

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

Incident Investigation Report

Report Date: 05/09/2014

Investigator: Alula Gebremedhin

Incident Number: G 20130808-01

Utility: Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)

Date and Time of the Incident: 8/8/2013, 4:37:00 AM

Location of the Incident: [REDACTED] Burlingame Avenue
Burlingame ,CA
County: San Mateo

Summary of Incident:

On August 8, 2013, at approximately 0437 hours, a third party contractor, JMB Construction, struck a PG&E 4-inch plastic gas distribution main with an excavator while excavating a trench to replace a sewer line. This resulted in damage to the distribution main, release of gas into the atmosphere, along with service interruption for five customers for approximately nine hours. This incident became reportable due to media at the scene.

From the evidence I collected, it is difficult to verify that the line was marked properly or not. The supporting documents provided by PG&E and the contractor show that the location was marked and based on these documents I did not find any General Order 112-E violation by PG&E.

Casualties: None reported

Property Damage: \$2,500.00

Utility Facilities involved:

Pipe Material = Plastic, Pipe Size = 4 (inches), MAOP = 60 (psi), Operating Pressure = 32 (psi)

Witnesses:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Phone</i>
1 Stephen Campbell	Project Engineer/ JMB Cons	415 559 7642/
2 Stuart Brickman	Owner of Burlingame Optical	650 465 7689

Evidence

<i>Source</i>	<i>Description</i>
1 PG&E	CPUC File No.420 Intial on 08/08/2013
2 PG&E	CPUC File No.420 Final on 09/06/2013
3 PG&E	Responses to Data Request on 08/23/13 & 04/22/14
4 JMB Construction	Emails and Photographs sent from Stephen Campbell
5 PG&E	USA Ticket # 83128 with Expiration date 08/22/2013
6 Stuart Brickman (Burlingame Optical Store Owner)	Pictures

Observations and Findings:

On August 8, 2013, at approximately 0437 hours, a third party contractor, JMB Construction, struck a PG&E 4-inch plastic gas distribution main with an excavator while excavating a trench to replace a sewer line. This resulted in damage to the distribution main, release of gas into the atmosphere, along with service interruption for five customers for approximately nine hours.

PG&E was notified of the incident at approximately 0437 hours. PG&E's gas service representative was on site at 0458. PG&E gas crew personnel arrived at the scene at 0540 hours and stopped the flow of gas at 0840 hours by squeezing the main at three locations. As a precaution, the Burlingame fire and police department blocked off traffic one block in each direction from the incident location.

This incident became reportable due to media at the scene. There were no injuries, fatalities, or ignition of gas reported as a result this incident.

At the time of the incident, the contractor had requested a USA ticket (#083128) with an expiration date of 08/22/2013.

On August 23, 2013 and April 22, 2014, PG&E responded to my data request that the line was properly marked and on August 8, 2013, the contractor stated in his email that the closest PG&E's marking was off by about 10 feet.

On the same day of the incident at approximately 1730 hours, I visited the incident location and discovered that all the repair work was completed and the trench was covered with steel plates. I could not align the existing markings, outside of the damaged area, to determine the correct location of the marking since I could not determine the actual location of the damage underneath the steel plates. There were PG&E's pipeline marking in the general area.

On the same day, I received 10 pictures from Stuart Brickman, a witness who owns a store nearby the location of the incident.

After carefully reviewing the 63 pictures (40 from PG&E, 13 from the contractor, and 10 from the witness) of the incident, the plat map of the pipeline around the incident location, and the notes from the USA ticket PG&E provided, it is still difficult to determine with certainty whether the line was marked properly or not.

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

None

Conclusion:

At this time of the investigation, it is inconclusive to say who was at fault; however, from the supportive documents I have collected, it appears that the general area was marked. I did not find any General Order 112-E violation by PG&E.