



**CALIFORNIA UNDERGROUND SAFETY BOARD
INVESTIGATION DIVISION**

INVESTIGATION REPORT

Date: April 27, 2026

Case No.: N243261302

Violations:

Solar Central, Inc.

Government Code § 4216.2(b): Excavating without first notifying the regional notification center of intent to excavate.

Government Code § 4216. 4(c)(1): Failure to call 911 emergency services upon discovering or causing damage to subsurface installation resulting in the escape of flammable, toxic, or corrosive gas or liquid.

Executive Summary:

On November 20, 2024, Solar Central, Inc. was installing an electrical grounding rod with a hammer without first contacting the regional notification center and damaged a ½" plastic natural gas facility. Upon the escape of gas from the subsurface installation, Solar Central, Inc. did not call 911 emergency services to report it. No one was injured and no equipment, other than the ½" plastic natural gas facility, was damaged.

Reporting Party Information:

Southern California Gas Company
555 West 5th Street
Los Angeles, California 90013

Date of Incident:

November 20, 2024

Location of the Incident:

64015 Appalachian Street
Desert Hot Springs, California 92240

Operator:

Southern California Gas Company
Regional Notification Center Member Code SCG10G
1981 Lugonia Avenue

Redlands, California 92373

Excavator:

Solar Central, Inc.
72056 North Shore Street, Suite B
Thousand Palms, California 92276

Facility Type Damaged:

½" Plastic natural gas facility

Investigation:

Notification of the Incident

On November 21, 2024, Southern California Gas Company submitted a notification of an incident to the California Underground Safety Board. The notification stated, “Solar Central INC was installing ground rod in the process Solar Central INC truck .5 plastic gas service while excavating with no USA ticket.” (Exh. 1.)

The case was assigned to Investigator Angel Barton (Investigator).

Excavation and Damage

Government Code section 4216(g) defines “excavation” to be the use of tools or equipment to move or displace earth, rock, or other material in the ground.

Solar Central, Inc. was installing an electrical grounding rod with a hammer and damaged a gas line at 64015 Appalachian Street, Desert Hot Springs, California 92240. (Exh. 2.)

Identity of the Excavator

Government Code section 4216(h) defines an excavator to be “any person, firm, contractor or subcontractor, owner, operator, utility, association, corporation, partnership, business trust, public agency, or other entity that, with their own employees or equipment, performs any excavation.”

Solar Central, Inc. was licensed as of December 12, 2024, by the Contractors State License Board, license number 1051362 with C46 - Solar classification. (Exh. 3.)

Solar Central, Inc. Did Not Contact the Regional Notification Center Before Excavating

Government Code section 4216.2(b) states that an excavator planning to excavate shall notify the appropriate regional notification center of the excavator’s intent to excavate at least two working days, and not more than 14 calendar days, before beginning that excavation.

Solar Central, Inc. did not notify the regional notification center prior to installing an electrical grounding rod with a hammer. Patrick Kelley, General Manager at Solar Central, Inc., stated

they did not contact the regional notification center because they did not believe 811 was required for adding an additional electrical grounding rod for the main service panel. (Exh. 2.)

On December 17, 2024, the investigator emailed Safety Awareness Director, Amber Dahl at DigAlert, requesting ticket information for 64015 Appalachian Street, Desert Hot Springs, California 92240, between October 20, 2024, to December 1, 2024. (Exh. 4.)

On December 17, 2024, Dahl responded confirming that a ticket did not exist at 64015 Appalachian Street, Desert Hot Springs, California 92240, between October 20, 2024, and December 1, 2024. (Exh. 5.)

Solar Central, Inc. Did Not Call 911 Emergency Services Upon Gas Release

Government Code section 4216.4(c)(1) states an excavator shall call 911 emergency services upon discovering or causing damage to a gas or hazardous liquid pipeline subsurface installation in which the damage results in the escape of any flammable, toxic, or corrosive gas or liquid.

On November 20, 2024, while using a ground rod, Solar Central, Inc. damaged a ½" plastic natural gas facility while displacing earth by installing an electrical grounding rod that caused gas to leak but did not call 911 afterward. (Exh. 2.)

Findings:

1. Solar Central, Inc. did not contact the regional notification center before installing a grounding rod with a hammer November 20, 2024, at 64015 Appalachian Street, Desert Hot Springs, California 92240, because Patrick Kelley did not believe 811 was required for adding an additional electrical grounding rod to upgrade the main service panel.
2. On November 20, 2024, Solar Central, Inc. did not call 911 emergency services to report the escaping gas from the subsurface installation after it was damaged while displacing earth by installing an electrical grounding rod.

