

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Department of Toxic Substances Control
Hazardous Waste Management Program
Geology, Permitting, and Corrective Action
Branch
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630

Project Title: Pacific Gas & Electric Company

Project Location - Specific: Topock Compressor Station, near Needles

Project Location - City: Unincorporated

Project Location - County: San Bernadino

Description of Project:

Initiate immediately the pumping, transport, and disposal of groundwater from existing groundwater monitoring wells at the MW20 cluster at the Pacific Gas & Electric Co (PG&E) Topock Compressor Station near Needles, California. This immediate action is required in order to prevent and/or mitigate any possible future impacts to the beneficial water resource, the Colorado River. These additional interim measures are needed because recent sampling activities have indicated levels of Chromium-6 are higher than previously measured and action is needed to avoid further groundwater flow toward the river. The goal of the immediate action is to reduce or reverse the flow of contaminated groundwater toward the river. Additional groundwater extraction and monitoring wells will be required if pumping from the MW20 well cluster does not demonstrate a groundwater gradient reversal away from the Colorado River. During the actions taken, activities will be conducted to analyze the influence of wells that may be used for longer term flow reversal or containment. The current action does not include longer term activities such as treatment ponds and pipelines that may be needed for longer term extraction. These will be the subject of a separate environmental review. In addition, PG&E is required to immediately begin monthly sampling of surface water locations along the Colorado River.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Department of Toxic Substances Control

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Terri Herson, CH2M Hill on behalf of PG&E

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(A));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: _____
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____
- General Rule (Sec. 15061(b)(3))

Exemption Title: Title 14, Section 15269 c. Actions necessary to prevent an emergency.

Reasons Why Project is Exempt:

These project activities are necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency situation wherein the waters of the Colorado River may be impacted with a hazardous constituent, chromium, which is in contaminated groundwater in close proximity to the river. Immediate action is necessary to contain and reverse the flow of groundwater toward to the Colorado River.

Norman Shopay, Project Manager
Lead Agency Contact Person

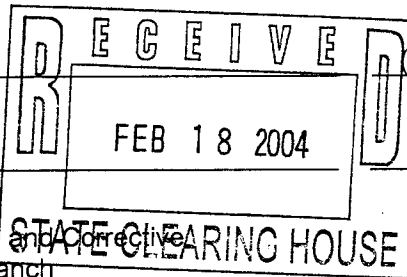
Karen Thomas Baker
DTSC Branch Chief Signature

Karen T. Baker, CHG, CEG,
Chief

DTSC Branch Chief Name

Geology, Permitting, and Corrective
Action Branch

DTSC Branch Chief Title



(510) 540-3943
Phone #
2/18/04
Date

TO BE COMPLETED BY OPR ONLY

Date Received For Filing and Posting at OPR: _____

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION TRACKING FORM

Project Title: Interim Emergency Groundwater Extraction at Pacific Gas & Electric Co., Topock Compressor Station, Conversion of Existing Groundwater Monitoring Wells to Extraction Wells

Project Location (Include County):

near Needles, California - Unincorporated San Bernadino County

PCA Code: 22120

Site Code: 540015-00

Lead Staff Person: Norman Shopay Phone # (510) 3943

Unit or Section: Geology, Permitting, and Corrective Action

Address: 700 Heinz Avenue

City: Berkeley State: CA Zip Code: 94710

Step #1 Project Manager prepares the NOE; attaches the transmittal memorandum for internal review, initials and dates; the Branch Chief (or his/her designee) signs off and submits the completed package to the Chief of the Office of Environmental Analysis, Regulations and Audits (OEARA).

Norman Shopay 2/10/04
Project Manager Signature
Norman Shopay
Provide Name of Person Signing
Karen Thomas Baker 2/10/04
Branch Chief or Designee Signature
Karen T. Baker
Provide Name of Person Signing

Step #2 NOE is date stamped, logged and assigned to OEARA staff. OEARA will review and evaluate within fifteen (15) working days from the date received. A written response will be provided if changes are needed. OEARA Chief or designee signs the tracking form with a copy of the NOE and attachments.

Eric M. Maher 2/11/04
Chief, OEARA or Designee Signature
Eric M. Maher
Provide Name of Person Signing

Step #3 OEARA will forward the NOE to the Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse.

Date Mailed to OPR