

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Title: Victor Valley Anaerobic Digester Upgrade and RNG Production Expansion

Project Applicant: SoCal Biomethane, LLC

Project Location - Specific: 20111 Shay Road, Victorville, CA 92394

Project Location - City: Victorville **Project Location - County:** San Bernardino

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

This project consists of debottlenecking the existing facility, taking biogas produced by VVWRA and converting it to biomethane for injection into the existing Southwest Gas pipeline. It will produce 1.6 million diesel gallon equivalents of low-carbon renewable natural gas as transportation fuel from food waste and wastewater and displace 18,256 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year. This project will benefit members of disadvantaged and low-income communities by improving economic opportunities through employment and scholarship, and improving air quality by stopping the flaring of biogas and converting excess biogas into pipeline-grade renewable gas.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: SoCal Biomethane, LLC

Exempt Status: (check one):

Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);

Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));

Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));

Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Cal. Code Reg.s, tit. 14, section 15301 and section 15303

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

Work under this project consists of installation of small new equipment at an existing wastewater treatment plant, and falls under both Class 1 and Class 3.

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. All new equipment will be installed at an existing wastewater treatment plant, and an existing renewable natural gas plant within that wastewater treatment facility. Modifications will be made to existing equipment and piping, and new equipment will be placed on existing concrete or in an existing biodigester. For these reasons, work under this project will have no significant impact on the environment and falls within 15301.

Class 3 consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. There are five components to the work. First, an existing thickener unit will be replaced. The new unit will be placed on existing concrete, and will be approximately 24 square feet. Pumps, piping, and a filter will be placed on existing lines. Second, a new membrane holder and piping will be installed, next to an existing membrane holder. The new membrane holder will be approximately 300 square feet. Third, modifications will be made to existing piping in an existing renewable natural gas (RNG) plant within the existing wastewater treatment facility. Small electronic controls and instrumentation, new piping, valves, and membranes on existing racks will all be added. The new membranes are approximately 12" x 36". Fourth, a microgrid controller – i.e., a computer – will be added at the RNG plant. Fifth, two mixers will be added to an existing anaerobic digester. Each mixer is approximately 900 pounds, with a 1.5-meter blade diameter. The result of these upgrades and additions of small new equipment will be to increase throughput without changing use, while simultaneously reducing biogas flaring. For these reasons, work under this project will have no significant impact on the environment and falls within 15303.

Responsible Agency

Contact Person: Taiying Zhang

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 916-903-4241

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: Taiying Zhang Date: 3/24/2022 Title: Air Pollution Specialist

Signed by Responsible Agency

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____