Investigator	Supervisor
Angel Barton	Anona Bonner
Signature	Signature
/s/ Angel Barton	/s/ Anona Bonner

Exhibit List:

Exhibit No.	Description	Date	Received From
1.	Incident Report submitted to the Underground Safety Board	Received on 11/21/2024	Jonathan Garcia, Damage Prevention Analyst, Southern California Gas Company
2.	Board's Investigation Questionnaire response by Solar Central, Inc.	Received on 12/20/2024	General Manager, Patrick Kelley, Solar Central, Inc.
3.	Contractor's License Detail for License No. 1051362 obtained from the Contractors State License Board website	Downloaded on 12/12/2024	California Contractors State License Board website at https://www.cslb.ca.gov/onlineservices/checklicensell/checklicense.aspx
4.	Investigator's email to DigAlert requesting ticket information on the underlying job to this incident	Emailed on 12/17/2024	
5.	Email from DigAlert stating there was no valid ticket for the underlying job to this incident	Received on 12/17/2024	Amber Dahl, Safety Awareness Director, DigAlert

Exhibit 1

No-Ticket Damage Reporting Form

Submitted: November 21, 2024 1:36 PM

Reporter Information

Provide the names, titles, phone numbers, and email addresses of all individuals who are involved in reporting this damage or contributing to the answers to these questions

Full Name

Jonathan Garcia

Title

Damage Prevention Analyst

Phone Number

213-379-2605

E-mail address

Jgarci33@socalgas.com

Company

Provide the name, address, phone number, email address, and, if applicable, the Regional Notification Center (member code for your company).

Company Name

SoCal Gas

Address

555 W. 5th St, Los Angeles , 90013

Phone Number

213-379-2605

Email Address

SCGDamageprevention@socalgas.com

Regional Notification Center member code

Other Contacts

Is the photographer same as the primary reporter named above?

Yes

Incident Information

What was the date and approximate time of the incident?

November 20, 2024 10:54 AM

What is the address where your facility was damaged on 11/20/2024?

Damage Street Address

64015 Appalachian St

Damage County

Riverside

Damage City

Desert Hot Springs

Damage Cross Street 1

Mission Lakes

Damage Cross Street 2

Other Damage location description

Does SoCal Gas own, operate or maintain the facility damaged on 11/20/2024?

Yes

What type of excavation did you observe on 11/20/2024 at that address?

Solar installation

Describe the excavation activity you identified.

Excavating with hand tools no USA ticket

What excavation companies did you observe on 11/20/2024?

Company Name

Solar Central INC

Company Address

72056 Northshore St, Thousand Palm , 92276

Phone Number

760-640-0000

Email Address

Office@solarcentralinc.com

Did this company damage the facility?

Yes

Provide the name, title, phone number, and email address for at least one contact for each excavation company working at or near incident address on date of incident. If you have more than one contact, please provide all of them. Email addresses are required for submission of this form.

Personnel Name

Patrick Kelly

Title

Foreman

Phone Number

760-640-0000

Email Address

Office@solarcentralinc.com

Notification Details

Was SoCal Gas notified of the proposed excavation by the Regional Notification Center before 11/20/2024?

No

What date and time did you learn of the damage to the facility?

November 20, 2024 10:54 AM

How did SoCal Gas learn of the damage to the facility?

Intercompany email notification

Facility Damaged

What kind of facility was damaged on 11/20/2024?

Natural Gas

Natural Gas

What type of material was the damaged facility?

Plastic

Facility diameter (inches)?

30

Incident Details

What kinds of excavation equipment did you observe at the location of the damaged facility?

Other hand tools

Do you know what equipment damaged the facility?

Yes

What equipment damaged the facility?

Other hand tools

What information are you relying on regarding damage to the facility?

Interview with excavator

Did SoCal Gas contact the Regional Notification Center before repairing the damaged facility?

No

Provide any other relevant information about the damage on 11/20/2024.
Solar Central INC was installing ground rod in the process Solar Central INC truck .5 plastic gas service while excavating with no USA ticket.

Damages

Were there any injuries to any personnel or bystanders due to the damage to your facility on 11/20/2024?

No

Was any property damaged other than the damaged facility?

No

Was there a fire caused by this damage on 11/20/2024?

No

Was there an evacuation of any nearby homes or businesses caused by this damage on 11/20/2024?

No

Provide an estimate of the number of your customers whose service was interrupted by this damage on 11/20/2024.

