

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: County Clerk
Kern County
1115 Truxtun Ave.
Bakersfield, CA 93301

From: West Kern Water District
P.O. Box 1105
Taft, CA 93268

Project Title: Water Pipeline Replacement – Highway 119 - Dustin Acres, Project 24-1301

Project Location: Within the unincorporated area of Dustin Acres, County of Kern and along Highway 119 – North side of right of way 22' north of the west bound fog line between the intersections of west Tank Farm Road and east Tank Farm Road, Dustin Acres, County of Kern.

Description of Activity: The activity consists of replacing approximately 2800 feet of the existing steel water mainline with 8" plastic C-900 and installing four (4) fire hydrant assemblies within the public right of way. The new portions of the waterline will be connected to the existing waterlines and service connections. The project replaces existing aging infrastructure and ensures continued provision of essential services to the disadvantaged community.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: West Kern Water District

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial.
- Declared Emergency.
- Emergency Project.
- Categorical Exemption.** State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301, 15303, & 15304
- Statutory Exemption.** Public Resources Code Division 13 Environmental Quality, Section 21080.21 & State Guidelines Section 15282 (k)

Reasons why project is exempt: Public Resources Code section 21080.21(a)&(b) and State CEQA Guidelines section 15282(k) exempts from CEQA the installation of new pipeline or maintenance as long as the new pipeline does not exceed one (1) mile in length. Public Resources Code Section 21080.21 also exempts "accessories or appurtenances" to a pipeline, such as mains, traps, vents, cables, conduits, vaults, valves, flanges, manholes, meters and fire hydrants. The Project is thus statutorily exempt from CEQA.

Additionally, the Project is categorically exempt from CEQA under State CEQA Guidelines section 15303, which exempts the "construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; (and) installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures". Notably, Section 15303 exempts "water main and other utility extensions of reasonable length to serve such construction." Thus, to the extent the Project results in the construction of pipelines, lateral facilities, meters, fire hydrants, and other small, onsite facilities, this construction is categorically exempt from CEQA.

The Project is also categorically exempt from CEQA under State CEQA Guidelines section 15301, which exempts "minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use." Here, to the extent the Project will result in the installation of potable water pipeline extensions, all such pipelines will be installed in streets. The minor alteration of these streets to install pipelines and related accessories is categorically exempt from CEQA. (State CEQA Guidelines § 15301)

The Project is further categorically exempt under State CEQA Guidelines section 15304, which exempts minor trenching and backfilling where-as here-the surface will be restored. (State CEQA Guidelines § 15304 (f)). In particular, to the extent trenching will be required to install pipelines and related structures, the surface will be restored after the pipelines and related accessories are installed. The Project is thus exempt from CEQA.

West Kern Water has determined, based on substantial evidence, that none of the exceptions to the Class 1, 3, or 4 categorical exemptions set forth in State CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply here.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Wendy Adams-Rosenberger Telephone (661) 763-3151

Signature: Wendy Adams-Rosenberger Title: Regulatory Admin Date: 4-29-2024

Signed by Applicant