



CALIFORNIA UNDERGROUND SAFETY BOARD
INVESTIGATION DIVISION

INVESTIGATION REPORT

Date: December 9, 2025
Case No.: N2426177

Violations:

Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC
Government Code § 4216.2(b): Excavating without first notifying the regional notification center of intent to excavate.

Government Code § 4216.4(c)(1): Excavator 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.

Government Code § 4216.4(c)(3): Excavator failure to report to the regional notification center within 48 hours of discovering or causing damage to a subsurface installation.

Executive Summary:

On August 21, 2024, Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC was digging to repair a sewer line for a homeowner without first contacting the regional notification center and, with a trench shovel, damaged a 1/2" plastic gas service line. The sewer line was causing a backup for the homeowner due to root intrusion in the sewer line. Upon the escape of natural gas from the subsurface installation, Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC did not contact 911 emergency services to report it. Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC failed to report the damage to DigAlert, the regional notification center. No one was injured, and no equipment, other than the 1/2" plastic gas service line, was damaged.

Reporting Party Information:

Southern California Gas Company
Regional Notification Center Member Code (SCG0G1)
[REDACTED]

Date of Incident:
August 21, 2024

Location of the Incident:

4714 Saloma Avenue
Sherman Oaks, California 91403

Operator:

Southern California Gas Company
Regional Notification Center Member Code (SCG4U5)
[REDACTED]

Excavator:

Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Facility Type Damaged:

1/2" plastic gas service line

Investigation:

Notification of the Incident

On September 17, 2024, at 2:25 p.m., the Southern California Gas Company submitted a notification of an incident to the California Underground Safety Board (Board). The notification stated, "Third party contractor was performing excavation to fix sleeve on sewer drain. While in the process, the contractor struck a 1/2" plastic service with a shovel." (Exh. 1.)

The case was assigned to Investigator Adrian Anaya (Investigator).

Excavation and Identity of the Excavator

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.

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."

On October 31, 2024, Investigator conducted a telephone interview with Victor Curiel (Curiel), owner of Victor's Rooter and Plumbing SVC. Curiel stated he was hired by the homeowner at 4714 Saloma Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403, to do an "emergency" repair as the house's sewage was backing up due to root intrusion in the sewer pipe. (Exh. 2.) Furthermore, Curiel stated it was an emergency repair on private property, and a four by four hole was dug, using a trench shovel, in order to access and repair the sewer pipe.

Victor's Rooter and Plumbing SVC was licensed, as of October 31, 2024, with the California Contractors State License Board, license number 1004608, with a C36-Plumbing and a C42-Sanitation System Classifications. (Exh. 3.)

Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC Did Not Contact the Regional Notification Center Before Excavating

Government Code section 4216.2(b) states that, except in an emergency, "an excavator planning to conduct an excavation 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. The date of the notification shall not count as part of the two-working-day notice."

On October 31, 2024, Investigator conducted a telephone interview with Curiel. During the interview, Curiel stated that he had not notified the Regional Notification Center prior to digging at the incident location on August 21, 2024. Curiel stated the reason he did not contact the regional notification center was because he was working on private property for an emergency service repair that was causing a backup for the homeowner. (Exh. 2.)

On October 31, 2024, Investigator emailed Amber Dahl, DigAlert's Safety Awareness Director, requesting all tickets and electronic positive responses for 4714 Saloma Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403, on August 21, 2024. (Exh. 4.)

On November 1, 2024, Director Dahl emailed the Investigator that DigAlert had searched from February 21, 2024, through August 21, 2024, and was unable to find any DigAlert tickets for the location at or near 4714 Saloma Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403, for August 21, 2024. (Exh. 5.)

Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC Did Not Call 911 Emergency Services Upon Causing the Natural Gas Escape

Government Code section 4216.4(c)(1) states "an excavator shall immediately 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 October 31, 2024, during the telephone interview with Investigator, Curiel stated that on August 21, 2024, while using a trench shovel to repair the sewer line that was backing up due to root-intrusion, he damaged a 1/2" plastic gas service line at the incident location which caused gas to leak. Further, Curiel stated he immediately contacted the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) and SoCalGas arrived in twenty minutes to repair the leak. Curiel stated he notified the homeowner and a neighbor. Curiel reported that he did not call 911. (Exh. 2.)

