

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



August 24, 2012

Dennis Reed
Line Superintendent
Surprise Valley Electrification Corp.
516 U.S. Hwy 395 E
Alturas, CA 96101

EA2012-015

SUBJECT: Audit of Surprise Valley Electrification Corp.

Dear Mr. Reed:

On behalf of the Electric Safety and Reliability Branch of the California Public Utilities Commission, Ivan Garcia and Ryan Yamamoto conducted an audit of Surprise Valley Electrification Corp. (SVEC) from June 18, 2012 to June 20, 2012. The audit included a review of SVEC's maintenance records and inspections of SVEC's facilities.

During the audit, my staff identified violations of one or more General Orders. A copy of the audit summary itemizing the violations is enclosed. Please advise me no later than September 28, 2012, by electronic or hard copy, of all corrective measures taken by SVEC to remedy and prevent such violations.

If you have any questions concerning this audit you can contact, Ryan Yamamoto of my staff at (415) 703-2192 or ryan.yamamoto@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Stepanian".

Raffy Stepanian, P.E.
Program Manager
Electric Safety and Reliability Branch
Consumer Protection and Safety Division
California Public Utilities Commission

Enclosures: CPUC Audit Summary

CC: Raymond Fugere, Program and Project Supervisor, CPUC
Alok Kumar, Senior Utilities Engineer (Supervisor), CPUC
Ivan Garcia, Utilities Engineer, CPUC
Ryan Yamamoto, Utilities Engineer, CPUC

Audit Summary

GO 165, Section III-B, - Standards for Inspection, states in part:

“Each utility subject to this General Order shall conduct inspections of its distribution facilities, as necessary, to ensure reliable, high-quality, and safe operation, but in no case may the period between inspections (measured in years) exceed the time specified in Table 1.”

SVEC did not have sufficient records to demonstrate compliance with the patrol, detailed, and intrusive intervals requirements of GO 165.

GO 165, Section III-C, – Record Keeping, states in part:

“For all inspections records shall specify the circuit, area, facility or equipment inspected, the inspector, the date of the inspection, and any problems (or items requiring corrective action) identified during each inspection, as well as the scheduled date of corrective action.”

SVEC did not document all violations of General Orders 95 and 128 during its inspections. Additionally, all violations that were discovered by SVEC were not scheduled for corrective action.

GO 165, Section III-D, - Reporting, states in part:

“By July 1st each utility subject to this General Order shall submit an annual report for the previous year under penalty of perjury. The report shall list four categorical types of inspections: Patrols, Overhead Detailed, Underground Detailed and Wood Pole Intrusive. The report shall denote the total units of work by inspection type for the reporting period and the number of outstanding (not completed) inspections within the same reporting period for each of the four categories.”

SVEC has not submitted any annual reports to the Commission. Annual reports must be submitted to the Commission by July 1st.

GO 95 , Rule 18-A1a, - Resolution of Safety Hazards and GO 95 Nonconformances, states in part:

“Each company (including utilities and CIPs) is responsible for taking appropriate corrective action to remedy Safety Hazards and GO 95 nonconformances posed by its facilities.”

SVEC did not document, schedule for correction and correct all Safety Hazards received from other companies.

GO 95, Rule 18-A2a - Resolution of Safety Hazards and GO 95 Nonconformances, states in part:

“All companies shall establish an auditable maintenance program for their facilities and lines.”

SVEC does not have an auditable maintenance program.

GO 95, Rule 18B, - Notification of Safety Hazards, states in part:

“If a company, while performing inspections of its facilities, discovers a safety hazard(s) on or near a communications facility or electric facility involving another company, the inspecting company shall notify the other company and/or facility owner of such safety hazard(s) no later than 10 business days after the discovery. To the extent the inspecting company cannot determine the facility owner/operator; it shall contact the pole owner(s), who shall be responsible for promptly notifying the company owning/operating the facility with the safety hazard(s), normally not to exceed five business days after being notified of the safety hazard. The notification shall be documented and such documentation must be preserved by all parties for at least ten years.”

SVEC does not address notification of safety hazards as required by GO 95.

GO 95, Rule 44.2, Additional Construction, States:

“Any entity planning the addition of facilities that materially increase vertical, transverse or longitudinal loading on a structure shall perform a loading calculation to ensure that the addition of the facilities will not reduce the safety factors below the values specified by Rule 44.3. Such entity shall maintain these pole loading calculations for ten years and shall provide such information to authorized joint use pole occupants and the Commission upon request.”

Pole load calculations performed by SVEC did not contain accurate information; specifically, the data used in the calculation did not accurately reflect the facilities in the field. Pole loading calculations need to use accurate information.

