

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: DOE- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Project Title: Market-leading Adoption of Scalable Low GWP Refrigerant Heat Pump in a Retrofit Application

Project Location – Specific: 475 E Grand Ave

Project Location – City: South San Francisco 94080 **Project Location – County:** San Mateo

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project will develop holistic and scalable solutions for transitioning conventional central plants to heat recovery chiller systems that use low GWP refrigerants. The project will fund equipment including gas boilers and chiller systems to retrofit an existing central plant at a demonstration site.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: DOE- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

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, § 15302 ; 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., tit. 14, sect. 15301 provides that projects which consist of operation, repair, maintenance, permitting or minor alterations of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment and which involve negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time are categorically exempt from CEQA. This project involves operation and minor alterations consisting of equipment installation at a private existing facility, with no or negligible expansion of capacity. The existing central heat pump plant will be retrofitted with low-GWP equipment. This installation is at an existing, developed urban site on land that is not environmentally sensitive.

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sect. 15302 exempts projects that consist of the replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity. This project involves replacing and retrofitting an existing heat pump plant. In addition, this project fits within Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sect. 15306 because it involves basic data collection which will not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. All applicable health, safety, and environmental rules and regulations would be followed;

activities would be conducted by appropriately trained and qualified technicians and researchers. Energy use and emissions of existing facilities would generally be lowered by project implementation.

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: Jackson Thach **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-776-0818

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: *Jackson Thach* **Date:** 5-14-2024 **Title:** Mechanical Engineer

Signed by Responsible Agency

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____