On December 10, 2024, Investigator emailed the Los Angeles Fire Department to request a fire report for 4714 Saloma Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403, on August 21, 2024. That

same day, December 10, 2024, the Los Angeles Fire Department reported no fire report existed for 4714 Saloma Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403, on August 21, 2024. (Exh. 6.)

Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC Did Not Report The Natural Gas Line Damage To The Regional Notification Center

Government Code section 4216.4(c)(3) requires that, except as provided in a different subsection, "an excavator shall notify the regional notification center within 48 hours of discovering or causing damage to any subsurface installation."

On October 31, 2024, Investigator conducted a telephone interview with Curiel during which he admitted he had not contacted the regional notification center after damaging the 1/2" plastic natural gas service line on August 21, 2024. (Exh. 2.)

Findings:

1. Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC did not contact the regional notification center before digging to repair a sewer line on August 21, 2024, at 4714 Saloma Avenue, California 91603, because Victor Cruel stated he was working on private property for an emergency service repair that was causing a backup for the homeowner.
2. Victor's Rooter & Plumbing SVC did not report the damaged subsurface installation and the natural gas escape to the regional notification center within 48 hours of its discovery.
3. On August 21, 2024, Victor's Rooter & Plumbing failed to call 911 emergency services to report the escaping gas from the subsurface installation after it was damaged by a trench shovel.

| Investigator | Supervisor |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Adrian Anaya | Amy Morford |
| Signature | Signature |
| /s/ Adrian Anaya | /s/ Amy Morford |

Exhibit List:

| Exhibit No. | Description | Date | Received From |
|-------------|--|---|---|
| 1. | Incident Report Submitted to the Underground Safety Board | Received on 09/17/2024, at 2:25 p.m. | Southern California Gas Company |
| 2. | Summary of Telephone Interview with Owner Victor Manuel Curiel prepared by Adrian Anaya | Telephone Interview Conducted by Adrian Anaya on 10/31/2024 | Victor Manuel Curiel Sole Owner Victor's Rooter and Plumbing SVC |
| 3. | Contractor's License Detail for License No. 1004608 obtained from the Contractors State License Board website | Downloaded on 10/31/2024 | California Contractors State License Board website at https://www.cslb.ca.gov/onlineservices/checklicense/checklicense.aspx |
| 4. | Investigator's Email to DigAlert Requesting Ticket Information on the Underlying Job to This Incident | Emailed on 10/31/2024 | |
| 5. | Email from DigAlert Stating There Was No Ticket for the Underlying Job to This Incident | Received on 11/01/2024 | Amber Dahl Safety Awareness Director DigAlert |
| 6. | Board's Public Records Request to Los Angeles Fire Department: LAFD Records Unit Electronic Response to the Board's Public Records Request from Los Angeles Fire Department: LAFD Records Unit | Emailed on 12/10/2024 Received on 12/10/2024 | Los Angeles Fire Department: LAFD Records Unit |

Exhibit 1

No-Ticket Damage Reporting Form

Submitted: September 17, 2024 2:25 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

Alejandro Alvarez

Title

Damage Prevention Analyst

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

E-mail address

aalvare5 [REDACTED]

Company

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

Company Name

SoCalGas

Address

[REDACTED]

Phone Number
[REDACTED]

Email Address

SCGDamagePrevention [REDACTED]

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?

August 21, 2024 10:03 AM

What is the address where your facility was damaged on 8/21/2024?

Damage Street Address

4714 Saloma Ave

Damage County

Los Angeles

Damage City

Sherman Oaks

Damage Cross Street 1

Camarillo St.

Damage Cross Street 2

Moorpark St.

Other Damage location description

Does SoCalGas own, operate or maintain the facility damaged on 8/21/2024?

Yes

What type of excavation did you observe on 8/21/2024 at that address?

Sewer

Describe the excavation activity you identified.

Third party contractor was performing excavation to fix sleeve on sewer drain. While in the process, the contractor struck a 1/2" plastic service with a shovel.

What excavation companies did you observe on 8/21/2024?

Company Name

VICTOR'S ROOTER & PLUMBING SVC

Company Address

[REDACTED]

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Email Address

SCGDamagePrevention [REDACTED]

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

Victor Curiel

Title

Sole Owner

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Email Address

SCGDamagePrevention [REDACTED]

Notification Details

Was SoCalGas notified of the proposed excavation by the Regional Notification Center before 8/21/2024?

