

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: Institute of Gas Technology dba Gas Technology Institute

Project Title: Decarbonizing Large Commercial and Industrial Equipment with Hydrogen

Project Location:

<u>Address</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>County</u>
Engineering Laboratory Facility, Ring Rd 1700 S Mt Prospect Rd	Irvine, CA 92697 Des Plaines, IL 60018	Orange County Cook County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Under agreement PIR-22-001, the California Energy Commission will provide a \$1,770,000 grant to the Institute of Gas Technology dba Gas Technology Institute to conduct a technical study of the impacts of utilizing hydrogen (H2) as a delivered fuel, blended with fossil fuel with greater than 50% H2 or 100% H2, used in hard-to-electrify equipment used in large commercial buildings and industrial processes in at the University of California, Irvine Combustion Laboratory and Gas Technology Institute's laboratories in Des Plaines, Illinois. The benefits of this project, as related to the California Investor-Owned Utility natural gas ratepayers, are to increase grid resiliency, reduce the financial burden for natural gas services, and improved safety by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Institute of Gas Technology dba Gas Technology Institute

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, § 15306
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number.
- Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

Cal. Code Regs., title 14, Section 15301 provides that projects which consist of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public and private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, and which involve negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination, are categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act.

The proposed project will primarily test and modify existing fossil-fuel burning equipment within existing laboratories, in conjunction with research and paper-based studies. The laboratory-based work will take place in existing facilities at the University of California, Irvine Combustion Laboratory. This laboratory already emits the types of air pollutants expected during testing. This work will be supported by data sets gathered from out-of-

state testing at Gas Technology Institute's laboratories in Des Plaines, Illinois. For these reasons, the proposed work will not have any significant effect on the environment and is exempt under Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, Section 15301.

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14 Section 15306 provides that projects which consist of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities, and which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource are categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. The research is described above. There are no sensitive environmental resources at the laboratory site. For these reasons, the proposed work will not have any significant effect on the environment and is exempt under Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, Section 15306,


The project will not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies; does not involve any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; the project site is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5; and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply to this project, and this project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Jason Tancher **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-776-0693

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:** 07/26/2022 **Title:** Utility Engineer

Signed by Responsible Agency

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____