

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

2020020217

**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  
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630

<b>Project Title:</b> SCE Mesa Facility Parcels 6 and 7 Removal Action Workplan		
<b>Project Address:</b> 14300 Mesa Road, San Clemente	<b>City:</b> San Clemente	<b>County:</b> Orange
<b>Project Applicant:</b> Southern California Edison		
<b>Approval Action Under Consideration by DTSC:</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Removal Action Workplan	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial Permit Issuance	<input type="checkbox"/> Permit Re-Issuance
<input type="checkbox"/> Corrective Measure Study/Statement of Basis	<input type="checkbox"/> Permit Modification	<input type="checkbox"/> Closure Plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Remedial Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Regulations	<input type="checkbox"/> Interim Removal
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):		
<b>Statutory Authority:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> California H&SC, Chap. 6.5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> California H&SC, Chap. 6.8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):		

**Project Description:** The purpose of the Removal Action Workplan (RAW) is to remediate hexavalent chromium and lead in Site soil as well as tetrachloroethene (PCE) in soil vapor, through excavation and off-site removal of contaminated soil, to minimize future potential human exposure to these chemicals. Implementation of the RAW is expected to take 45 days and require excavation, loading and off-site disposal of approximately 5,400 Cubic Yards (CY) of soil from the Site. Soil and soil gas confirmation sampling, analyses, and health risk assessment will be conducted to confirm that residual chemicals on site will have no potential future impact on site occupants and that unrestricted closure status for the Site can be granted by DTSC. The RAW includes evaluation of available removal methods and selects a preferred alternative to be used to clean-up the Site based on the Final Comprehensive Site Characterization Report (CSCR) approved by DTSC in August 2019. The RAW was submitted in August 2019, by Leighton Consulting, Inc. on behalf of Southern California Edison (SCE), the project proponent.

**Background:** The SCE Mesa Facility (Site) is located in the northwestern portion of the Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton (MCBCP) that was acquired by the U.S. Government in 1942 with the purchase of the land that includes Lease Parcels 6. The Site is currently vacant and comprises approximately 118 acres of land, which was used to support the construction and operation of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) power plant located on the opposite side of Interstate 5.

The Site was used for warehousing of construction materials, supplies, and replacement parts; manufacturing of specialized components; refurbishing of parts and equipment; as well as staff training. The Site is developed with buildings, storage areas, pavement, and a vegetated area along the northeastern boundary of Parcel 6. Industrial chemicals, petroleum products, and other compounds (e.g., pesticides) have been used at the Site.

With SONGS operations permanently discontinued effective in June 2013, the Mesa Facility was no longer needed and preparations to return the leased land to the Navy were initiated. Materials and equipment were removed or auctioned and most of the buildings were demolished, leaving the footings and foundation slabs in place. Some of the buildings and most of the utility infrastructure were left intact for potential reuse at the request of the Navy. The environmental evaluations of Parcels 6 and 7 were undertaken, beginning in 2014, to assess the environmental status of the property and provide recommendations to address any related conditions that could affect the unrestricted future land-use of the property. The Site has been the subject of multiple environmental remediation-related investigations of soil, soil vapor, and groundwater. The results of these investigations were summarized and presented in the CRSR, which also included a Human and Ecological Health Assessment (HERA). The CRSR concluded that a removal action was warranted based on concentrations of lead and hexavalent chromium in soil and PCE in soil vapor at concentrations that exceed DTSC screening values for unrestricted use.

**Project Activities:** Three remedial alternatives were evaluated and scored based on the following criteria: effectiveness, implementability, and cost. Based on the results of this evaluation, removal of contaminated soil and off-site disposal was selected as the most appropriate remedial alternative. This alternative consists of the excavation, removal, and off-site disposal of approximately 5,400 CY of shallow soils. The cost to implement the RAW is under \$1,000,000.

