Sources for Further Reading on Toxicity:

- QESST (Engineering Research Center at Arizona State University): Thin Film CdTe Photovoltaics and the U.S. Energy Transition in 2020, June 2020
- International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA): End-of-life management: Solar Photovoltaic Panels, June 2016
- Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI): Solar PV Module End of Life: Options and Knowledge Gaps for Utility-Scale Plants, December 2018
- EPRI: Feasibility Study on Photovoltaic Module Recycling in the United States, April 2018
- EPRI: Solar Photovoltaics: End-of-Life Management Infographic, March 2021
- National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL): A Circular Economy for Solar Photovoltaic System Materials, April 2021
- Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA): SEIA National PV Recycling Program, with factsheet, checklist, and peer-reviewed article, (accessed December 2021)
- North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality: Final Report on the Activities Conducted to Establish a Regulatory Program for the Management and Decommissioning of Renewable Energy Equipment, January 2021

Electromagnetic Fields (EMF)

Exposure to EMF, or electric and magnetic fields, is a fact of everyday modern life. Electromagnetic fields come in many different frequencies, ranging from grid electricity with a frequency of 60 hertz to x-rays and gamma rays that are billions of billions of times faster. The faster the frequency, the stronger the EMF. The EMF coming from grid electricity, including from the inverters, transformers, and AC wires to be used at the Morven Solar project, has a much lower frequency and therefore much lower energy than the EMF from cell phones, wireless internet, and even radio and TV towers. The solar panels and the wire connecting them to the inverters carry direct current electricity, which has a frequency of zero hertz, and thus produces static electric and magnetic fields. The voltage and current of these circuits are both relatively low, so the electric and magnetic fields they produce are both rather weak. The static magnetic fields the panels generate are much weaker than the earth's natural static magnetic field, which can be demonstrated by a compass still pointing north when placed near the panels.

Electric fields are created around wires and equipment wherever a voltage exists, however it is easily blocked with common materials such as metal, wood, and soil. The WHO in 2005 concluded that there were no substantive health issues related to electric fields (0 to 100,000 Hz) at levels generally encountered by members of the public.[17] The proposed solar project does not produce any voltages higher than the existing power lines, and therefore does not produce any electric fields not generally encountered by members of the public.

Magnetic fields are the other aspect of EMF, and they are created by electric current. Typical Americans are exposed to about 1 milligauss of magnetic field from grid electricity on average during their day, primarily from sources at homes and work[18]. The primary source of magnetic fields in a solar facility are the inverters and the short section of wires between each central inverter and its step-up transformer. To convert direct current to alternating current, inverters use a series of solid-state switches that turn off and on several thousand times a second, creating EMF in the range of 5 kHz to 100 kHz, which is much faster than the 60 Hz of grid electricity but still much slower than even the lowest frequency radio signals. The highest electrical current of any portion of the solar facility occurs in the inverters, ISU transformers, and the few feet of wire between them, making this the source for the strongest magnetic fields in the facility. Yet, because the strength of a magnetic field decreases dramatically with increasing distance from the source, these magnetic fields only extend about 100-300 feet from the inverter and ISU transformer, which is less than the distance from each inverter/transformer to any neighboring residential property lines, at which point the magnetic fields would be expected to measure less than 0.5

[17] WHO factsheet: Electromagnetic fields and public health, Exposure to extremely low frequency fields, June 2007, www.who.int/teams/environment-climate-change-and-health/radiation-and-health/non-ionizing/exposure-to-extremely-low-frequency-field

[18] World Health Organization (WHO), webpage: Electromagnetic Fields – Typical exposure levels at home and in the environment, www.who.int/peh-emf/about/WhatisEMF/en/index3.html