

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: 675533 Aera UIC

Project Applicant: Aera Energy LLC (A0610)

Project Location: Kern, Belridge, South; 02/28S/21E/MD; 35.47351837/-119.73442841; 1258 ft N and 2508 ft E from the SW section corner

Project Description: Work Proposal: Aera proposes to rework a total of 1 existing steam injector well in the existing and heavily developed South Belridge Oil Field to continue oil and gas resource development. The specific rework activity includes adding perforations to an existing well, which should take approximately 3 days to complete.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving 1 permit(s) for Aera Energy LLC (A0610) to rework the well(s) listed below, in the Belridge, South Oil Field.

API #	Well Name
0403057662	Section 2 DE-V1A

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)

Exemption Type	Statute (PRC)	Regulation (14 CCR)	
<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)	
<u>CEQA Exceptions to the Exemptions (14 CCR § 15300.2):</u> where project is located (e.g., sensitive environment); Cumulative Impact; Significant Effect due to Unusual Circumstances; Scenic Highways; Hazardous Waste Sites; Historical Resources.			

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 categorically exempt from CEQA under the "Class 1" (14 CCR § 15301) exemption per the CEQA Guidelines because the proposed project is a repair or minor alteration of existing facilities and will not involve an expansion of use of the oil field, and therefore is exempt from the need for full CEQA review. 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. The proposed work consists of perforating one existing well within an existing zone and returning its use back to steam injection. Additionally, a CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work would be a continuation of operations within the UIC Project 05200010, as permitted by the project approval letter (PAL).

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302): Class 2 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[.]" The proposed project would make minor alterations to one existing well by adding

perforations and returning its use back to steam injection, which was its originally intended use. The work will be done on an existing wellbore, which is located on an existing well pad. The project will not expand operations or change the existing use of the well. Additionally, a CalGEM engineer has confirmed that the proposed work would be a continuation of operations within UIC Project 05200010, as permitted by the PAL.

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 would not disturb any undisturbed areas. The rework/sidetrack would not expand the facility. The proposed project will add perforations to an existing well and return its use back to steam injection, its originally intended use. The proposed project is located within an active and dense oil field. There would be no construction of new facilities or expansion of existing facilities. 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:  **Date:** 3/27/2025

Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division