

To: Office of Planning and Research
 PO Box 3044
 1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
 1516 Ninth Street, MS-48
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: Imperial Western Products, Inc., A California Corporation 2020070193

Project Title: Imperial Western Products Microgrid Project

Project Location – Specific: 86600 Avenue 54 (APN: 763-141-023)

Project Location – City: Coachella 92236 **Project Location – County:** Riverside

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The purpose of this project is to design, install, and operate a solar microgrid system that reduces electricity consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the existing Imperial Western Products (IWP) 36-acre organic food recycling facility in the community of Thermal within the City of Coachella, California. The microgrid project consists of 2,105 roof and carport mounted solar photovoltaic panels totaling 842 kilowatts, and a battery energy storage system (BESS) that will provide a minimum of 3.1 hours of stored energy at maximum critical load. The project includes demolition of one 2,000 square foot carport structure and installation of three new solar panel carports over existing parking stalls totaling 21,736 square feet, and installation of 33,763 square feet of new solar panels on the rooftops of four existing industrial buildings. The project does not entail any expansions in floor area. The BESS will be provided in its own 20-foot x 8-foot outdoor-rated enclosure container and it will include fire alarm, fire suppression system, and HVAC. It will be a UL-certified product. Trenching approximately 36 inches deep will be completed entirely within the property to connect the solar panels and BESS components of the microgrid. The BESS will be placed on a 25-foot x 12-foot concrete pad. By installing the project, IWP will be able to reduce its total grid energy usage by more than 35 percent, reducing its GHG emissions by over one-third. The proposed microgrid will also allow IWP to continue operations in the event of a utility blackout. The City of Coachella Development Services Director has determined that the project qualifies for a ministerial review including plan check and permitting by the City of Coachella, the project meets all Zoning Development standards, and no discretionary actions are involved in the local review and approval process. The project is consistent with the California Energy Commission’s mission of leading the state to a 100 percent clean energy future.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Imperial Western Products, Inc., A California Corporation

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
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number. PRC § 21080.35
- Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Imperial Western Products, Inc.

The purpose of this project is to design, install, and operate a solar microgrid system that reduces electricity consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the existing Imperial Western Products (IWP) organic recycling facility in Coachella, California.

This project will involve the installation of solar energy systems on the roofs of four existing buildings and three new carports over existing parking lots. The installation of the solar photovoltaic panels will enable the generation of energy for onsite use at an organic food recycling facility in the City of Coachella. Associated equipment of each solar energy system will not occupy more than 500 square feet of ground surface and will be located on the same parcel as the solar panels. The project does not involve a federal Clean Water Act permit; waste discharge requirements pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act; an individual take permit for species protected under the federal Endangered Species Act or the California Endangered Species Act; streambed alteration permit pursuant to the California Fish and Game Code; or removal of protected or native trees. For these reasons, this project is statutorily exempt from CEQA under Public Resources Code section 21080.35.

This project will involve the installation of a ground mounted battery energy storage system (BESS) within the interior of the fully developed 36-acre facility in the City of Coachella. The project has been deemed an allowed modification to the existing organic food recycling facility use by the City of Coachella Development Services Director. The BESS, used in tandem with the solar panels will allow IWP to reduce their total grid energy usage by more than 35 percent, reducing their GHG emissions by over one-third. The BESS will also allow IWP to continue operations in the event of a utility blackout. The project will not involve the removal of trees. The BESS installation will be a minor alteration to existing paved areas within the interior of the property, with no expansion beyond the existing operation and will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The project will not result in a significant cumulative impact, damage resources within a designated state scenic highway, cause substantial adverse change to the significance of a historical resource, or be located on a listed hazardous waste site. Therefore, the project falls under the categorical exemption listed in California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301.

Each exemption is an independent basis for finding the project exempt.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Kaycee Chang **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-327-1509

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: *kchang* **Date:** 07/08/2020 **Title:** Energy Analyst

Signed by Responsible Agency

Signed by Lead Agency

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: Jul 09 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE