PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY
Wildfire Mitigation Plans Discovery 2023
Data Response

PG&E Data Request No.:	OEIS_010-Q004		
PG&E File Name:	WMP-Discovery2023_DR_OEIS_010-Q004		
Request Date:	July 20, 2023	Requester DR No.:	P-WMP_2023-PG&E-010
Date Sent:	August 3, 2023	Requesting Party:	Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
DRU Index #:		Requester:	Dakota Smith

SUBJECT: REGARDING PG&E'S RECENT UNDERGROUND VAULT FIRES IN SAN FRANCISCO

QUESTION 004

a. Provide the expected cause for each recent underground vault fire that's occurred in San Francisco.

b. In terms of the associated equipment in each of the vault fires, is PG&E planning on using such equipment as part of its planned undergrounding for wildfire risk? If so, how is PG&E monitoring and reducing any associated ignition risk?

ANSWER 004

a. PG&E does not specifically track whether ignition events have occurred in a vault or outside a vault. However, after a review of all ignitions associated with underground equipment in San Francisco, we have identified two 2023 events involving facility ignitions in PG&E's ignition records, occurring on April 26, 2023 and July 8, 2023. PG&E understands this request to be referring to these two recent events involving underground vaults. We provide high-level summaries of each event below.

EI230708A: On July 8, 2023, at approximately 2025 hours two vaults fed by the Marina-0404 4kV underground distribution circuit in San Francisco (a non-HFTD) began smoking. One vault cover lifted and damaged the vehicle parked on top of it when an explosion (which also damaged windows on both sides of Pacific Avenue) occurred inside the vault. Troubleshooters deenergized and isolated a section of damaged idle secondary underground distribution cable before restoring customers. The investigation into the cause of this incident is still ongoing.

The April 26, 2023 incident is subject to an ongoing privileged legal investigation. As such, we assert our right to withhold information, reports, conclusions, and results based on the attorney-client privilege and/or the work product doctrine. On that basis, PG&E objects to this data request to the extent it calls for such information.

Without waiving the foregoing objections, PG&E answers as follows:

EI230426A: On April 26, 2023, at approximately 2040 hours two vaults fed by Substation SF J in San Francisco (a non-HFTD) caught fire. The fire at Sansome Street and Halleck Avenue damaged three 12kV primary circuits in the J Group distribution network and all five ZJ tie cables that feed SF J from Substation SF Z. PG&E deenergized SF Z and first responders extinguished the fires. The extensive damage led to a multi-day power outage and repairs that continued into July 2023. The investigation into the cause of this incident is subject to a privileged legal investigation and is ongoing.

b. The 10k Undergrounding project utilizes standard PG&E underground enclosures, which are smaller than the PG&E standard vaults found in urban areas such as San Francisco. While some equipment/material, such as cable and cable accessories, may be used in both enclosures and vaults, larger equipment such as switches and transformers will differ. Due to the size limitations and ventilation requirements, vault switches and transformers are not used in underground enclosures and are not expected to be used as part of the 10k Undergrounding project.

   PG&E relies on our inspection and maintenance program to identify any problems and hazards that may adversely impact safety or reliability. Please see our response to Q1 parts c and d for additional information.