

State of California  
Natural Resources Agency / Department of Conservation  
GEOLOGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

## California Environmental Quality Act Notice of Exemption

**To:** Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation  
State Clearinghouse  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**From:** Department of Conservation  
715 P Street, MS 1803  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
**Contact:** CEQA@conservation.ca.gov

**Instruction is in blue text. Example language is in green text.**

**\*\*Remove "DRAFT" watermark and delete all instructional and example language, and this sentence prior to submitting for first review. Retain only the text that applies to the project. Lastly, change all font color to black\*\***

**Project Title:** CalGEM Project Title

**Project Applicant:** Operator Name

**Project Location:** County, Oil Field; Section/Township/Range/Base; lat/long; and/or location description

**Project Description:** The project description summarizes the proposed project purpose and activities, key stakeholders involved, environmental setting, construction activities, and project timeline when applicable. Input the API and Well Name of each well included in the project.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving # permit(s) for Operator Name to rework the well(s) listed below, in the Name of Oil Field.

API #	Well Name

**Exempt Status:** As the Lead Agency, CalGEM has determined that the proposed project is exempt from full environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the specified exemptions marked in the section below. CalGEM further finds that the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact to the environment, or that any of the exceptions to the application of the exemptions apply (14 CCR § 15300.2).

Exemption Type		Statute (PRC)	Regulation (14 CCR)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Statutory Exemption:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing Project ( <i>pre-CEQA approval on April 5, 1973</i> )	21169	15261 (b)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ministerial	21080 (b)(1)	15268	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Declared Emergency	21080 (b)(3)	15269 (a)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency Projects	21080 (b)(4)	15269 (b) or (c)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Categorical Exemption:</b>	21084		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 1:</b> Existing Facilities		15301	1684.1
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 2:</b> Replacement or Reconstruction		15302	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 3:</b> New Construction/Conversion of Small Structures		15303	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 4:</b> Minor Alterations to Land		15304	1684.2
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 7:</b> Protection of Natural Resources		15307	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 8:</b> Protection of the Environment		15308	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 11:</b> Accessory Structures		15311	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 21:</b> Enforcement Actions to revoke a permit		15321	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 30:</b> Minor Actions to Prevent, Minimize, Stabilize, Mitigate, or Eliminate a Release (Actual or Threat) of Hazardous Substances (Waste or Material)		15330	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Class 33:</b> Small Habitat Restoration Projects		15333	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exemption</b> ("common sense")		15061 (b)(3)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Not a "Project" subject to CEQA</b>		15378 (b)(2)	
<b>CEQA Exceptions to the Exemptions</b> (14 CCR § 15300.2): where project is located (e.g., sensitive environment); Cumulative Impact; Significant Effect due to Unusual Circumstances; Scenic Highways; Hazardous Waste Sites; Historical Resources.				

**Reasons Why Project is Exempt:** The basis for CalGEM's determination that the project is exempt from the requirements of CEQA is provided in the brief explanation below.

*Write a brief description of exemptions applied, including the Class and Statute consistent with the project. Use and/or modify examples below when applicable:*

**Ongoing Project:** CalGEM has determined that the project is statutorily exempt from CEQA under the "Ongoing Project" (PRC § 21169 and 14 CCR § 15261 (b)) exemption because the existing project is part of an approval that occurred prior to CEQA approval on April 5, 1973, and the current project does not require CalGEM to exercise of any greater degree of responsibility or control than the prior approval of the activity.

**Class 1, Existing Facilities (14 CCR §§ 15301, 1684.1):** The project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Class 1" (14 CCR § 15301) exemption per the CEQA Guidelines

because the proposed project is a repair or minor alteration of existing facilities and will not involve an expansion of use of the oil field, and therefore is exempt from the need for full CEQA review. Additionally, in accordance with 14 CCR § 1684.1 the Class 1 exemption consists of operation repair, maintenance, minor alternation of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously. This Class includes but is not limited to conversion, and abandonment work on oil, gas, injection, and geothermal wells involving the alteration of well casing, such as perforating and casing repair, removal, or replacement; installation or removal of downhole production or injection equipment, cement plugs, bridge plugs, and packers set to isolate production or injection intervals.

**Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302):** Class 2 applies because it consists of “replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced[.]” Examples of Class 2 include, but are not limited to, “Replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity.”

**Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2):** Class 4 exemption applies. The proposed project would be conducted entirely on an existing pad with enough space to contain all equipment. The project would not disturb any undisturbed areas. The proposed project is located within an industrial area. Therefore, the proposed project “consists of drilling operations that result in only minor alterations with negligible or no permanent effects to the existing condition of the land, water, air, and/or vegetation.” The rework/sidetrack would not expand the facility. [This exemption may be used when a project will involve minor and temporary surface ground disturbance.](#)

**Class 7, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources (14 CCR § 15307):** The project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the “Class 7” exemption per the CEQA Guidelines because the work performed under these contracts would be the plugging and abandonment of 56 wells, restoration of 56 wells sites, the removal / remediation of tank pads, the removal of 3 pads, and the investigation and clean out of 6 unknown possible well sites.

Consistent with the purposes of Public Resources Code § 3250 et seq. and documentation available for the preliminary review, the proposed project will benefit the following list of species and their habitat: [List species here](#). In addition, the work under the contracts and any resulting impacts will be temporary in duration. Therefore, the project can be considered exempt from the need for full CEQA review. [This exemption is often used for state abandonment projects and rulemaking projects.](#)

**Class 8, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment (14 CCR § 15308):** The project is categorically exempt from CEQA under the “Class 8” exemption because the work performed under these contracts will be the plugging and abandonment of 56 wells, restoration of 56 wells sites, the removal / remediation of tank pads, the removal of 3 pads, and the investigation and clean out of 6 unknown possible well sites. [This exemption is often used for state abandonment projects and rulemaking projects.](#)

**General or “Common Sense” Exemption:** CalGEM has determined that the project is exempt from full review under CEQA under the General Rule or “Common Sense” exemption (14 CCR § 15061(b)(3)), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if “the activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA”. As discussed above, CalGEM has determined there is no substantial evidence indicating the project could adversely affect any of the environmental resource areas, as listed in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Exceptions to Exemptions: Choose one of the following paragraphs. Paragraph 1, when project is not in an HPZ. Paragraph 2, when project is in an HPZ. Delete these instructions and the paragraph that doesn't apply.

**Exceptions to Exemptions:** CalGEM further finds that there are no exceptions to the application of the categorical exemptions (PRC § 21084; 14 CCR § 15300.2) referenced above. For example, there is no substantial evidence that there are any “unusual circumstances” associated with the proposed project that create a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment, and that there are no significant “cumulative impacts” resulting from successive projects of the same type in the same place. Therefore, reliance on the exemptions is appropriate.

**Exceptions to Exemptions:** CalGEM further finds that there are no exceptions to the application of the categorical exemptions (PRC § 21084; 14 CCR § 15300.2 (c)) referenced above. There is no substantial evidence that there are any “unusual circumstances” associated with the proposed project that create a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment. The approved project is within a Health Protection Zone (HPZ) as defined by Public Resources Code (PRC) section 3280(b). The HPZ does not present an unusual circumstance because SB 1137 (PRC § 3280 et seq.) requires all oil or gas production facilities or wells with a wellhead within an HPZ to comply with specified health, safety, and environmental requirements. In addition, CalGEM further finds that there are no significant “cumulative impacts” resulting from successive projects of the same type in the same place. Therefore, reliance on the exemption(s) is appropriate.

A copy of this NOE (as required by 14 CCR § 15062(a)) and all other related materials can be made available to the public by contacting the CalGEM CEQA Program, located at 715 P Street, MS 1803, Sacramento, CA 95814; by calling (916) 445-9686; or an electronic copy of these documents may be requested by contacting [CEQA@conservation.ca.gov](mailto:CEQA@conservation.ca.gov). The notice filed with the State Clearinghouse may be accessed online at: <https://ceganet.opr.ca.gov>

**Certified:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Department of Conservation,  
Geologic Energy Management Division