

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CONSUMER SERVICES DIVISION
UTILITIES SAFETY BRANCH

RESOLUTION SU-43
Date: September 24, 1997

R E S O L U T I O N

RESOLUTION SU-43, ORDER DIRECTING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY TO PAY A PENALTY IN THE AMOUNT OF FORTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$40,000) FOR VIOLATIONS OF GENERAL ORDER 112-E.

SUMMARY

1. On September 27, 1996, a six-inch steel distribution line ruptured during a pressure test conducted by Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). The incident resulted in significant property damage and an injury.
2. The Utilities Safety Branch (USB) staff investigated the incident and its findings are summarized in an Investigation Report that was produced by USB in February 1997.
3. This resolution directs SoCalGas to pay a penalty in the amount of (\$40,000), as agreed upon on the attached Settlement, based on USB's Investigation Report recommendation.

BACKGROUND

1. Section 315 of the Public Utilities Code grants the Commission authority to investigate utility accidents.
2. Section 2107 of the Public Utilities Code grants the Commission authority to penalize a public utility which fails to comply with its decisions and rules with a fine up to twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for each violation.

DISCUSSION

1. SoCalGas did not completely purge the 6-inch pipeline prior to the pressure test allowing a combustible mixture of gas and air to form inside the pipeline. This is a violation of General Order (GO) 112-E, Reference Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (49 CFR), Part 192, Section 192.629.
2. SoCalGas performed welding on the pipeline while containing a combustible mixture causing an explosion. This is a violation of GO112-E, Reference 49 CFR, Part 192, Section 192.175.

FINDINGS

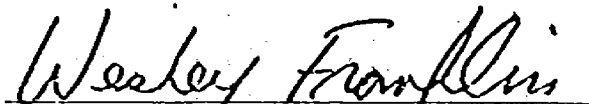
1. SoCalGas is in violation of Commission GO112-E, Reference 49 CFR, Part 192, Sections 192.629 and 192.751.

2. SoCalGas should be ordered to pay penalty, in accordance with Section 2107 of the Public Utilities Code, of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for each of the above violations.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

SoCalGas shall pay a penalty of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) to the Commission for remittance to the State Treasury within 30 (thirty) days of this Resolution.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on September 24, 1997. The following Commissioners approved it:


Wesley M. Franklin,
Executive Director

JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.
HENRY M. DUQUE
JOSIAH L. NEEPER
RICHARD A. BILAS
Commissioners

President P. Gregory Conlon, being necessarily absent, did not participate.