

**Notice of Exemption**

**Form D**

**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  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Project Applicant:** The Regents of The University of California, on behalf of the San Diego Campus

**Project Title:** Purification and Regeneration Integrated Materials Engineering ("PRIME") Process for Direct Recycling and Upcycling of Lithium Cathode Materials

**Project Location:**

<u>Address</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>County</u>
9500 Gilman Dr	La Jolla	San Diego
9680 Campus Point Dr	La Jolla	San Diego

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

The purpose of agreement EPC-23-023 with The Regents of The University of California, on behalf of the San Diego Campus for a \$1,200,000 grant is to develop a highly efficient, scalable and high-value direct recycling pathway for lithium-ion batteries with a diverse range of cell chemistries at a facility in San Diego. This is a federal cost share grant leveraging \$10 million of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding from the U.S. Department of Energy.

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

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** The Regents of The University of California, on behalf of the San Diego Campus

**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 and § 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., tit. 14 sec.15301 provides that projects which consist of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or 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

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

Environmental Quality Act. The purpose of this agreement is to design and scale processes to upcycle and recycle lithium-ion battery materials at their end of life. The initial design and optimization of the process will take place in an existing laboratory in the Department of Nanoengineering at the University of California, San Diego campus. During the scale up of this recycling process, the project team will build a pilot processing line in an existing facility managed by ExPost Technology, Inc. Minor alterations of the facility space will include installation of process equipment such as reactors, shredders, sieves, ovens, mixers, and separators.

The activities funded by the agreement will not cause a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Therefore, the project falls within section 15301 and will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sec. 15306 provides that projects which consist of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. This project includes developing recycling processes and improving its efficiency through data collection, experimentation, data analysis, and process improvement in a laboratory facility. Therefore, the project falls within section 15306 and will not have a significant effect on the environment.

This project does not involve impacts on any particularly sensitive environment; 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:** Elyse Kedzie **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-805-7435

**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:** 3/22/2024 **Title:** Utilities Engineer

**Signed by Responsible Agency**

**Signed by Lead Agency**

**Signed by Applicant**

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

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