1.	Location:	Anza Road (SVEC pole #120)
	Previous SVEC Visit Details:	N/A (No records available)
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	06/19/12
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p data-bbox="191 562 597 596"><u>Missing High Voltage Sign</u></p> <p data-bbox="191 600 993 634">GO 95, Rule 51.6-A, High Voltage Marking states in part:</p> <p data-bbox="324 667 1471 743"><i>“Poles which support line conductors of more than 750 volts shall be marked with high voltage signs....”</i></p> <p data-bbox="191 781 1058 814">At this location, SVEC’s pole was missing a high voltage sign.</p>		

2.	Location:	Anza Road and Mission Road (SVEC pole #494)
	Previous SVEC Visit Details:	N/A (No record available)
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	06/19/12
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p data-bbox="191 562 597 594"><u>Missing High Voltage Sign</u></p> <p data-bbox="191 598 993 630">GO 95, Rule 51.6-A, High Voltage Marking states in part:</p> <p data-bbox="324 667 1469 741"><i>“Poles which support line conductors of more than 750 volts shall be marked with high voltage signs....”</i></p> <p data-bbox="191 779 1058 810">At this location, SVEC’s pole was missing a high voltage sign.</p> <p data-bbox="191 852 870 884"><u>Anchor Guy Touching Communication Cable</u></p> <p data-bbox="191 888 737 919">GO 95, Rule 38, Table 2 states in part:</p> <p data-bbox="324 961 1477 1140"><i>“The minimum vertical, horizontal or radial clearances of wires from other wires shall not be less than the values given in Table 2 and are based on a temperature of 60° F. and no wind. Conductors may be deadended at the crossarm or have reduced clearances at points of transposition, and shall not be held in violation of Table 2, Cases 8–15, inclusive.”</i></p> <p data-bbox="191 1182 1312 1213">At this location, SVEC’s anchor guy was in contact with a communication cable.</p>		

3.	Location:	Mission Road (SVEC pole #495)
	Previous SVEC Visit Details:	N/A (No record available)
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	06/19/12
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p><u>Missing High Voltage Sign</u> GO 95, Rule 51.6, A, High Voltage Marking states in part:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Poles which support line conductors of more than 750 volts shall be marked with high voltage signs....”</i></p> <p>At this location, SVEC’s pole was missing a high voltage sign.</p>		

4.	Location:	1158 Mission Road (SVEC pole #496)
	Previous SVEC Visit Details:	N/A (No record available)
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	06/19/12
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p><u>Missing High Voltage Sign</u> GO 95, Rule 51.6, A, High Voltage Marking states in part:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Poles which support line conductors of more than 750 volts shall be marked with high voltage signs....”</i></p> <p>At this location, SVEC’s pole was missing a high voltage sign.</p> <p><u>Ground Molding Missing</u> GO 95, Rule 54.6 B states in part:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“That portion of the ground wires attached on the face or back of wood crossarms or on the surface of wood poles and structures shall be covered by a suitable protective covering (see Rule 22.8)”</i></p> <p>At this location, SVEC’s ground wire was exposed.</p>		

5.	Location:	Big Sky (California Pines Vault #6)
	Previous SVEC Visit Details:	N/A (No records available)
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	06/19/12
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p><u>Vault Had Damaged Ownership Identification Signs</u> GO 128, Rule 17.8, Identification of Manholes, Handholes, Subsurface and Self-contained Surface-mounted Equipment Enclosures states:</p> <p><i>“Manholes, handholes , subsurface and self-contained surface-mounted equipment enclosures shall be marked as to ownership to facilitate identification by persons authorized to work therein and by other persons performing work in their vicinity.”</i></p> <p>At this location, SVEC’s vault had a damaged ownership identification sign.</p> <p><u>Vault Has Damaged High Voltage Signs</u> GO 128, Rule 35.3, Warning Signs states:</p> <p><i>“Warning signs indicating high voltage shall be installed on an interior surface, or barrier if present, inside the entrance of vaults, manholes, handholes, pad mounted transformer compartments, and other above ground enclosures containing exposed live parts above 750 volts. Such warning signs shall also be installed on an exterior surface of all such pad mounted transformer compartments and other above ground enclosures. Such signs shall be clearly visible to a person in position to open any such access door, other opening, or barrier.”</i></p> <p>At this location, SVEC’s vault had a damaged high voltage sign.</p>		

6.	Location:	585 Lake View Drive (Padmounted Transformer "NEW")
	Previous SVEC Visit Details:	N/A (No record available)
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	06/19/12
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p><u>Padmounted Transformer Missing Ownership</u> GO 128, Rule 17.8, Identification of Manholes, Handholes, Subsurface and Self-contained Surface-mounted Equipment Enclosures states:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"Manholes, handholes , subsurface and self-contained surface-mounted equipment enclosures shall be marked as to ownership to facilitate identification by persons authorized to work therein and by other persons performing work in their vicinity."</i></p> <p>At this location, SVEC's padmounted transformer had no ownership identification sign.</p>		

7.	Location:	Near Modoc Substation (SVEC pole #023)
	Previous SVEC Visit Details:	04/02/12
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	06/19/12
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p><u>Missing High Voltage Sign</u> GO 95, Rule 51.6, A, High Voltage Marking states in part:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"Poles which support line conductors of more than 750 volts shall be marked with high voltage signs...."</i></p> <p>At this location, SVEC's pole was missing a high voltage sign.</p>		