

DOE-ID NEPA CX DETERMINATION

SECTION A. Project Title: Upgrade of Universal Element Tester for Nuclear Energy Infrastructure Research– University of Houston

SECTION B. Project Description

The University of Houston proposes to purchase and install a computer control system and tele-participation computer system to upgrade the universal element tester that is used to perform biaxial or triaxial tests on full-size concrete elements with load-control and strain-control loading modes. The upgrade will allow further studies of the behavior of reinforced concrete, prestressed concrete, steel plate concrete, and advanced materials used in nuclear power containments.

SECTION C. Environmental Aspects / Potential Sources of Impact

The action consists of purchasing equipment to be used in research and teaching. The action would not create additional environmental impacts above those already occurring at the university.

SECTION D. Determine the Level of Environmental Review (or Documentation) and Reference(s): Identify the applicable categorical exclusion from 10 CFR 1021, Appendix B, give the appropriate justification, and the approval date.

Note: For Categorical Exclusions (CXs) the proposed action must not: 1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environmental, safety, and health, including requirements of DOE orders; 2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities; 3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that pre-exist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; 4) adversely affect environmentally sensitive resources. In addition, no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal exist which would affect the significance of the action, and the action is not “connected” nor “related” (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1) and (2), respectively) to other actions with potentially or cumulatively significant impacts.

References: B1.31 Installation or relocation and operation of machinery and equipment (including, but not limited to, laboratory equipment, electronic hardware, manufacturing machinery, maintenance equipment, and health and safety equipment), provided that uses of the installed or relocated items are consistent with the general missions of the receiving structure. Covered actions include modifications to an existing building, within or contiguous to a previously disturbed or developed area, that are necessary for equipment installation and relocation. Such modifications would not appreciably increase the footprint or height of the existing building or have the potential to cause significant changes to the type and magnitude of environmental impacts.

Justification: The activity consists of purchasing equipment to upgrade for testing concrete for research and educational purposes.

Is the project funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) Yes No

Approved by Jason Sturm, DOE-ID Deputy NEPA Compliance Officer on 09/03/2014