

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: 690053_Group_Aera_UIC

Project Applicant: Aera Energy LLC (A0610)

Project Location: Kern, Mid-Way Sunset; 36/32S/23E/MD; 35.10502625, -119.46250916

Project Description: The proposed project involves removing the existing liner, deepening the wellbore, and replacing the existing liner and gravel pack for existing four oil and gas production wells using temporary equipment, such as a rework rig. The project duration is approximately six days.

The proposed project consists of the California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) approving four permit(s) for Aera Energy LLC (A0610) to deepen the wells listed below, in the Midway-Sunset Oil Field.

API #	Well Name
0403011503	Pru 309
0403011505	Pru 311
0403012405	Pru 349
0403012406	Pru 350

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 applies to the “operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration” of existing facilities involving “negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing previously” (§ 1684.1). The project involves deepening four oil and gas production wells by removing the existing liner, deepening the wellbore, replacing the liner, and packing gravel. The proposed work will not change the current use of the wells. The district engineer also confirmed that the proposed work will have no modifying effect on UIC PAL 464-00-0125.

Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction (14 CCR § 15302): Class 2 applies because the rework of the well could be considered “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.” The proposed project involves reconstructing four oil and gas production wells by removing the existing liner, deepening the wellbore, replacing the existing liner, and packing gravel into an established zone to continue resource production. There will be no expansion of the existing structures and no construction of new facilities. CalGEM engineer has reviewed the existing UIC PAL 464-00-0125 and confirmed that the proposed work has no modifying effect on the UIC Project. Therefore, the work would not substantially change the purpose or capacity of the wells.

Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §§ 15304, 1684.2): Class 4 applies because the rework “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.” The proposed project involves deepening four oil and gas production wells. The proposed drilling activities and associated temporary equipment will be contained within the existing wellpad. The proposed activities will not expand the well pads, roads, staging areas, and pipelines. Once completed, the wells will continue to operate using the existing infrastructure. There will be no construction of new production facilities and no new grading. As a result, there will be no new ground disturbances. There are no expected impacts on biological resources as the project will not disturb undisturbed areas.

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: Charmane Robinson **Date:** 6/5/2025
Department of Conservation,
Geologic Energy Management Division