

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

California Environmental Quality Act Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
 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: 526453_Chevron_UIC

Project Applicant: Chevron U.S.A. Inc.

Project Location: Fresno County, Coalinga Oil Field; 24/20S/14E/MD; Latitude 36.17343140, Longitude -120.39224243

Project Description: The project would sidetrack one steam flood injection well and convert to cyclic steam in order to repair damage and restore functionality. Operations include cleaning out the wellbore, laying a cement plug, drilling a new wellbore, cementing casing, and perforating the new wellbore. The well will operate within the existing completion zone and work will not increase the depth of the well. Temporary equipment such as pumps and return bins may be needed. Various mobile temporary equipment will be used including, but not limited to, backhoe, crane, drilling and rework rig, etc., and vehicles to transport personnel and materials to and from the site. No new production facilities or new ground disturbance will take place. Any waste materials will be properly disposed of in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. The work will not expand the use of well pads, roads, staging areas or pipeline. No new facilities will be constructed.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving one permit for Chevron U.S.A. Inc. to sidetrack the well listed below, in the Coalinga Oil Field.

API #	Well Name
0401925235	Claremont 4-FW

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>)	21169	15261 (b)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ministerial	21080 (b)(1)	15268	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Declared Emergency	21080 (b)(3)	15269 (a)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Projects	21080 (b)(4)	15269 (b) or (c)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Categorical Exemption:	21084		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 1: Existing Facilities		15301	1684.1
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 2: Replacement or Reconstruction		15302	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 3: New Construction/Conversion of Small Structures		15303	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Class 4: Minor Alterations to Land		15304	1684.2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 7: Protection of Natural Resources		15307	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 8: Protection of the Environment		15308	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 11: Accessory Structures		15311	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 21: Enforcement Actions to revoke a permit		15321	
	<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)		15330	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Class 33: Small Habitat Restoration Projects		15333	
<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):

Class 1 consists of the "operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously." (14 CCR § 1684.1.) This includes "remedial, maintenance, 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 proposed project involves remedial, maintenance, and conversion work on an existing well conductor and wellbore, including cleaning out the wellbore, laying a cement plug, drilling from the wellbore, cementing casing, and perforating the sidetracked wellbore. The well will be converted

from steamflood to cyclic steam, which is a negligible change in use that would not result in significant surface or subsurface impacts. The purpose of this work is to restore functionality, as the well is damaged. The well will operate within the existing completion zone consistent with historical use. The work will not increase the depth of the well. Existing well pads, roads, pipeline, and other infrastructure will be used. No new production facilities or ground disturbance will occur. The engineer determined that the proposed project falls within the scope of the current PAL (UIC Project 15000056). Therefore, the proposed project would involve negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously.

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302):

Class 2 applies because the rework consists of the “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[.]” (14 CCR § 15302.) The proposed project would replace an existing damaged wellbore to return the well to its original functionality. The well will operate within the existing completion zone consistent with past and present use and consistent with the existing PAL. The work will not increase the depth of the well. The conversion of the well from steamflood to cyclic steam serves substantially the same purpose under the PAL, which authorizes both well types.

Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2):

Class 4 applies because the rework consists of “drilling operations that result only in minor alterations with negligible or no permanent effects to the existing condition of the land, water, air, and/or vegetation.” (14 CCR § 1684.2; see also 14 CCR § 15304.) The proposed project involves converting a steamflood injection well by cleaning out the wellbore, laying a cement plug, drilling a new wellbore, cementing casing, and perforating the new wellbore. These are negligible modifications to an existing steamflood injection well that would restore the well to its original functionality. No new facilities will be constructed, and no grading or other ground disturbance will occur. Existing roads, well pad, and other infrastructure will be used. Therefore, Class 4 applies.

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>

