

From: Clanon, Paul
Sent: 7/7/2011 9:47:42 AM
To: Cherry, Brian K (/O=PG&E/OU=CORPORATE/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=BKC7)
Cc:
Bcc:
Subject: PRA Allegations

Brian, can you check this out on the PG&E side to make sure it characterizes things accurately? We never got any Public Records Act request from this group; we've never heard of them.

Suisun Patch - Suisun City Group Says PG&E Cites 'National Security' In Denying Pipeline Safety Records

Announcement comes on the heels of admission from PG&E that it misclassified pipelines and avoided federal safety rules

By [David Ryan](#), July 6

Pacific Gas & Electric Company and utility regulators recently told a nonprofit pipeline safety group information necessary to determine the safety of a pair of Suisun City natural gas pipelines is off limits because it's a matter of "national security."

The Wednesday announcement by the group, Healthy Community Research of Suisun City, follows a July 2 article in the San Francisco Chronicle in which utility regulators said PG&E admitted it had misclassified 172 miles of gas transmission lines as exempt from strict federal safety standards.

Paul Clanon, the executive director of the state utilities commission, was quoted as saying it was a "serious failure with serious safety repercussions."

According to the Chronicle article, PG&E could face sanctions and fines depending on how it responds to the failure.

PG&E spokeswoman Brittany Chord said safety information of the kind Healthy Communities is looking for is typically shared only with "first responders and public officials."

Healthy Communities member Anthony Moscarelli, a former Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory engineer who acquired a one-of-its-kind federal grant to study current pipeline safety in Suisun City, said the California Public Utilities Commission said it could not release data on the safety of varying thicknesses of metal pipe running along the north end of Highway 12 and Peterson Road in Suisun City, because it would place the public at risk. The pipelines run right next to some residents' backyards, including Moscarelli's backyard.

Moscarelli said the CPUC and PG&E cited national security policy as a reason for withholding the information.

Moscarelli said he was able to gather information on the exact location of different thicknesses of pipe and how thick they were through public records. Clearly visible orange and white markers also denote the location of the pipelines for passing motorists, joggers and bicyclists throughout Suisun City.

"We speculate that the reasons for the withholding of information from us have nothing to do with national security in this well-marked pipeline route, but may have more to do with the possibilities that proper records do not exist or these pipelines are not up to code," Moscarelli wrote in a report distributed to the media.

Chord said PG&E conducted a safety inspection of one of the Suisun City pipelines in April, and an inspection was due on the other in 2012. The inspection was done with a device called a smart pig, used to determine the structural integrity of the pipelines.

In addition, she said PG&E conducts annual inspections on pipelines to determine their safety.

"There are sections of these pipelines that have been re-installed," Chord said, adding that safety and service to customers is PG&E's highest priority.

One question raised through the nonprofit's research is the pressure level PG&E runs through the pipelines, many sections built before 1970 in either 1949 or 1965, depending on the section.

Another question – first raised in 2007 – affects the proposed Walmart Supercenter expected to be built at Walters Road and Highway 12 in Suisun City.

The pipeline running along the north side of Peterson Road could be shaken by 40-ton trucks transporting supplies to Walmart, Moscarelli said. Currently, there is a 5-ton weight limit on the road.

Although road improvements could be made, Moscarelli said, he worries the old pipeline could be damaged in the future by Walmart trucks. PG&E simply needs to replace old pipelines with new ones to avoid any danger, he said. Moscarelli is a staunch and vocal opponent of Walmart's Suisun City proposal.

Healthy Communities is also pursuing claims the Walmart site is being built on a wetland city officials call a mere drainage ditch. Walmart is pursuing mitigation credits in order for water regulators to allow it to build on the site.