No

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

August 21, 2024 10:05 AM

How did SoCalGas learn of the damage to the facility?

Intercompany email notification

Facility Damaged

What kind of facility was damaged on 8/21/2024?

Natural Gas

Natural Gas

What type of material was the damaged facility?

Plastic

Facility diameter (inches)?

0.5

Incident Details

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

Shovel

Do you know what equipment damaged the facility?

Yes

What equipment damaged the facility?

Shovel

What information are you relying on regarding damage to the facility?
Eyewitness statement, Photographs, Interview with excavator

Did SoCalGas contact the Regional Notification Center before repairing the damaged facility?

No

Provide any other relevant information about the damage on 8/21/2024.

Contractor excavated front yard for sewer. while in the process, they damaged 0.5-inch plastic gas line with shovel. No USA for excavation.

Damages

Were there any injuries to any personnel or bystanders due to the damage to your facility on 8/21/2024?

No

Was any property damaged other than the damaged facility?

No

Was there a fire caused by this damage on 8/21/2024?

No

Was there an evacuation of any nearby homes or businesses caused by this damage on 8/21/2024?

No

Provide an estimate of the number of your customers whose service was interrupted by this damage on 8/21/2024.

1

Conclusions

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

August 21, 2024 11:31 AM

Please explain why you think the facility was damaged on 8/21/2024?

0.5-inch plastic gas service was broken with gas escape.

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

Not counting your answers to these questions, did SoCalGas create an investigatory or incident report pertaining to the damage on 8/21/2024?

Yes

Please attach investigatory or incident report here.

USB Damage Report Form Template AA Copy.docx, 0.02MB

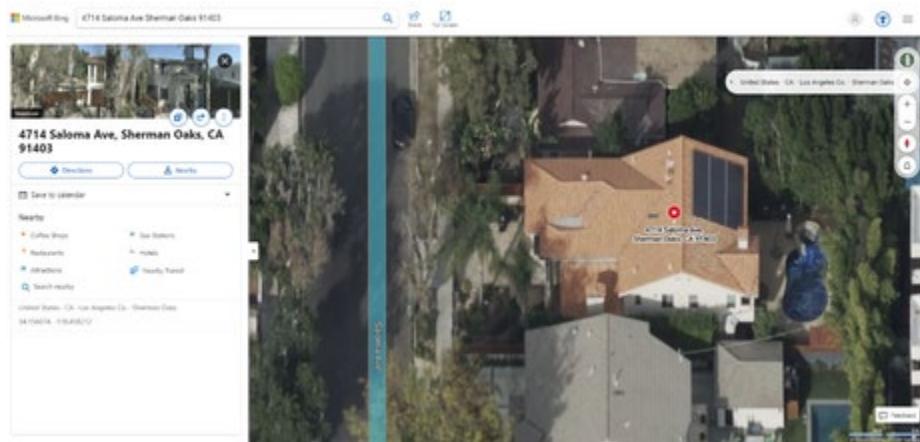
Have your answers to these questions and or the documents you are sending today been reviewed, changed or amended by anyone?

No

Files

Please attach all Facility Repair Orders.

Please attach all Photos.



Date and time photographed
September 17, 2024 2:22 PM

Photographer Name
Alejandro Alvarez

Additional Records

Business cards, photo of company vehicles onsite, etc.

IMG_9640.jpg, 2.37MB

Business cards, photo of company vehicles onsite, etc.

IMG_9641.jpg, 2.34MB

Reference Number

N2426177



VICTOR'S ROOTER

24 Hour Plumbing & Rooter Service

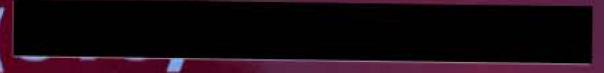
**Serving All San Fernando Valley &
Greater Los Angeles**

