

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
 PO Box 3044  
 1400 Tenth Street, Room 113  
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** California Energy Commission  
 715 P Street, MS-48  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**Project Applicant:** The Regents of the University of California, Davis-Western Cooling Efficiency Center

**Project Title:** Affordable Near- and Medium-Term Solutions for Integration of Low GWP Heat Pumps in Residential Buildings (REVISED) SCH#2020060478

**Project Location:**

<u>Address</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>County</u>
Sage St	Davis 95616	Yolo
Lynmarie Dr	Merced 95341	Merced (new)
San Augustine Ave	Merced 95348	Merced (new)
Francisco Ave	Santa Rosa 95403	Sonoma (new)
Sierra Ct	Windsor 95492	Sonoma (new)
Buena Vista Dr	Santa Rosa 95404	Sonoma (new)
Marshall St	Le Grand 95333	Merced (new)
Flour Mill Dr	Newman 95360	Stanislaus (new)
Sussex Ct	Atwater 95301	Merced (new)
Flour Mill Dr	Newman 95360	Stanislaus (new)
Farmers Central Rd	Woodland 95776	Yolo (new)

**Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:**

Under agreement EPC-19-016, the California Energy Commission approved a \$1,916,306 grant to the Western Cooling Efficiency Center, at UC Davis, at its May 2020 Business meeting, and adopted CEQA findings that this project is exempt from CEQA under Categorical Exemptions CCR tit. 14, section 15301 and section 15306.

The purpose of this project is to develop and demonstrate affordable near-term and medium-term solutions for integration of lower cost, low- and ultra-low global warming potential heat pumps. The project will develop and test the performance of the heat pump in the laboratory to develop performance maps of the system. The project will install the next generation heat pumps in 10 homes over two California climate zones and evaluate the performance relative to the baseline.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** California Energy Commission

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** The Regents of the University of California, Davis-Western Cooling Efficiency Center

**Exempt Status: (check one)**

- Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

- Statutory Exemptions. State code number.
- Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

**Reasons why project is exempt:**

COVID related delays to the project kick off in 2020 and project implementation during 2021 resulted in all of the project demonstration sites having to be replaced

The activities would include developing high efficiency low global warming potential heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) heat pumps to be tested in an existing laboratory and installed or used in existing buildings, especially, residential buildings. The equipment and materials would include, but may not be limited to, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units; paint; building energy controls (e.g., heating, cooling, lighting); and evaluation, measurement, and verification equipment (e.g., power meters, flow meters, sensors, and data loggers). The physical work would include installing this equipment. The project would not involve adding residential units or substantially enlarging buildings.

The above activities fall under two categorical exemptions. First, the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, licensing, and minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, and mechanical equipment, involving negligible or no expansion of use, falls under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301. Second, the project includes data collection and analysis to be conducted in residential buildings and in existing laboratories of the grant recipient team. California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15306 exempts basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. The proposed project's data analysis activities will have no significant effect on the environment and fall within the categorical exemption of section 15306.

The Energy Commission made CEQA findings pertaining to this project, including finding that it was categorically exempt under CCR tit. 14, sections 15301 and 15306 when the Energy Commission originally approved the agreement on May 13, 2020. The currently proposed changes through this amendment involve changing the location of ten (10) test sites. These changes will not result in any environmental impacts beyond those already considered by the Commission.

This amended Notice of Exemption provides documentation of the test site changes and the CEC's analysis regarding CEQA.

**Lead Agency**

Contact Person: Felix Villanueva Area code/Telephone/Ext: 916-776-0822

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Signature: Felix Villanueva Date: 4/15/22 Title: Utility Engineer

Signed by Responsible Agency

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_