STATE OF CALIFORNIA

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., *Governor*

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

December 1, 2015

Jerry Schmitz, P.E.
SouthWest Gas Corporation
Vice President, Engineering
5421 Spring Mountain Road
Las Vegas, NV 89150

Re: Increased Hazards Due to El Niño

This year's El Niño is expected to be among the strongest on record. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center and the National Weather Service are forecasting greater-than-average rainfall for virtually all of California. Preparing for an event such as El Niño is crucial and beneficial not only to utilities, but also to all of Californians. The California Public Utilities Commission's Safety and Enforcement Division (SED) is concerned about the devastation and damages that could result from El Niño; therefore, I hereby direct you to:

- Identify any specific areas of concerns relating to El Niño, either particular areas or particular equipment or infrastructure, that your company has identified, and the steps being taken to address those concerns.
- Identify any specific actions or approvals that your company expects to request from the CPUC to prepare for, or respond, to El Niño and related conditions.
- Describe any inventories build up that is specific for El Niño.
- Describe any agreements with other agencies and utilities to address potential damages and hazards that are caused by El Niño.
- Provide us all written plans detailing your company's preparations for El Niño and related conditions, including heavy rain and snow, mud or debris slides, flooding, river scour, river channel migration, and erosion.

It is vital and crucial that your company be prepared to help minimize the potential damages of an event such as El Niño. Please provide us with all the requested information by December 17, 2015. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Kenneth Bruno at (213) 576-6297, or kenneth.bruno@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Elizaveta Malashenko, Director
Safety and Enforcement Division
California Public Utilities Commission

Cc: Edward Randolph, CPUC, Director Energy Division
Peter Allen, CPUC, Deputy Director SED
Cynthia Walker, CPUC, Deputy Director Energy Division
Kenneth Bruno, CPUC, Program Manager GSRB