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Sent: 4/29/2013 2:32:10 PM
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Cc:
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Subject: FW: Advance Notice of Critical News Coverage

From: Fitzpatrick, Tim
Sent: Monday, April 29, 2013 2:24 PM
To: Officers and Directors - All
Subject: Advance Notice of Critical News Coverage

Officers & Directors:

Critical Coverage Expected on NBC Bay Area News Tonight

We expect a negative news story to run at 11 p.m. tonight on NBC Bay Area KNTV. The piece is likely to focus on the number of gas leaks on our system, PG&E's alleged failure to cooperate with the NBC Bay Area Investigative Unit as it examined this issue, and some aspect of regulatory oversight since the channel has done several negative pieces on the CPUC's safety culture.

As a follow-up to NBC's critical news segment on gas fuzzi leaks in August 2012, NBC Bay Area's Investigative Unit contacted us about a month ago requesting every record related to gas leaks on our system in 2012. While we did not provide the voluminous data requested, PG&E provided a significant amount of information about the company's natural gas system including all self-reports to date, and detailed tables highlighting gradable and repaired leaks on our system. This information showed our progress in responding to the leaks, but in the hands of a news team that has a history of isolating data sets to drive sensationalism, we expect our positive data trend to be run through a negative filter.

In addition to this, the reporters – Tony Kovalski and Liz Wagner – requested a sit down 30-minute interview with a PG&E executive or spokesperson but refused to share any details about their questions or expected focus. Given their history for unbalanced reporting and “gotcha” TV tactics, we declined this offer and instead provided a statement and a telephone interview with a director of Bay Area gas operations.

Our Proactive Plan to Shape the Media Cycle

In anticipation of this story, we developed and have been implementing a plan to mitigate it both before and after airing. Key steps have included:

- We increased the level of positive news about gas safety over the past month, including our progress on NTSB recommendations, the importance of safe digging and 811, and our use of the latest technology in the field to help us maintain a safe and reliable gas system.
- We proactively pitched a gas safety story to a competing media outlet. This morning, we brought KTVU-TV (Channel 2) consumer reporter Tom Vacar on a helicopter ride-along in Santa Cruz County to demonstrate our aerial leak survey technology. The story will air this evening in the Bay Area on KTVU and on KCRA-TV (Channel 3) in Sacramento. The piece was strategically pitched to run alongside the NBC coverage this evening. KTVU and KCRA combined have stronger viewership and ratings than NBC.
- We are finalizing a special *Currents* story and video that will highlight the progress we’ve made on the gas system and will promote these using our social media channels.
- We are working to prepare our Contact Centers and local offices for any inquiries and a general employee communication will go out after the piece airs.

As a general rule, we are looking to take a similarly proactive approach to telling PG&E’s story across every channel available to us whenever we are challenged by sensational reporting.

For reference, following are the typical number of viewers for a nightly newscast on each of the major Bay Area TV channels:

- ABC (KGO-TV): 82,415
- CBS (KPIX): 42,451
- NBC (KNTV-NBC Bay Area): 39,587
- Fox (KTVU): 37,881

The station reaches 12 counties including: Alameda, Contra Costa, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano and Sonoma.

Please let me know if you have questions.

Best,

Tim

Tim Fitzpatrick

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