1

Conclusions

What date and time were repairs completed to the damaged facility?

November 20, 2024 11:20 AM

Please explain why you think the facility was damaged on 11/20/2024?

Gas service was punctured with ground rod.

Is there any other information which you feel is important to share about this incident?

Not counting your answers to these questions, did SoCal Gas create an investigatory or incident report pertaining to the damage on 11/20/2024?

Yes

Please attach investigatory or incident report here.

Have your answers to these questions and or the documents you are sending today been reviewed, changed or amended by anyone?

No

Files

Please attach all Facility Repair Orders.

Please attach all Photos.



Date and time photographed

November 20, 2024 12:57 PM

Photographer Name

Jonathan

Additional Records

Business cards, photo of company vehicles onsite, etc.

IMG_5192.jpeg, 1.64MB

Reference Number

N243261302



Home | Online Services | License Details

Contractor's License Detail for License # 1051362

DISCLAIMER: A license status check provides information taken from the CSLB license database. Before relying on this information, you should be aware of the following limitations.

- ▶ CSLB complaint disclosure is restricted by law (B&P 7124.6) If this entity is subject to public complaint disclosure click on link that will appear below for more information. Click [here](#) for a definition of disclosable actions.
- ▶ Only construction related civil judgments reported to CSLB are disclosed (B&P 7071.17).
- ▶ Arbitrations are not listed unless the contractor fails to comply with the terms.
- ▶ Due to workload, there may be relevant information that has not yet been entered into the board's license database.

Business Information

SOLAR CENTRAL INC
 72056 NORTH SHORE ST STE B
 THOUSAND PALMS, CA 92276
 Business Phone Number: [\(760\) 640-0000](tel:(760)640-0000)

Entity Corporation
Issue Date 03/15/2019
Expire Date 03/31/2025

License Status

This license is current and active.

All information below should be reviewed.

Classifications

[C46 - SOLAR](#)

Bonding Information

Contractor's Bond

This license filed a Contractor's Bond with AMERICAN CONTRACTORS INDEMNITY

Online Services Quick Hits

- ▶ [Check a License or HIS Registration](#)
- ▶ [Find My Licensed Contractor](#)
- ▶ [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- ▶ [Forms and Applications](#)
- ▶ [Guides and Publications](#)
- ▶ [CSLB Laws and Regulations](#)
- ▶ [List of All CSLB Fees](#)
- ▶ [License Classifications](#)
- ▶ [Contractor Newsletter](#)
- ▶ [Application Status](#)
- ▶ [Application Status \(Secured\)](#)
- ▶ [Application Status by Personnel Name](#)
- ▶ [Application Status by Business Name](#)

Online Services



Exhibit 2

No-Ticket Damage Reporting Form

Submitted Time: December 20, 2024 7:40 PM

Provide your name, title, phone number, and email address

Name

Patrick

Title

General Manager

Phone Number

760-567-9888

Email Address

Patrick@Solarcentralinc.com

Please provide the identifying information for Solar Central INC in general.

California Contractor's State License Board (CSLB) license

1051362

Physical Address

72056 Northshore St suite B Thousand Palms, Ca 92276

Mailing Address

72056 Northshore St suite B Thousand Palms, Ca 92276

Phone Number

760-640-0000

Email Address

Patrick@solarcentralinc.com

Did Solar Central INC damage the NaturalGas facility while excavating at 64015 Appalachian St, Desert Hot Springs on the 11/20/2024? (Select One)

Yes

Were there any other companies at or near 64015 Appalachian St, Desert Hot Springs on 11/20/2024? (Select One)

No

Did someone in Solar Central INC, or anyone else, contact the Regional Notification Center on 11/20/2024?

No

Did SoCal Gas respond after the Regional Notification Center created the 811 ticket?

Is Solar Central INC aware that it needed to contact the Regional Notification Center prior to excavating?

No

Did the Regional Notification Center create an 811-ticket for 64015 Appalachian St, Desert Hot Springs that Solar Central INC worked?

No

If no one at Solar Central INC, or anyone else, contacted the Regional Notification Center before excavating, why not?

Other

Explain why Solar Central INC did not obtain an 811 ticket?

There was additional Electrical grounding rod needed for Code Compliance of the Main service panel upgrade. I did not believe 811 was required for adding the ground rod.

Has Solar Central INC ever obtained an 811 ticket, either by calling 811 or using the Regional Notification Center's website?

Yes

The damage notification indicated that a facility was damaged at 64015 Appalachian St, Desert Hot Springs on 11/20/2024. Is that correct?