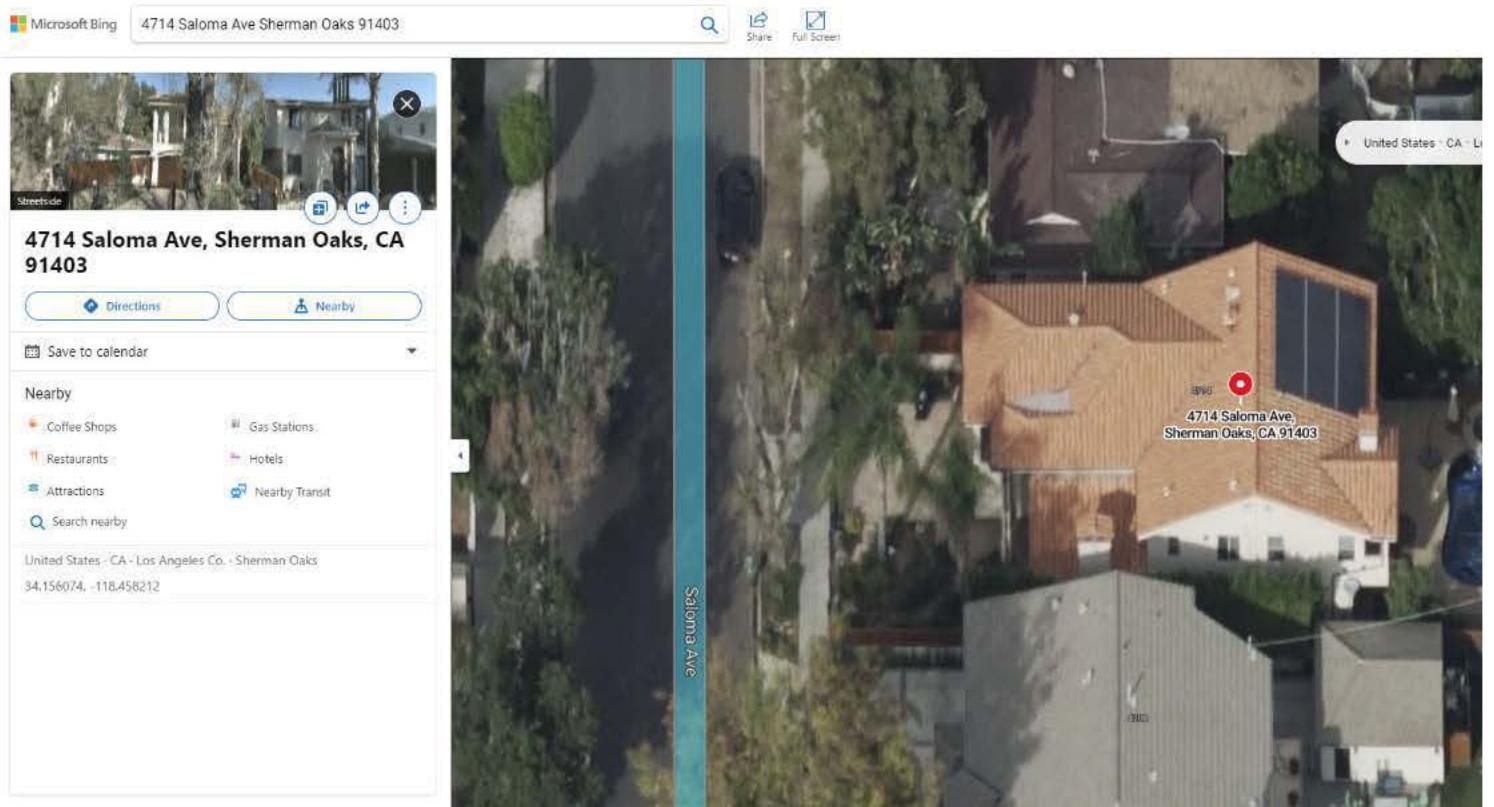
Bonded & Insured Lic# 1004608

Toll Free ([REDACTED]

VICTOR'S ROOTER

- Drain Cleaning & Hydro Jetting
- Trenchless Pipe Bursting
- Trenchless Pipe Lining
- Sewer Camera Inspections
- Sewer Repair & Replacement
- Water Heaters
- Faucets
- Copper Repipes
- Gas Lines
- Lifetime Warranties

Toll Free (



4714 Saloma Ave Sherman Oaks 91403
No USA Damage

Incident Time: (24hr) 10:03 AM

Incident Date: 08/21/24

Incident Location:

City/County: Sherman Oaks/ Los Angeles

Address/Location: 4714 Saloma Ave Sherman Oaks 91403

Incident Cause: Shovel punctured 0.5-inch gas service

Gas Equipment Affected:

