



9/15/2020

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Sep 17 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

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CEQA Project #: SCH 2020029088
Document Type: Initial Study/Negative Declaration
Project Lead Agency: City of Rio Vista
Project Title: Rio Vista Manufacturing, Inc.

Public Resources Code (PRC) § 3208.1 establishes well reabandonment responsibility when a previously plugged and abandoned well will be impacted by planned property development or construction activities. Local permitting agencies, property owners, and/or developers should be aware of, and fully understand, that significant and potentially dangerous issues may be associated with development near oil, gas, and geothermal wells.

The California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) has received and reviewed the above referenced project dated 2/27/2020. To assist local permitting agencies, property owners, and developers in making wise land use decisions regarding potential development near oil, gas, or geothermal wells, CalGEM provides the following well evaluation.

The project is located in Solano County, City of Rio Vista within the boundaries of the Rio Vista gas field:

CalGEM's records indicate there are no known oil or gas well located within the project boundary as identified in the application.

- Number of wells Not Abandoned to Current CalGEM Requirements as Prescribed by Law and Projected to Be Built Over or Have Future Access Impeded by this project: 0
- Number of wells Not Abandoned to Current CalGEM Requirements as Prescribed by Law and Not Projected to Be Built Over or Have Future Access Impeded by this project: 0
- Number of wells Abandoned to Current CalGEM Requirements as Prescribed by Law and Projected to Be Built Over or Have Future Access Impeded by this project: 0
- Number of wells Abandoned to Current CalGEM Requirements as Prescribed by Law and Not Projected to Be Built Over or Have Future Access Impeded by this project: 0

The CalGEM categorically advises against building over, or in any way impeding access to, oil, gas, or geothermal wells. Impeding access to a well could result in the need to remove any structure or obstacle that prevents or impedes access including, but not limited to, buildings, housing, fencing, landscaping, trees, pools, patios, sidewalks, roadways, and decking. Maintaining sufficient access is considered the ability for a well servicing unit and associated necessary equipment to reach a well from a public street or access way, solely over the parcel on which the well is located. A well servicing unit, and any necessary equipment, should be able to pass unimpeded along and over the route, and should be able to access the well without disturbing the integrity of surrounding infrastructure.

There are no guarantees a well abandoned in compliance with current CalGEM requirements as prescribed by law will not start leaking in the future. It always remains a possibility that any well may start to leak oil, gas, and/or water after abandonment, no matter how thoroughly the well was plugged and abandoned. CalGEM acknowledges wells plugged and abandoned to the most current CalGEM requirements as prescribed by law have a lower probability of leaking in the future; however, there is no guarantee that such abandonments will not leak.

PRC § 3208.1 gives the CalGEM the authority to order or permit the re-abandonment of any well where it has reason to question the integrity of the previous abandonment, or if the well is not accessible or visible. Responsibility for re-abandonment costs may be affected by the choices made by the local permitting agency, property owner, and/or developer in considering the general advice set forth in this letter. The PRC continues to define the person or entity responsible for reabandonment as:

1. The property owner - If the well was plugged and abandoned in conformance with CalGEM requirements at the time of abandonment, and in its current condition does not pose an immediate danger to life, health, and property, but requires additional work solely because the owner of the property on which the well is located proposes construction on the property that would prevent or impede access to the well for purposes of remedying a currently perceived future problem, then the owner of the property on which the well is located shall obtain all rights necessary to reabandon the well and be responsible for the reabandonment.

2. The person or entity causing construction over or near the well - If the well was plugged and abandoned in conformance with CalGEM requirements at the time of plugging and abandonment, and the property owner, developer, or local agency permitting the construction failed either to obtain an opinion from the supervisor or district deputy as to whether the previously abandoned well is required to be reabandoned, or to follow the advice of the supervisor or district deputy not to undertake the construction, then the person or entity causing the construction over or near the well shall obtain all rights necessary to reabandon the well and be responsible for the reabandonment.

3. The party or parties responsible for disturbing the integrity of the abandonment - If the well was plugged and abandoned in conformance with CalGEM requirements at the time of plugging and abandonment, and after that time someone other than the operator or an affiliate of the operator disturbed the integrity of the abandonment in the course of developing the property, then the party or parties responsible for disturbing the integrity of the abandonment shall be responsible for the reabandonment.

No well work may be performed on any oil, gas, or geothermal well without written approval from CalGEM. Well work requiring approval includes, but is not limited to, mitigating leaking gas or other fluids from abandoned wells, modifications to well casings, and/or any other re-abandonment work. CalGEM also regulates the top of a plugged and abandoned well's minimum and maximum depth below final grade. CCR §1723.5 states well casings shall be cut off at least 5 feet but no more than 10 feet below grade. If any well needs to be lowered or raised (i.e. casing cut down or casing riser added) to meet this regulation, a permit from the CalGEM is required before work can start.

CalGEM makes the following additional recommendations to the local permitting agency:

1. To ensure that present and future property owners are aware of (a) the existence of all wells located on the property, and (b) potentially significant issues associated with any improvements near oil or gas wells, CalGEM recommends that information regarding the above identified well(s), and any other pertinent information obtained after the issuance of this letter, be communicated to the appropriate county recorder for inclusion in the title information of the subject real property.

2. CalGEM recommends that any soil containing hydrocarbons be disposed of in accordance with local, state, and federal laws. Please notify the appropriate authorities if soil containing significant amounts of hydrocarbons is discovered during development.

As indicated in PRC § 3106, the CalGEM has statutory authority over the drilling, operation, maintenance, and abandonment of oil, gas, and geothermal wells, and attendant facilities, to prevent, as far as possible, damage to life, health, property, and natural resources; damage to underground oil, gas, and geothermal deposits; and damage to underground and surface waters suitable for irrigation or domestic purposes. In addition to CalGEM's authority to order work on wells pursuant to PRC §§ 3208.1 and 3224, it has authority to issue civil and criminal penalties under PRC §§ 3236, 3236.5, and 3359 for violations within the CalGEM's jurisdictional authority. CalGEM does not regulate grading, excavations, or other land use issues.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 324-7120 or via email at: Charlene.Wardlow@conservation.ca.gov

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

067E7BD5EA114A7...
Charlene L Wardlow
Northern District Deputy

9/17/2020

cc: Jan Perez
Jan.Perez@conservation.ca.gov

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