Pacific Gas and Electric Company®

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September 10, 2026

Elizabeth McAlpine
Supervising Environmental Scientist | Environmental Science Division
Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
715 P Street, 20th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Energy Safety NOV ID: ESD_PGE_RGA_20250717_0951
Notice of Violation: Government Code § 15475.1 and the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 17 § 29302(b)(2)

Dear Ms. McAlpine:

This letter provides a supplemental response to PG&E's letter to Energy Safety dated September 8, 2025, in reference to the above Notice of Violation (NOV) dated August 7, 2025, regarding the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (Energy Safety) inspection of Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) 2024 Wildfire Mitigation Plan initiatives in the vicinity of the city of Novato, California, in High Fire Threat District (HFTD) Tier 3, on July 17, 2025.

Energy Safety based its compliance assessment on the following statute and code sections:

> **California Government Code Section 15475.1,** states:
>
> *(a) The office may determine that a regulated entity is not in compliance with any matter under the authority of the office. If necessary, the office may undertake an investigation into whether the regulated entity is noncompliant with its duties and responsibilities or has otherwise committed violations of any laws, regulations, or guidelines within the authority of the office.*
> *(b) The office's primary objective is to ensure that regulated entities are reducing wildfire risk and complying with energy infrastructure safety measures as required by law.*
>
> **California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 29302(b)(2), "Investigations, Notices of Defect and Violation, and Referral to the Commission"** states in part:
>
> *"The Director may designate a compliance officer to consider the findings of any investigation. The compliance officer may issue any of the following:*
> *...*
> *(2) Notice of violation, identifying noncompliance with an approved Wildfire Mitigation Plan or any law, regulation, or guideline within the authority of the Office."*

Energy Safety's July 17, 2025 inspection identified the following violation:

Violation 1. Energy Safety observed that in implementing 2025 WMP initiative 8.2.3.1 Pole Clearing, PG&E failed to adhere to its protocol at pole ID120511951 near coordinates 38.085315291612744,-122.591955114. Energy Safety considers this violation for adherence to protocol to be in the "Moderate" risk category due to the presence of dry grass which provides a fuel bed of flammable vegetation.

Response

PG&E respectfully disagrees with Energy Safety's finding that PG&E was in violation of its protocols. Despite this disagreement, some additional actions have been taken to further mitigate site conditions and provide a long-term solution to eliminate the need for firebreak maintenance at this location.

Background and Maintenance History

The subject pole (026259) is located on two separate properties, [redacted] and [redacted] This subject pole has been in the Vegetation Control inventory for over two decades and has been cleared annually without herbicide treatment. On March 18, 2025, the property owner at [redacted] expressed concern with erosion and runoff of soil onto the property's driveway. The pole was treated as a constrained location and that customer agreed to maintain the base of the pole by mowing the vegetation rather than allowing bare ground firebreak maintenance. Firebreak maintenance had previously been completed by PG&E contractors. Image 1 shows how historical maintenance of this firebreak has appeared on both properties.



Image 1: Firebreak maintenance shown by satellite imagery taken April 16, 2024.

The Vegetation Around the Pole Was Properly Maintained

We respectfully disagree with the findings of this NOV. The conditions at the subject location are not in violation of PG&E's protocols because PG&E was only required to maintain the vegetation in question to a height of less than 12 inches, pursuant to 14 CCR 1255(d). 14 CCR 1255(d) alters the minimum clearance requirements of PRC 4292 in certain circumstances, like those here. Specifically, 14 CCR 1255(d) states:

> The minimum clearance provisions of PRC 4292 are not required around poles and towers, including line junction, corner and dead-end poles and towers: …
> (d) Where vegetation is maintained less than 30.48 cm (12 inches) in height, is fire resistant, and is planted and maintained for the specific purpose of preventing soil erosion and fire ignition.

As can be seen from the photos in the NOV, the vegetation in question was maintained low to the ground, is fire resistant, less than 12 inches in height, and was maintained for the specific purpose of preventing soil erosion. Images 2 and 3 below depict the state of the vegetation on July 17, 2025, at the time of the inspection that triggered the NOV.



Image 2: Pole at NOV inspection



Image 3: Pole at NOV inspection

In addition to these considerations, it is also worth noting that both sides of the required 10-foot firebreak have paved driveway areas offering additional protection for fire spread well beyond the 10-foot horizontal distance clearance requirement.

Actions Taken

Upon receipt of this NOV, PG&E revisited the properties and, out of an abundance of caution, secured permission to clear the portion of the pole at [redacted] to achieve bare ground treatment. The owner at [redacted] still prefers to maintain the portion on that property without bare ground treatment. On August 14, 2025, PG&E created an EC notification to change out the split bolt connectors with CAL FIRE exempt connectors as a long-term solution. This work is pending completion. Image 4 and Image 5 show the clearing achieved on August 11, 2025.



Image 4: Clearance achieved on 8/11/25



Image 5: Additional clearance detail

<u>Supplemental Response</u>

PG&E completed the work associated with EC notification 129456620 at pole ID 120511951 near coordinates 38.085315291612744, -122.591955114, on July 23, 2026.

Please see the following attachment for photos of the completed work:

- "*PGE_NOV_RGA_20250717_0951_20260910_ATCH001.pdf*"

Please do not hesitate to contact WSComplianceMailbox@pge.com if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Daniel Kushner, PhD
Senior Director, Electric Risk & Compliance

cc: Samuel Isaiah, Senior Utilities Engineer Specialist, Energy Safety
Patrick Doherty, Program Manager, Energy Safety
Shannon Greene, Program Manager, Energy Safety
Akiko Masuda, Senior Environmental Science Specialist
Ricardo Garcia, Field Inspector, Energy Safety