

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

Incident Investigation Report

**Report Date:** 03/05/2024

**Incident Number:** G 20230830-3591

**Utility:** Southern California Gas      SoCalGas

**Date and Time of the Incident:** 8/30/2023, 6:15:00 AM

**Location of the Incident:** Nevada Ave & 30th Ave  
Lemoore ,CA  
County: Kings

**Summary of Incident:**

On August 30, 2023, at approximately 0615 hours, a third-party contractor, Stone Land Company, struck a SoCalGas 20-inch transmission line while farming. This incident resulted in damage to the transmission line and release of 1.85mm cubic feet of natural gas. The incident became DOT and CPUC reportable due to the cost of damage exceeding \$344,086. SED's investigation found that the incident was caused by the contractor failing to obtain a valid USA ticket prior to excavation. Therefore, SED did not find any violations of GO 112-F, Reference Title 49 CFR by SoCalGas.

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

**Property Damage:** \$344,086.00

**Utility Facilities involved:**

Pipe Material = Steel, Pipe Size = 20 (inches), MAOP = 400 (psi), Operating Pressure = 367 (psi)

**Witnesses:**

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Phone</i>
1	Jordan Lin	CPUC Investigator	N/A
2	[REDACTED]	SoCalGas FOS	
3	[REDACTED]	SoCalGas DOM	
4	[REDACTED]	Executive Assistant Undergr	(925) 222-6517
5	[REDACTED]	Pipeline Safety & Complianc	(978) 719-3485
6	[REDACTED]	Stone Land Company	(559) 945-2205
7	[REDACTED]	Pipeline Safety & Complianc	(213) 264-6814

**Evidence:**

	<i>Source</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	[REDACTED]	Interview on 8/30/2023
2	[REDACTED]	Interview on 8/30/2023
3	[REDACTED]	Data Request received 8/31/2023
4	[REDACTED]	Initial 420 Report received 8/31/2023
5	[REDACTED]	Data Request received 9/8/2023
6	[REDACTED]	Data Request received 9/9/2023
7	[REDACTED]	Form 7100.2 received 9/29/2023
8	[REDACTED]	Supplemental Form 7100.2 received 11/1/2023
9	[REDACTED]	Data Request received 11/9/2023
10	[REDACTED]	Data Request received 2/2/2024
11	[REDACTED]	Data Request received 3/1/2024

**Observations and Findings:**

On August 30, 2023, at approximately 0615 hours, a third-party contractor, Stone Land Company, struck a SoCalGas 20-inch transmission line while farming at Nevada Avenue & 30th Avenue, Lemoore, Kings County. This resulted in an unintentional release of natural gas and damage to the transmission line. There were no injuries, fatalities, or third-party property damage reported. This incident became reportable to DOT and the CPUC due to release of gas and potential damages exceeding \$344,086. The DOT incident number is 1377699.

On August 30, 2023, at approximately 1630 hours, SED arrived at the incident site to conduct a field investigation including interviewing the field personnel. SED observed two SoCalGas' pipeline markers that were visible from the damage location, at approximately 1250ft and 1700ft away on either direction. Upon inspection, these two pipeline markers were found to be in good condition and displayed the required information. There were no USA markings or delineation observed at the excavation site. Per SoCalGas' field personnel, there was no USA ticket requested for excavation in the area prior to the incident. In addition, SoCalGas' repair plan is to weld on a patch to prevent air/gas mixture, then cut out damaged segment and replace it with a new section of pipe. The third party responsible for the damage was not on scene, but contact information was obtained. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] of SoCalGas informed SED that a third-party contractor, Stone Land Company, was operating farming equipment when they struck SoCalGas' transmission pipeline L800. They provided a summary regarding the events that occurred after the incident. SoCalGas was notified at 0654 hours on August 30, 2023, and SoCalGas personnel arrived on scene at 0855 hours. SoCalGas controlled the gas flow and isolated the damage segment by shutting the transmission shutoff valves 800-9.74-0 and 800-7.04-0 at 1000 hours. SoCalGas then began a blowdown procedure at 1020 hours and concluded blowdown at 1415 hours. At approximately 1610 hours, SoCalGas crew immediately began excavation on the damaged segment.

On August 31, 2023, at 1458 hours, SED received a data response from [REDACTED] of Underground Service Alert. According to the data response, Stone Land Company did not have a USA ticket before the date of the incident.

On August 31, 2023, at 1554 hours, [REDACTED] of SoCalGas submitted the initial CPUC 420 Report to SED. With that report, [REDACTED] stated that the service was restored on August 31, 2023, at 1215 hours. Additionally, all repairs have been completed on the same day. The farming equipment that had damaged the transmission line was a ripper.

On September 8, 2023, at 0727 hours, [REDACTED] provided additional information in a data response. [REDACTED] provided pictures of the as found pipeline marker that was located within the line of sight of the incident location. SED observed from the pictures that the line marker is readable and has the correct information.

On September 9, 2023, at 1010 hours, SED received a data response from [REDACTED]

██████████ of Stone Land Company. ██████████ stated that they were ripping the field when their tractor operator lifted the ripper up to cross over the gas line. Though a hydraulic cylinder broke, causing one side of the ripper to fall onto the ground and damaged the top of the gas line. ██████████ stated that after hitting the line, they called the emergency number located on the pipeline markers. The incident occurred around 0615 hours and nobody was injured from the incident. ██████████. ██████████ said that he did not have a USA ticket and was unaware that they were required to call 811. ██████████ also provided pictures of the tractor, ripper, and the pipeline marker.

On September 29, 2023, at 1312 hours, ██████████ of SoCalGas submitted the PHMSA F 7100.2 Form to SED. The report states that the total damage cost was \$344,086. The estimated volume of gas released unintentionally was 1,850.00 thousand standard cubic feet (mcf) and the estimated volume of intentional and controlled release/blowdown was 831.00 mcf. The recorded depth of cover for the pipe is 54-inches.

On November 1, 2023, at 0735 hours, ██████████ resubmitted the PHMSA F 7100.2 Form to SED. The form was updated to reclassify the apparent cause to G3 – excavation damage from the original cause of G4 – Other Outside Force Damage. On November 9, 2023, at 1302 hours, ██████████ provided additional information in a data response. ██████████ stated that the repairs for the pipe consisted of cutting out the damaged pipe and having a new cylinder installed with two butt welds. ██████████ also provided the operator qualifications for the gas repair crew and records show that they were qualified at the time of the repair.

On February 2, 2024, at 1317 hours, ██████████ provided additional information in a data response. ██████████ provided information about the pipe specifications for the pipe segment before and after the incident. The pipe segment that was removed was approximately 16.52-feet, outside diameter of 20-inches, pipe specification was unknown, pipe grade is X60, and material was carbon steel. The new pipe segment that was installed is approximately 16.52-feet, outside diameter of 20-inches, pipe specification is 41-06.1, pipe grade is X65, and material is 20-inches Pipe Steel Bare API 5L GR-X65 SMLS OR SAW (0.375" W). The newly installed pipe was pre-tested on July 17, 2023. The test medium used was water and test pressures were a minimum of 2120 PSIG and maximum of 2220 PSIG. The test duration was 8 hours and 15 minutes.

On March 1, 2024, at 1427 hours, ██████████ provided additional information in a data response. ██████████ stated that the downstream customers experienced no service interruptions after the incident due to L800 having the ability to be back fed by another high-pressure pipeline, SL-38-504.

**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 third-party contractor failing to obtain a valid USA ticket prior to excavation. Therefore, SED did not find any violations of GO 112-F, Reference Title 49 CFR by SoCalGas.