”, and “Region”.

Another filter that may be helpful is “State Reviewing Agency”; CalRecycle would likely be identified for any solid waste related projects since they are the state agency with oversight in waste management activities (such as composting). The final suggestion is to identify the “start range” or “end range”. These filters identify published environmental documents within specific date ranges.

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