

**CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Safety and Enforcement Division
Gas Safety and Reliability Branch
Gas Engineering and Compliance Section**

Incident Investigation Report

Report Date: 05/29/2020

Incident Number: G 20200117-2986

Utility: Southern California Gas SoCalGas

Date and Time of the Incident: 1/17/2020, 4:10:00 AM

Location of the Incident: [REDACTED]

Exeter ,CA

County: Tulare

Summary of Incident:

On January 17, 2020, at approximately 0411 hours, a structural fire occurred and resulted in damage to a SoCalGas Meter Assembly (MSA). The structural fire melted two-meter manifolds and caused a leaking service valve, resulting in a gas release into the atmosphere and service interruption to two (2) customers. There were no injuries or fatalities reported as a result of the incident. This incident was reported to the CPUC due to the gas release and media coverage. SED's investigation found that the incident was caused by a structure fire originated inside a house. The release of natural gas from SoCalGas' facilities was secondary to the fire. Therefore, SED did not find any GO 112-F, Reference Title 49 CFR, Part 192 violations by SoCalGas.

Casualties: *Fatalities:* 0 *Injuries:* 0

Property Damage: \$890.00

Utility Facilities involved:

Pipe Material = Steel, Pipe Size = 0.75 (inches), MAOP = 25 (psi), Operating Pressure = 20 (psi)

Witnesses:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Phone</i>
1 Gordon Kuo	CPUC Investigator	N/A
2 Ali Matin	Pipeline Safety and Complai	(909) 919-0463
3 Captain Bear	Captain Fire Investigation	(559) 802-9810

Evidence:

<i>Source</i>	<i>Description</i>
1 Ali Matin	Initial Form 420 on 1/21/20
2 Ali Matin	Final Form 420 on 2/15/20
3 Ali Matin	Preset Data Response 2/15/20
4 Ali Matin	Photos and Leak Survey Map on 2/15/20
5 Ali Matin	Data Response on 2/15/20
6 Ali Matin	Data Response on 3/13/20
7 Ali Matin	Abandonment Records and Call records on 3/13/20

Observations and Findings:

On January 17, 2020, at approximately 0411 hours, a structural fire damaged two-meter manifolds and a SoCalGas service valve. This resulted in gas release into the atmosphere and service interruption to two (2) customers. The total cost of repair to SoCalGas's facilities was estimated to be in the amount of \$890. There were no injuries or fatalities reported as the result of this incident. The area was blocked off, traffic was rerouted, and the building was evacuated. This incident was reported to both the CPUC and DOT due to gas release and possible damaged over \$50,000. In addition, a DOT incident number, NRC 1268920, was issued. The incident was rescinded from being a DOT reportable on the same day when it was discovered that the SoCalGas Facilities were secondary to the fire.

On January 17, 2020, SED contacted the Exeter Fire Department and talked to Captain Bear. Captain Bear stated that the cause of the fire was not related to SoCalGas's gas facilities.

On February 15, 2020, SED received the final 420 form from SoCalGas Representative Ali Matin. Mr. Matin stated in the form that as per Battalion Chief Mark Fleming, the gas company was not responsible for the cause of the fire. The structure fire damaged two-meter manifolds and a SoCalGas service valve. The SoCalGas crew took underground samples and performed a post incident leakage

survey and found zero gas indication. SoCalGas's crews cut back the gas service line to the property line and will restore service upon completion of structure repairs. Attached with the form where photos of the incident and previous leak survey showing no leaks.

On March 20, 2020, SED received another data response from Mr. Matin. Mr. Matin stated that a partial abandonment has been done at the location, with a full abandonment to be done under work order 540000380916. Attached with this response was the repair order and the operator qualifications for the employee who did the repair order. Also attached was the CSO leak call records, which did not show any calls related to that location 15 days before the incident.

On March 18, 2020, SED received a fire report from the Tulare fire department confirming that the fire originated from a small room off the laundry room.

From the phone interview with Fire Investigators, along with the fire report, SED's investigation found that the release of natural gas from SoCalGas' facilities was secondary to the fire. Therefore, SED did not find any GO 112-F, Reference Title 49 CFR, Part 192 violations by SoCalGas.

Preliminary Statement of Pertinent General Order, Public Utilities Code Requirements, and/or Federal Requirements:

None

Conclusion:

Based on the investigation, SED found that the incident was caused by a structure fire originated inside a house. The release of natural gas from SoCalGas' facilities was secondary to the fire. Therefore, SED did not find any GO 112-F, Reference Title 49 CFR, Part 192 violations by SoCalGas.