

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

From: California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street, MS-48
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: RePurpose Energy, INC.

Project Title: Reuse of Electric Vehicle Batteries for Solar Energy Storage

Project Location – Specific: See below.

Project Location – City: See below. Project Location – County: _____

290 Sierra College Drive, Grass Valley / Nevada County

Installation of solar photovoltaic arrays on roofs and two carports, with a lithium-ion battery energy storage system.

149 Grobrie Court, Suite E, Fairfield / Solano County

Laboratory testing at RePurpose's testing and manufacturing site

One Washington Square, ENGR 349, San Jose / Santa Clara County

Laboratory research - San Jose State University, electrical grid emulation testing using computer simulation software

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Under grant Agreement EPC-19-039, the California Energy Commission will provide a grant of \$3,000,000 to RePurpose Energy, INC. to install a solar photovoltaic (PV) and energy storage microgrid system at a food co-op grocery store in Grass Valley, California. The system will incorporate second-life batteries that were originally used in Nissan electric vehicles (EV).

The goal of this project is to validate the used EV batteries' ability to integrate solar PV and to provide energy resilience to the food co-op. RePurpose Energy will also conduct a series of laboratory-based cycling tests to identify the degradation rate and effective useful life of used EV battery cells. The activities at different locations are summarized in the "Project Location" section above.

Beneficiaries will include the food co-op in Grass Valley, other utility customers who eventually may buy electricity storage devices using second-life EV batteries; California's electric utilities and their customers (i.e., ratepayers); along with the public at large and the environment.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: RePurpose Energy, INC.

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

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15301; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15303

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

RePurpose Energy, Inc.

Statutory Exemptions. State code number. Cal. Public Resources Code § 21080.35

Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project involves testing, design, and installation of an integrated solar photovoltaic energy storage system that incorporates second-life batteries from electric vehicles. The testing and manufacturing will take place at an existing laboratory operated by RePurpose Energy in Fairfield, California. The installation will be at the BriarPatch Cooperative in Grass Valley, California. Additional analytical and/or design work will occur at existing laboratories and/or offices in San Jose and Davis.

The solar photovoltaic panels on the rooftop of the BriarPatch Cooperative and on two carports over part of the parking lot, and the rest of the system, are exempt under California Public Resources Code section 21080.35. This statute exempts from CEQA “the installation of a solar energy system on the roof of an existing building or at an existing parking lot” fitting certain characteristics, which this project fits. (For this project, no trees will be removed. Associated equipment will not occupy more than 500 square feet of ground surface, and the site of the associated equipment does not contain plants protected by the Native Plant Protection Act.)

In addition, CEQA exemptions under California Code of Regulations, title 14, sections 15301 and 15303 apply. Section 15301, “Existing Buildings,” covers the operation, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. All of the laboratory, manufacturing, and office-type work falls under Section 15301. The installation at the food co-op also falls under this section.

Section 15303, “New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures,” covers construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; and installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures. The additions of solar PV panels, storage batteries, and ancillary equipment under the grant project fall within these parameters.


The City of Grass Valley’s Community Development Department staff issued a letter, dated March 17, 2020, regarding the PV and battery storage installation at the food co-op in Grass Valley. The Department concluded that the installation would qualify for CEQA exemptions under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301, Existing Facilities, and California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Tanner Kural **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-327-1542

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:  **Date:** 6/29/2020 **Title:** Energy Commission Specialist I

Signed by Responsible Agency

Governor’s Office of Planning & Research

Signed by Lead Agency

Jun 30 2020

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: STATE CLEARINGHOUSE