

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



October 12, 2012

Darrell Nyhouse
Utilities Services –Service Planner
City of Needles
817 Third Street
Needles, California 92363

EA2012-030

SUBJECT: Audit of the city of Needles' electric distribution facilities

Dear Mr. Nyhouse:

On behalf of the Electric Safety and Reliability Branch of the California Public Utilities Commission, Mahmoud Intably of my staff conducted an audit of the city of Needles' Electric Distribution Facilities from September 24, 2012, to September 27, 2012. The audit included review of records and field inspections of the city of Needles' electric distribution 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 November 16 2012, by electronic or hard copy, of all corrective measures taken by the city of Needles to remedy and prevent such violations.

If you have any questions, you can contact Mahmoud Intably at (213) 576-7016 or mahmoud.intably@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

Enclosure: Audit Summary

CC: Raymond Fugere, Program and Project Supervisor, CPUC

AUDIT SUMMARY

1.	Location:	The city of Needles – San Bernardino county
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	September 24 to September 26, 2012
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<u>Records Review and Inspections</u>		
<p>General Order (GO) 165, Section III-B, Standards for Inspection, states in part: <i>Each utility subject to this General Order shall conduct inspections of its distribution facilities, as necessary, to assure 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.</i></p> <p>The city of Needles does not inspect its facilities frequently; it only inspects facilities reported by the public, or its personnel, as having a problem. The city of Needles does not inspect its distribution facilities as specified in Table 1 of GO 165.</p> <p>GO 165, Section III-C, Record keeping, states in part: <i>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.</i></p> <p>The city of Needles does not inspect its facilities thoroughly. The city of Needles does not identify and document all GOs 95 & 128 violations during its detailed inspections. In addition, the city of Needles does not record the date of corrective action.</p> <p>GO 165, Section III-D, Reporting, states in part: <i>By July 1st each utility subject to this General Order shall submit an annual report for the previous year under penalty of perjury.</i></p> <p>The city of Needles does not submit an annual report to the Commission detailing its compliance with General Order 165.</p> <p>GO 95, Rule 18-B Notification of Safety Hazards states in part: <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 the discovery.</i></p> <p>The city of Needles does not notify communication companies of any safety hazards discovered on their facilities during its inspection.</p>		

2.	Location:	The city of Needles – San Bernardino County
	Date of CPUC Inspection:	September 24 to September 26, 2012
Explanation of Violation(s):		
<p data-bbox="191 501 824 537"><u>Unprotected Grounded Metal Operating Rods</u></p> <p data-bbox="191 575 854 611">GO 95, Rule 58.3-D1, Operating Mechanism states:</p> <p data-bbox="321 648 1477 758"><i>Grounded metal operating rods which pass through any supply or communication conductor level shall be protected with suitable protective covering for a vertical distance of 8 feet above and below or 6 feet horizontal from such levels.</i></p> <p data-bbox="191 798 1369 907">During the audit, we observed many line switches and line disconnects with grounded metal operating rods passing through the supply and communication conductor level that were not protected with a suitable protective covering.</p> <p data-bbox="191 947 331 982"><u>Pole Steps</u></p> <p data-bbox="191 1020 837 1056">GO 95, Rule 91.3-A1, Use Of Steps, states in part:</p> <p data-bbox="321 1094 1487 1165"><i>All jointly used poles which support supply conductors shall be provided with pole steps if vertical run or risers are attached to the surface of such pole.</i></p> <p data-bbox="191 1205 1422 1276">During the audit, we observed many jointly used poles with a vertical run or a riser without pole steps.</p> <p data-bbox="191 1316 574 1352"><u>Pad-mounted Transformers</u></p> <p data-bbox="191 1390 686 1425">GO 128, Rule 34.3-A, Strength, states:</p> <p data-bbox="321 1463 1433 1535"><i>The equipment case or enclosure shall be secured in place and of sufficient strength to resist entrance or damage to the equipment by unauthorized persons.</i></p> <p data-bbox="191 1575 1390 1646">During the audit, we observed many pad-mounted transformers that were not secured in place (bolted down).</p>		