Material: Plastic Pipe size: 0.5" IPS

Dig In Information:

USA notification required: Yes / No

USA notified: Yes / No USA #_____

Facilities properly marked: N/A

Name of Excavator: VICTOR'S ROOTER & PLUMBING SVC

Excavator Contact Person: Victor Curiel

Phone: [REDACTED]

| On Scene: | Date | Time |
|-----------|------|------|
|-----------|------|------|

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Company Personnel on Scene | <u>LCT</u> | <u>Christopher Rodriguez</u> | <u>08/21/24</u> | <u>10:59 AM</u> |
|----------------------------|------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|

| | | | |
|------------------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Gas Flow Stopped | _____ | <u>08/14/24</u> | <u>11:31 AM</u> |
|------------------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|

Customer Outages (Quantity) 1

Summary of incident: Licensed 3rd party contractor damaged 0.5-inch plastic gas service while digging with shovel for repair of sewer lateral. No USA called in for excavation.

Exhibit 2



**CALIFORNIA UNDERGROUND SAFETY BOARD
INVESTIGATION DIVISION
INTERVIEW REPORT**

REPORT DATE: October 31, 2024

CASE NO: N2426177

DATE AND TIME OF INTERVIEW: October 31, 2024, 3:07 pm

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Phone

INTERVIEWER: Adrian Anaya (Investigator)

NAME, TITLE, AND COMPANY OF INTERVIEWEE:

Victor Manuel Curiel, Sole Owner

Victor's Rooter and Plumbing SVC

[REDACTED]

Narrative:

On October 31, 2024, the Investigator contacted Victor Manuel Curiel (Curiel), Sole Owner of Victor's Rooter and Plumbing SVC, via telephone. Curiel provided an email address of vmc1vmc1@ and confirmed his Contractor State License Number 1004608. Curiel reported that his company was excavating, with their trench shovel, to repair the sewer line for a homeowner. Curiel stated the homeowner hired him since the homeowner had sewage backup due to root intrusion in the sewer pipe. Curiel stated it was an emergency repair and that he was performing the hand digging when they hit the gas service line. Curiel indicated they dug a four-by-four hole into the soil in order to access and repair the sewer line. Curiel reported there was an abandoned steel line discovered, and the yellow gas service line was a foot away from that steel line.

Curiel indicated he did not contact the Regional Notification Center (811) prior to excavating due to the fact that they were working on a private property. Curiel reported no other companies were present, other than a tree service company, during the incident. Curiel stated he had two (2) employees working with him named Jesus Diaz and Eduardo Gomez. Curiel stated he contacted the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) immediately after the incident and SoCalGas

arrived in twenty minutes to repair the leak. Curiel stated he notified the homeowner and a neighbor as well. Curiel reported no injuries nor fires occurred during the incident. Curiel stated he does not remember contacting 811 after the incident to report the damage and that he did not call 911. Curiel stated he would continue to contact 811 and hand dig as much as possible to prevent similar damage in the future.

Exhibit 3



Contractor's License Detail for License # 1004608

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.

Data current as of 10/31/2024 2:47:51 PM

Business Information

VICTOR'S ROOTER & PLUMBING SVC



Business Phone Number: [\[REDACTED\]](#)

Entity Sole Ownership

Issue Date 06/22/2015

Expire Date **06/30/2025**

License Status

This license is current and active.

All information below should be reviewed.

Classifications

- ▶ [C36 PLUMBING](#)
- ▶ [C42 SANITATION SYSTEM](#)

Bonding Information

Contractor's Bond

This license filed a Contractor's Bond with [BUSINESS ALLIANCE INSURANCE COMPANY](#).

Bond Number: G111210672256

Bond Amount: \$25,000

Effective Date: 01/01/2023

[Contractor's Bond History](#)

Workers' Compensation

This license is exempt from having workers compensation insurance; they certified that they have no employees at this time.

