

State of California
Natural Resources Agency / Department of Conservation
GEOLOGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

**California Environmental Quality Act
Notice of Exemption**

To: Office of Planning & Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: Department of Conservation
715 P Street, MS 1803
Sacramento, CA 95814
Contact: CEQA@conservation.ca.gov

Project Title: 513144_Aera_UIC

Project Applicant: Aera Energy LLC (Aera)

Project Location: Fresno County, Coalinga Oil Field; 01/20S/14E/MD;
36.21660614, -120.39624023

Project Description: Aera proposes to rework one existing well located in the Coalinga Oil Field. The proposed rework consists of correcting the injection profile by adding casing patches and new perforations to the well. The well in this project is situated on an existing well pad. Along with the auxiliary equipment, the temporary service equipment used to accomplish the proposed activities will consist of a double rig (workover/service), cementing equipment, coil tubing unit, and wireline.

No new permanent facilities will be constructed to accomplish the proposed activities, all of which will be done to existing facilities previously permitted through CalGEM. There will be no expansion to the existing facilities to accomplish the proposed activities. There will be no new ground disturbance.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving one permit for Aera to rework the well listed below, in the Coalinga Oil Field.

API #	Well Name
0401924130	Penn-Zier 4-HR

Exempt Status: As the Lead Agency, CalGEM has determined that the proposed project is exempt from full environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the specified exemptions marked in the section below. CalGEM further finds that the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact to the environment, or that any of the exceptions to the application of the exemptions apply (14 CCR § 15300.2).

Exemption Type	Statute (PRC)	Regulation (14 CCR)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Exemption: <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing Project (<i>pre-CEQA approval on April 5, 1973</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Ministerial <input type="checkbox"/> Declared Emergency <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Projects	21169 21080 (b)(1) 21080 (b)(3) 21080 (b)(4)	15261 (b) 15268 15269 (a) 15269 (b) or (c)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Categorical Exemption: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 1: Existing Facilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 2: Replacement or Reconstruction <input type="checkbox"/> Class 3: New Construction/Conversion of Small Structures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 4: Minor Alterations to Land <input type="checkbox"/> Class 7: Protection of Natural Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Class 8: Protection of the Environment <input type="checkbox"/> Class 11: Accessory Structures <input type="checkbox"/> Class 21: Enforcement Actions to revoke a permit <input type="checkbox"/> Class 30: Minor Actions to Prevent, Minimize, Stabilize, Mitigate, or Eliminate a Release (Actual or Threat) of Hazardous Substances (Waste or Material) <input type="checkbox"/> Class 33: Small Habitat Restoration Projects	21084	15301 15302 15303 15304 15307 15308 15311 15321 15330 15333	1684.1 1684.2
<input type="checkbox"/> General Exemption ("common sense")		15061 (b)(3)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Not a "Project" subject to CEQA		15378 (b)(2)	
<p>CEQA Exceptions to the Exemptions (14 CCR § 15300.2): where project is located (e.g., sensitive environment); Cumulative Impact; Significant Effect due to Unusual Circumstances; Scenic Highways; Hazardous Waste Sites; Historical Resources.</p>			

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: The basis for CalGEM's determination that the project is exempt from the requirements of CEQA is provided in the brief explanation below.

Class 1, Existing Facilities (14 CCR §§ 15301, 1684.1): The project is exempt under the Class 1, Existing Facilities exemption because the project would make minor changes to an existing well involving no expansion of the existing use of the well. Class 1 consists of the "minor alteration" of existing facilities "involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use." (14 CCR § 15301.) This includes "alteration of well casing, such as perforating and casing repair." Additionally, in accordance with 14 CCR § 1684.1 the Class 1 exemption consists of operation, repair, maintenance, minor alternation of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously. This Class includes but is not limited to conversion, and abandonment work on oil, gas, injection, and geothermal wells involving the alteration of well casing, such as perforating and casing repair, removal, or replacement; installation or removal of

downhole production or injection equipment, cement plugs, bridge plugs, and packers set to isolate production or injection intervals. The project will include correcting the injection profile by adding casing patches and new perforations to the well. No expansion of the existing well pad, roads, staging areas, or pipelines are proposed, and the completion design will be the same as the original wellbore. According to a CalGEM engineer, the proposed work is within the scope of UIC project 15000034 and would be a continuation of operations within the confines of the UIC project as permitted by the Project Approval Letter (PAL). Therefore, the changes to the existing facilities would be negligible and would not expand the existing use.

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302): Class 2 exemption applies because it consists of “replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced[.]” Examples of Class 2 include, but are not limited to, “[r]eplacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity.” The project will include correcting the injection profile by adding casing patches and new perforations to the well, and the completion design will be the same as the original wellbore. According to a CalGEM engineer, the proposed work is within the scope of UIC project 15000034 and would be a continuation of operations within the confines of the UIC project as permitted by the PAL. Therefore, the proposed project consists of replacement or reconstruction and would not change the purpose or capacity of the well.

Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2): Class 4 exemption applies. The proposed project would be conducted entirely on an existing pad with enough space to contain all equipment. The project will include correcting the injection profile by adding casing patches and new perforations to the well, and the completion design will be the same as the original wellbore. According to a CalGEM engineer, the proposed work is within the scope of UIC project 15000034 and would be a continuation of operations within the confines of the UIC project as permitted by the PAL. No expansion of the existing well pad, roads, staging areas, or pipelines are proposed. The proposed project is located within an industrial area. Therefore, the proposed project “consists of drilling operations that result in only minor alterations with negligible or no permanent effects to the existing condition of the land, water, air, and/or vegetation.”

Exceptions to Exemptions: CalGEM further finds that there are no exceptions to the application of the categorical exemptions (PRC § 21084; 14 CCR § 15300.2) referenced above. For example, there is no substantial evidence that there are any “unusual circumstances” associated with the proposed project that create a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment, and that there are no significant “cumulative impacts” resulting from successive projects of the same type in the same place. Therefore, reliance on the exemptions is appropriate.

A copy of this NOE (as required by 14 CCR § 15062(a)) and all other related materials can be made available to the public by contacting the CalGEM CEQA Program, located at 715 P Street, MS 1803, Sacramento, CA 95814; by calling (916) 445-9686; or an electronic copy of these documents may be requested by contacting

CEQA@conservation.ca.gov. The notice filed with the State Clearinghouse may be accessed online at: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov>

Certified: Nicole Trezza **Date:** 1/6/2025
Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division