

Notice of Exemption

Form D

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

From: California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: Sacramento Municipal Utility District

Project Title: SMUD POWER - Preventing Outages with Enhanced Reliability

Project Location – Specific: Various

Project Location – City: Sacramento **Project Location – County:** Sacramento

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project will deploy grid infrastructure upgrades to replace 230 network protectors and an estimated 210,000-280,000 circuit feed of underground cable in the SMUD service territory. The Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition ready (SCADA-ready) systems in the new network protectors to allow for remote monitoring and operation, which supports efficient energy management and quick responses to potential issues. The underground cable replacement will retire 1960s cables containing lead, which pose an environmental risk as they age. Additionally, the replacement will also retire pre-1981 direct buried unjacketed cables that frequently fail and disrupt service.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sacramento Municipal Utility District

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, § 15302 ; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15303 ; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15304
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number.
- Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

CCR section number: Cal. Code Regs. title 14, §15302, §15303, and §15304.

Cal. Code Regs. title 14, §15302 provides that replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure is to be located on the same site for substantially the same purpose and capacity are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. The project will replace existing 230 network protectors over a 6-year period. The network protectors will range in size from 3.5 – 4 feet tall and 17 – 22 inches wide. This project will also replace approximately 210,000 – 280,000 circuit feet of existing direct buried cable with new cable encased in conduit duct bank within existing

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

rights-of-way in the City of Sacramento. Ground disturbance will be limited to existing roadways, and project sites are not located within agricultural land. Encountering sensitive environmental resources are unlikely, however, unanticipated discovery protocols will be in place if any sensitive resources are discovered while trenching. The proposed sites have not been affected by hazardous wastes or cleanup problems. All work will occur while adhering to the City of Sacramento's noise ordinance of 7 am to 6 pm, Monday through Saturday and 9 am to 6 pm on Sunday. The work will not increase traffic by a noticeable amount; however, work within roadways will require traffic control plans to be implemented. For these reasons, the project will not have a significant effect on the environment and falls under the categorical exemption listed in 14 C.C.R. §15302.

Additionally, Cal. Code Regs. title 14, §15303 provides that projects which consist of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure, are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. This exemption includes water main, sewage, electrical, gas, and other utility extensions, including street improvements, of reasonable length to serve such construction. The project also involves installation of new manholes and pull boxes along the routes to allow electric cable pulling, splicing and maintenance. Generally, the manholes and pull boxes will be located in the street, however there may be a need to adjust the location of these facilities into the sidewalk to avoid conflicts with existing utilities. All surfaces will be restored back to their original condition once installation is completed. All work will occur while adhering to the City of Sacramento's noise ordinance of 7 am to 6 pm, Monday through Saturday and 9 am to 6 pm on Sunday. For these reasons, the project will not have a significant effect on the environment and falls under the categorical exemption listed in 14 C.C.R. §15303.

Lastly, Cal. Code Regs. title 14, §15304 provides that projects which consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. This project involves trenching and installation of conduit within existing road-rights-of-way and construction of limited new small facilities. Trenches are anticipated to be 2 feet wide by 2 feet deep where possible. This may change in some locations to avoid conflicts with existing utilities. Construction activities will include grinding roadway surfaces which will remain in place until material can be removed for installation of infrastructure by trenching. All surfaces will be restored back to their original condition once installation is completed. Work is expected to occur over a 6-year period, beginning in 2026 and anticipated completion in 2032. All work will occur while adhering to the City of Sacramento's noise ordinance of 7 am to 6 pm, Monday through Saturday and 9 am to 6 pm on Sunday. No trees are expected to be removed as part of this project. Only preexisting fallen trees and understory brush will be removed to access poles. Trees that make contact with the electrical lines will be trimmed as per standard vegetation management procedures. For these reasons, the project will have minimal disturbance to the land, water, and vegetation consistent with the categorical exemption listed in 14 C.C.R. § 15304.

Therefore, the proposed project will have no significant effect on the environment and is categorically exempt under sections 15302, 15303, and 15304.

The project will not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies; does not involve any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; the project site is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5; and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply to this project and this project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Public Agency

Contact Person: Abigail Jacob **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-232-6325

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: _____ **Date:** 1/22/2026 **Title:** Electric Generation System Specialist I

Signed by Public Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____