

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



December 31, 2013

Karuna Warren
Operations and Planning Manager
Bear Valley Electric Service (BVES)
P.O.Box 1547
42020 Garstin Drive
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315

EA2013-013

SUBJECT: Audit of BVES in Big Bear Lake

Dear Mr. Warren:

On behalf of the Electric Safety and Reliability Branch of the California Public Utilities Commission, Zelalem Ewnetu and Koko Tomassian of my staff conducted an audit of BVES in Big Bear Lake from November 18, 2013 to November 22, 2013. The audit included a review of BVES' records and field inspections of BVES' 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 February 14, 2014, by electronic or hard copy, of all corrective measures taken by BVES to remedy and prevent such violations.

If you have any questions, you can contact Zelalem Ewnetu at (213) 576-7042 or zel@cpuc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Raymond G. Fugere".

Raymond G. Fugere, P.E.
Program & Project Supervisor
Electric and Communication Facility Safety Section
Safety and Enforcement Division

Enclosure: Audit Summary

CC: Elizaveta Malashenko, Deputy Director, Safety and Enforcement Division
Fadi Daye, P.E., Senior Utilities Engineer Supervisor, CPUC – LA

AUDIT SUMMARY

The following violations were not documented and/or addressed by BVES during its last detailed inspection as required by General Order 165:

1.	Location:	Pole Number 11689BV
	Previous BVES Visit Details:	05/01/13
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	11/19/13
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<u>Unremoved Abandoned Facility</u>		
General Order 95, Rule 31.6, states in part:		
<i>Lines or portions of lines permanently abandoned shall be removed by their owners so that such lines shall not become a public nuisance or a hazard to life or property.</i>		
An abandoned section of a riser near the bottom of the pole was protruding out from the ground.		
2.	Location:	Pole Number 12075BV
	Previous BVES Visit Details:	03/29/13
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	11/19/13
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<u>Illegible High Voltage Sign</u>		
General Order 95, Rule 51.6-A, states in part:		
<i>Poles which support line conductors of more than 750 Volts shall be marked with high voltage signs...with letters cut out therefrom and clearly legible.</i>		
The high voltage sign on the pole was damaged and illegible.		

3.	Location:	Pole Number 10981BV
	Previous BVES Visit Details:	03/27/13
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	11/19/13
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p data-bbox="256 625 553 657"><u>Absence of Pole Steps</u></p> <p data-bbox="256 699 857 730">General Order 95, Rule 91.3-A1, states in part:</p> <p data-bbox="337 772 1498 846"><i>All jointly used poles which support supply conductors shall be provided with pole steps if vertical runs or risers are attached.</i></p> <p data-bbox="256 888 1125 919">The pole was jointly owned with a riser and did not have pole steps.</p>		

4.	Location:	Pole Number 9044BV
	Previous BVES Visit Details:	03/27/13
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	11/19/13
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p data-bbox="256 1297 558 1329"><u>Absence of Pole Steps</u></p> <p data-bbox="256 1371 862 1402">General Order 95, Rule 91.3-A1, states in part:</p> <p data-bbox="337 1444 1503 1518"><i>All jointly used poles which support supply conductors shall be provided with pole steps if vertical runs or risers are attached.</i></p> <p data-bbox="256 1560 1130 1591">The pole was jointly owned with a riser and did not have pole steps.</p>		

5.	Location:	Pole Number 12368BV
	Previous BVES Visit Details:	06/21/13
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	11/19/13
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<u>Conductor Clearance</u>		
<p><i>General Order 95, Rule 84.8-D4, requires utilities to maintain one foot of clearance between their electric and communication service drops within fifteen feet of buildings.</i></p> <p>Electric and communication service drops were touching near the customer's building.</p>		

6.	Location:	Pole Number 10691BV
	Previous BVES Visit Details:	04/01/13
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	11/19/13
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<u>Broken Lashing Wires</u>		
<p>General Order 95, Rule 18-B, states in part:</p> <p><i>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 discovery.</i></p> <p>During the audit, ESRB staff discovered broken communication cable lashing wires. BVES did not document the safety hazard and notify the communication company.</p>		

7.	Location:	Pole located at the intersection of Summit and Big Bear Boulevard (No ID)
	Previous BVES Visit Details:	N/A
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	11/19/13
	Explanation of Violation(s):	
	<p><u>Illegible High Voltage Sign</u></p> <p>General Order 95, Rule 51.6-A, 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...with letters cut out therefrom and clearly legible.</i></p> <p>The high voltage sign on the pole was damaged and illegible.</p>	

In addition to the above violations, my staff discovered that the pole loading calculation that BVES is performing are not accurate. The following is a sample of our discovery:

During validation of pole loading data for poles numbered 1518BV, 31627CIT and 12159BV, ESRB staff identified the following areas of concern on the BVES data collection and calculation scheme:

- The neutral conductors for the 4 kV circuits were not included in all the calculations provided.
- The ground clearance of the 4kV conductors was not accurate.
- A transformer attachment was not considered for pole loading calculation of pole number 12159BV.
- All three poles supported two 4 kV circuits, however, BVES assumed one circuit only during loading calculations

General Order 95, Rule 44.1, states in part:

Lines and elements of lines upon installation or reconstruction, shall provide as a minimum the safety factors specified in Table 4...The design shall consider the structural loading and mechanical strength requirements of all supply and communication facilities planned to occupy the structure.

BVES is in violation of General Order 95, Rule 44.1, for failing to include all the relevant facilities when performing safety factor calculations.