Pacific Gas and Electric Company®

Hydrostatic Pressure Testing
Briefing Paper

Pacific Gas and Electric Company's highest responsibility in 2011 and beyond is to enhance the safety of our operations. As part of this effort, we are planning to conduct safety tests known as hydrostatic pressure tests throughout our natural gas pipeline system. Hydrostatic testing is a proven method for verifying the capability of a natural gas pipeline to operate safely.

Locally, this work is scheduled to begin on April 18 and will take approximately two weeks. A map showing the local work locations is attached. This briefing paper describes the work to be performed and our plans for community outreach. Note that PG&E is prepared to adjust these plans to incorporate local agency input.

Hydrostatic Pressure Testing
PG&E will be performing a hydrostatic pressure test on a segment of natural gas pipeline. This involves pressurizing a section of pipe with water to a much higher level than the pipe will ever operate at with natural gas. This verifies the capability of a pipeline to safely operate and can also reveal weaknesses that could lead to defects and leaks. In order to perform a hydrostatic test, the pipeline has to be taken out of service for several days. However, during the work we will provide gas to customers from an alternate source, so service will not be interrupted.

Performing a hydrostatic test involves the following steps:

1) PG&E obtains all required work permits and coordinates activities with local agencies.
2) Gas is temporarily provided from an alternate source during the work to ensure uninterrupted service to customers.
3) The section of pipeline to be tested is temporarily removed from service, and safely vented of all natural gas.
4) The inside is mechanically cleaned prior to testing.
5) The section is sealed on both ends and filled completely with water.
6) The pipeline is pressurized to a specified pressure greater than normal operating pressure.
7) The test pressure is held and monitored for a set period of time, typically 8 hours.
8) If there is no significant loss of pressure, then the section of pipeline is emptied of water, dried thoroughly, and placed back into service.

Depending on the location of staging areas at both ends of the pipe segment to be tested, visible evidence of the work may include:

- Temporary traffic safety cones and/or detour signs
- PG&E and PG&E-contracted field personnel
- Testing equipment, such as above-ground pipes and valves
- Machinery and support equipment, such as excavators and water tanks

Depending on the location of gas vents and weather patterns, there may be a temporary gas odor. It is important to note that the odor will pose no risk to public health and safety. Nevertheless, as part of our standard safety protocols, we will be alerting the appropriate local emergency response agencies in advance of venting as well as the public.

There is also a remote chance that a segment of pipe may leak during the water pressure testing. If this were to occur, the result would be similar to a water main break (e.g., disturbed topsoil or buckled pavement with water

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seepage). PG&E will be closely monitoring the pipeline and pressure throughout the testing and will know immediately if this happens. If a leak should occur, we will promptly repair or replace the failed section of pipe and restart the test. In addition, PG&E is prepared to repair any resulting damage.

Customer and Community Outreach

PG&E has a comprehensive plan for customer and community outreach regarding hydrostatic testing. The outreach effort includes:

- Letters sent to all residents and businesses near the area where testing will take place. The letters include:
  - Overview of hydrostatic testing
  - What the community may see
  - Invitation to attend a Project Open House
  - Contact information to speak to PG&E representatives (7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday) and links to more information on PG&E's website.
- Project fact sheets will be included with the letters; they will describe the work, what customers can expect, and when the work will be completed
- Project Open Houses where customers can have their questions answered by PG&E representatives
- Door hangers placed on residences nearest to construction activity to remind them of work just prior to it taking place
- Recorded reminder messages delivered by telephone
- Post-test letter informing residents and businesses of the test results
- Customer Care gas specialist representatives available to answer questions about natural gas pipelines or the work being done in the area at 1-866-743-7431, between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- Online information about the project, PG&E's Natural Gas Transmission System and our Pipeline Safety Programs at: www.pge.com/gassystem.

Communication and Coordination

PG&E will provide you with copies of the letter, door hanger and relevant fact sheets that we will be providing to the public. We also invite you to join us at a Project Open House that we will be hosting in the area.

What: PG&E Hydrostatic Testing Project Open Houses
When: 5:30-8:30 p.m., April 20 and 21, 2011
Where: Location TBD

Contact Information

- PG&E Government Relations Contact: Redacted
- PG&E Hydrostatic Test Program Area Field Supervisor: Redacted
- PG&E Customer Care Contact: Don Hall, (408) 282-7554

Note: You may be contacted by the public with questions about natural gas pipelines or the work being done in the area. Also, starting April 14 and continuing throughout May, many people will receive letters notifying them that they live or work within 2,000 feet of a PG&E gas transmission line, and they may have additional questions. Please direct these inquiries to our Customer Care gas specialist representatives at 1-866-743-7431, between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. They can also find information about PG&E's Natural Gas Transmission System and Pipeline Safety Programs by visiting: www.pge.com/gassystem.