Prior to excavation activities to remove PCE contamination in soil gas, additional delineation drilling and soil gas sampling will be conducted to more precisely define the excavation boundaries. Utility clearance by geophysical survey and Underground Service Alert notification will be conducted by the contractor prior to initiation of soil-disturbing activities. The removal area has not been identified as an area of cultural resource significance. Site workers will be informed of the potential for discovering important paleontological, prehistorical, Native American, or historical resources below the ground surface. Based on the previous development on the Site, the likelihood of artifacts remaining in place is thought to be low.

A small area of the planned removal may include coastal sage scrub, habitat for the California Gnatcatcher, which is a protected bird species. A biological survey will be conducted prior to any field activities to confirm that the soil removal will not negatively impact sensitive resources and a biological observer may be present during excavation.

The soil removal will be performed by a contractor with typical earth moving equipment (loaders, backhoes, excavators, etc.). Soils will be stockpiled onsite or loaded directly onto trucks for export to an appropriately permitted facility. Any stockpiled soil will be stored on, and covered by, plastic sheeting in onsite stockpile staging areas. Confirmation sampling will be performed post-removal in the areas where lead and hexavalent chromium are the constituents of concern (the limits of PCE removal areas will be determined beforehand). Clean fill material from an offsite source will be used to backfill the excavation.

The RAW sets cleanup goals protective of unrestricted future use of the Site. Determining whether the remedial action objective for Site's shallow soils has been achieved will involve a statistical evaluation in which the results of confirmation sampling will be compared to the screening criteria for constituents of concern in soils. A post-remediation health risk assessment will be performed to document that the residual levels of contaminants remaining at the Site are safe and acceptable for future unrestricted land use.

Specific enforceable environmental safeguards and monitoring procedures will be made a condition of project approval to ensure that impacts to the environment are less than significant, including: an approved Excavation Plan, Health and Safety Plan, and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan; as well as compliance with Project Quality Assurance requirements, and San Diego Air Pollution Control District (APCD) Rules 50 (visible emissions), 51 (Nuisance), and 55 (dust control),.

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

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Southern California Edison

**Exempt Status:** (check one)

- ☐ Ministerial [PRC, Sec. 21080(b)(1); CCR, Sec. 15268]
- ☐ Declared Emergency [PRC, Sec. 21080(b)(3); CCR, Sec. 15269(a)]
- ☐ Emergency Project [PRC, Sec. 21080(b)(4); CCR, Sec. 15269(b)(c)]
- ☒ Categorical Exemption: CCR Title 14, Sec. 15330
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions: [State Code Section Number]
- ☐ Common Sense Exemption [CCR, Sec. 15061(b)(3)]

**Exemption Title:** Minor actions to prevent, minimize, stabilize, mitigate or eliminate the release or exposure risks associated with contaminated shallow soils on site.

**Reasons Why Project is Exempt:**

1. The project is a minor action designed to prevent, minimize, stabilize, mitigate, or eliminate the release or threat of release of hazardous waste or hazardous substances.
2. The project will not exceed \$1 million in cost.
3. The project will be consistent with applicable State and local environmental permitting requirements.
4. The project does not involve the onsite use of a hazardous waste incinerator or thermal treatment unit.
5. The project does not involve the relocation of residences or businesses.
6. The project does not involve the potential release into the air of volatile organic compounds as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 25123.6.
7. The exceptions pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15300.2 have been addressed as follows:
  - a. Cumulative Impact. The project will not result in cumulative impacts because it is designed to be a short-term final remedy that would not lead to a succession of projects of the same type in the same place over time.

- b. Significant Effect. The environmental safeguards and monitoring procedures that are enforceable and made a condition of project approval will prevent unusual circumstances from occurring so that there is no possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.
- c. Scenic Highways. The project will not damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, because it is not located within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.
- d. Hazardous Waste Sites. The project is not located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.  
(<http://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/default.htm>)
- e. Historical Resources. The project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource at the Site because there are none at the Site

Evidence to support the above reasons is documented in the project file record at:

Department of Toxic Substances Control  
File Room  
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630

DTSC EnviroStor website [https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/screens/menu?global\\_id=60002258](https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/screens/menu?global_id=60002258)

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**TO BE COMPLETED BY OPR ONLY**

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Date Received for Filing and Posting at OPR:

**FEB 10 2020**

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**