

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SAFETY AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION
UTILITIES SAFETY BRANCH

RESOLUTION SU-39
February 23, 1996

R E S O L U T I O N

RESOLUTION SU-39. ORDER AUTHORIZING PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY TO DEVIATE FROM GENERAL ORDER 112-D SECTION 192.465(b), TO EXEMPT THE COMPANY FROM THE REQUIREMENT OF BI-MONTHLY RECTIFIER INSPECTION.

SUMMARY

1. By letter dated February 14, 1995, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) requested deviation from General Order 112-E, Section 192.465(b). This section requires bi-monthly rectifier inspections for corrosion control or cathodic protection. In this request, PG&E wants to conduct annual rectifier inspections, with the condition that tests on gas pipeline under cathodic protection be conducted bi-monthly.
2. The Utilities Safety Branch (USB) recommends that this deviation be granted to all gas utilities in California.

BACKGROUND

1. General Order 112-E, referencing CFR 49, Section 192.465(b) states:

"Each cathodic protection rectifier or other impressed current power source must be inspected on a two-month basis, within its anniversary month, but with intervals not exceeding 2-1/2 months, to insure that it is operating."

2. The deviation would allow PG&E to conduct rectifier inspections on an annual basis. The request is subject to the condition that PG&E conduct tests of pipeline under cathodic protection on a two-month basis, rather than on annual basis as required by General Order 112-E, Section 192.465(a). PG&E conducts the test via pipe-to-soil potential measurements.

DISCUSSION

PG&E requests this deviation on the basis of the following:

1. Pipe-to-soil potential measurements could be used to monitor the proper operation of rectifiers. A malfunction of the rectifier could be detected by pipe-to-soil measurements.
2. Pipe-to-soil potential is a measurement of the level of cathodic protection placed on the pipe systems.
3. Annual rectifier inspections are of adequate frequency to ensure proper operation over a long term.
4. Through pipe-to-soil potential measurements, rectifiers can be monitored bi-monthly. Further, pipe-to-soil potential is a direct measurement of the level of cathodic protection pipe systems whereas rectifier current output is an indirect measurement.
5. It is the opinion of other gas utilities in California that pipe-to-soil potential measurements, taken on two-month basis, would help in early detection of problems, thereby minimizing the damage caused by corrosion.

FINDINGS

1. The request for deviation is reasonable, and the deviation will not reduce the level of safety in the gas system.
2. Other gas utilities will benefit from such a deviation, and, as such, the deviation should be granted to all gas utilities in California.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

1. PG&E may deviate from Section 192.465(b) of General Order 112-E, and conduct annual rectifier inspections, provided that pipe-to-soil potential measurements are taken bi-monthly.
2. This Resolution is effective today.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on February 23, 1996. The following Commissioners approved it:

Wesley Franklin

WESLEY M. FRANKLIN
Executive Director

DANIEL Wm. FESSLER
President
P. GREGORY CONLON
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