Effective Date: 06/09/2023

Expire Date: None

[Workers' Compensation History](#)

Other

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

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Contractor's License Detail (Personnel List)

Contractor License # 1004608

Contractor Name VICTOR'S ROOTER & PLUMBING SVC

Click on the person's name to see a more detailed page of information on that person

Licenses Currently Associated With

Name [VICTOR MANUEL CURIEL](#)

Title SOLE OWNER

Association Date 06/22/2015

Classification C36

Additional [There are additional classifications that can be viewed](#)

Classification [by selecting this link.](#)

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Exhibit 4

Anaya, Adrian@EnergySafety

From: Anaya, Adrian@EnergySafety
Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2024 2:43 PM
To: Amber Dahl
Subject: N2426177 - Ticket Locate Request

Hello Amber,

Could you please provide a copy of all tickets and electronic positive responses at about 4714 Saloma Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403 for August 21, 2024?

If there is not a ticket at this address for this date, confirm that finding.

Thank you,
Adrian Anaya
Investigator
[Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety](#)
Mobile: (279) 245-1133
EnergySafety.ca.gov



Exhibit 5

Anaya, Adrian@EnergySafety

From: Amber Dahl <amber@digalert.org>
Sent: Friday, November 1, 2024 12:08 PM
To: Anaya, Adrian@EnergySafety
Subject: File N2426177
Attachments: N2426177.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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



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Underground Service Alert

of Southern California™

November 1, 2024

Adrian Anaya
Underground Safety Board

File Number: N2426177

Dear Adrian,

After searching our records from 2/21/24 through 8/21/24, we were unable to find any DigAlert tickets for the location at or near 4714 Saloma Ave in Sherman Oaks. I hope this information will be helpful.

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

Sincerely,

Amber Dahl
Amber Dahl
Safety Awareness Director

Exhibit 6

Anaya, Adrian@EnergySafety

From: Anaya, Adrian@EnergySafety
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2024 8:19 AM
To: LAFD Records
Subject: Fire Records Request - Underground Safety Board Investigation N2426177

December 10, 2024

Los Angeles Fire Department Attn: LAFD Records Unit
201 North Figueroa Street, Suite 1250
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear LAFD,

I would like to request an electronic copy of any fire dispatch call logs, and any incident reports from responding emergency personnel surrounding a gas leak incident around 4714 Saloma Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403 on August 21, 2024, at approximately between 0900 to 1300 hrs. If no records are located, can you confirm that finding?

We are currently investigating the incident per California Government Code TITLE 1 – GENERAL - DIVISION 5 - PUBLIC WORK AND PUBLIC PURCHASES - CHAPTER 3.1 - Protection of Underground Infrastructure - ARTICLE 2 - Regional Notification Center System Section 4216.19.

If any fees are accrued per our request to receive an electronic copy, please advise and we will address accordingly. Any information received will be beneficial to our investigation. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your help on this matter,

Adrian Anaya

Investigator

Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety

Mobile: (279) 245-1133

EnergySafety.ca.gov



Anaya, Adrian@EnergySafety

From: LAFD Records <lafd.records@lacity.org>
Sent: Tuesday, December 10, 2024 10:27 AM
To: LAFD Records
Cc: Anaya, Adrian@EnergySafety
Subject: Re: Fire Records Request - Underground Safety Board Investigation N2426177

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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.

Good morning,

We have conducted a comprehensive search of our records and we are unable to locate any information / reports on your request.

Respectfully,

LAFD

On Tuesday, December 10, 2024 at 8:19:19 AM UTC-8 Anaya, Adrian@EnergySafety wrote:

December 10, 2024

Los Angeles Fire Department Attn: LAFD Records Unit

201 North Figueroa Street, Suite 1250
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear LAFD,

I would like to request an electronic copy of any fire dispatch call logs, and any incident reports from responding emergency personnel surrounding a gas leak incident around 4714 Saloma Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403 on August 21, 2024, at approximately between 0900 to 1300 hrs. If no records are located, can you confirm that finding?

We are currently investigating the incident per California Government Code TITLE 1 – GENERAL - DIVISION 5 - PUBLIC WORK AND PUBLIC PURCHASES - CHAPTER 3.1 - Protection of Underground Infrastructure - ARTICLE 2 - Regional Notification Center System Section 4216.19.

If any fees are accrued per our request to receive an electronic copy, please advise and we will address accordingly. Any information received will be beneficial to our investigation. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your help on this matter,

Adrian Anaya
Investigator
Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
Mobile: [\(279\) 245-1133](tel:(279)245-1133)
EnergySafety.ca.gov