Yes

Was Solar Central INC the prime contractor on the project at 64015 Appalachian St, Desert Hot Springs on 11/20/2024?

Yes

What was mentioned or what direction did the prime contractor provide to you?

Provide the names, phone numbers, and if applicable, their email address for all your personnel who were at 64015 Appalachian St, Desert Hot Springs when the facility was damaged.

Name

Patrick Kelley

Title

General Manager

Phone Number

760-567-9888

Email Address

Patrick@Solarcentralinc.com

Add an additional individual?

No

Which one of the individuals you identified was the foreman on the project when the facility was damaged?

Patrick Kelley

Facility Damage

Was a facility damaged on 11/20/2024?

Yes

Describe the damaged facility.

Ground rod penetrated gas line.

Identify the type of material damaged.

Plastic gas line on service side

Explain how the facility was damaged?

I Installed a grounding rod that penetrated the gas line.

What equipment did Solar Central INC use on 11/20/2024? (Select All That Are Applicable)

Other

Other:

Hammer

What type of equipment damaged the facility?

Other

Who was operating the equipment that damaged the facility on 11/20/2024?

Patrick Kelley

Does Solar Central INC own that equipment?

Yes

Emergency Response

How did Solar Central INC learn that the SoCal Gas facility was damaged on 11/20/2024?

I smelled gas.

Did anyone with Solar Central INC call 911 on 11/20/2024 after the damage had occurred?

No

Was there an emergency response to the incident from the fire department, a law enforcement department, or an ambulance on 11/20/2024?

No

Were there any injuries to any personnel or bystanders on 11/20/2024?

No

Were there any fatalities on 11/20/2024 or afterwards, due to the damage at 64015 Appalachian St, Desert Hot Springs?

No

Was there property damage on 11/20/2024, excluding the facility damage?

No

Was there a fire on 11/20/2024 as a result of the damage to the facility?

No

Was there an evacuation of any homes or businesses on 11/20/2024 as a result of the damage to the facility?

No

Are you aware of anyone else that called 911?

No

Did anyone at Solar Central INC contact the Regional Notification Center after the damage on 11/20/2024?

No

Did anyone at Solar Central INC contact SoCal Gas after the damage?

Yes

Who at Solar Central INC contacted the SoCal Gas?

Ron Winkle

What is the name of the person at the SoCal Gas contacted by the individual you identified above?

Unknown

What steps, if any, have Solar Central INC taken to prevent a similar damage in the future?

We have a policy to contact 811 prior to any future installs.

Is there any other information you want to share about this damage?

No.



Policy Title: Utility Locating and DigAlert Compliance Policy

Effective Date: 11/20/2024

Approved By: Patrick Kelley / General Manager

Purpose

To ensure the safety of personnel, prevent damage to underground utilities, and comply with local, state, and federal regulations when performing excavation work.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and subcontractors involved in excavation activities on any job site managed by Solar Central Inc.

Policy Overview

1. Mandatory Use of DigAlert

Prior to any excavation, DigAlert (or the appropriate utility notification center) must be contacted to identify and mark underground utilities.

- The call must be made at least **two full business days** before excavation begins, unless local regulations specify a different timeframe.
- The notification center can be reached by dialing **811** or visiting their website.

2. Responsibility

- The **Project Manager** or **Site Supervisor** is responsible for initiating the DigAlert request.
- All **crew members** must be briefed on the locations of marked utilities before excavation begins.

3. Verification of Markings

- Verify that all utilities have been marked on-site. If any are missing or unclear, excavation must not proceed until clarification is obtained from the utility notification center.
- Use the color-coded utility marking system to identify types of utilities (e.g., red for electric, yellow for gas, blue for water).

4. Documentation

- Maintain a record of the DigAlert reference number, date and time of the call, and any follow-up correspondence.
- A copy of the DigAlert ticket must be available on-site during excavation activities.

5. Safe Excavation Practices

- Adhere to the following guidelines:
 - Hand-dig or use non-destructive methods within **24 inches** of marked utility lines.
 - Stop work immediately if an unmarked utility is discovered, and notify the appropriate utility provider.

6. Incident Reporting

- In the event of a utility strike or damage, stop all work immediately. Notify the utility owner, DigAlert, and the company's safety officer.
- Complete an incident report detailing the circumstances and corrective actions.

7. Training

- Employees involved in excavation activities must undergo training on:
 - The importance of utility notification systems.
 - Recognizing utility markings.
 - Safe digging practices.

Compliance

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action, including suspension of work, removal from the job site, or termination of employment/contract. Compliance with this policy also ensures adherence to regulatory requirements, such as the **California One-Call Law**.

Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to reflect changes in regulations or industry standards.

Approved by:

Patrick Kelley
General Manager

Exhibit 3



Contractor's License Detail for License # 1051362

DISCLAIMER: A license status check provides information taken from the CSLB license database. Before relying on this information, you should be aware of the following limitations.

- ▶ CSLB complaint disclosure is restricted by law (B&P 7124.6) If this entity is subject to public complaint disclosure click on link that will appear below for more information. Click [here](#) for a definition of disclosable actions.
- ▶ Only construction related civil judgments reported to CSLB are disclosed ().
- ▶ Arbitrations are not listed unless the contractor fails to comply with the terms.
- ▶ Due to workload, there may be relevant information that has not yet been entered into the board's license database.

Data current as of 12/12/2024 3:37:08 PM

Business Information

SOLAR CENTRAL INC
 72056 NORTH SHORE ST STE B
 THOUSAND PALMS, CA 92276
 Business Phone Number:(760) 640-0000

Entity Corporation
Issue Date 03/15/2019
Expire Date 03/31/2025

License Status

This license is current and active.

All information below should be reviewed.

Classifications

C46 - SOLAR

Bonding Information

Contractor's Bond

This license filed a Contractor's Bond with [AMERICAN CONTRACTORS INDEMNITY COMPANY](#).

Bond Number: 100904349

Bond Amount: \$25,000

Effective Date: 11/19/2024

[Contractor's Bond History](#)

Bond of Qualifying Individual

The qualifying individual RONALD ROY WINKLE certified that he/she owns 10 percent or more of the voting stock/membership interest of this company; therefore, the Bond of Qualifying Individual is not required.

Effective Date: 03/15/2019

Workers' Compensation

This license has workers compensation insurance with the [STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND](#)

Policy Number:9356314

Effective Date: 03/18/2024

Expire Date: 03/18/2025

[Workers' Compensation History](#)

Other

- ▶ Personnel listed on this license (current or disassociated) are listed on other licenses.

[Back to Top](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Accessibility Certification](#)

Copyright © 2024 State of California

[Conditions of Use](#)

[Accessibility](#)

Exhibit 4

Barton, Angel@EnergySafety

From: Barton, Angel@EnergySafety
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2024 8:28 AM
To: amber@digalert.org
Cc: Alcantar, Daysi@EnergySafety
Subject: 811 ticket request N243261302

Good morning Amber,

Please provide a copy of all tickets, revisions, and electronic positive responses at about 64015 Appalachian Street in Desert Hot Springs California, for October 20, 2024, to December 1, 2024.

If there is not a ticket at this location for any of these dates, please confirm that finding.

Cordially,

Angel Barton
Investigator
Underground Infrastructure Directorate
Phone: (916) 216-0251
www.energysafety.ca.gov



OFFICE OF ENERGY
INFRASTRUCTURE
SAFETY

Stay connected and informed by signing up for the [Underground Safety Board's subscriber list](#).

Exhibit 5

Barton, Angel@EnergySafety

From: Amber Dahl <amber@digalert.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2024 2:00 PM
To: Barton, Angel@EnergySafety
Cc: Alcantar, Daysi@EnergySafety
Subject: File N243261302
Attachments: N243261302.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you,



Amber Dahl, Safety Director
Underground Service Alert of Southern California
PO BOX 77070 Corona, CA 92877
P: 951-808-8115 F: 951-808-8101
E: amber@digalert.org W: www.digalert.org



This e-mail message may contain confidential or legally privileged information and is intended only for the use of the intended recipient(s). Any unauthorized disclosure, dissemination, distribution, copying or the taking of any action in reliance on the information herein is prohibited. E-mails are not secure and cannot be guaranteed to be error free as they can be intercepted, amended, or contain viruses. Anyone who communicates with us by e-mail is deemed to have accepted these risks. Underground Service Alert of Southern California is not responsible for errors or omissions in this message and denies any responsibility for any damage arising from the use of e-mail. Any opinion and other statement contained in this message and any attachment are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the company.



Underground Service Alert

of Southern California™

December 17, 2024

Angel Barton
Underground Safety Board

File Number: N243261302

Dear Angel,

After searching our records from 10/20/24 through 12/1/24, we were unable to find any DigAlert tickets for the location at or near 64015 Appalachian St in Desert Hot Springs. I hope this information will be helpful.

If we can be of further assistance, please call us at 951-808-8100.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amber Dahl".

Amber Dahl
Safety Awareness Director