

**BEFORE THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
OFFICE OF ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY**

VIA E-FILE

June 10, 2024

Kristin Ralff Douglas
Program Manager, Electrical Undergrounding Division
Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
California Natural Resources Agency
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Docket Number 2023-UPS - 2023 Undergrounding Plans
Reply Comments of AT&T California, the California Broadband & Video
Association, and Sonic Telecom, LLC on the May 8, 2024 Draft 10-Year Electrical
Undergrounding Plan Guidelines**

Dear Ms. Ralff Douglas:

Pursuant to the May 8, 2024 notice memorandum, AT&T California, the California Broadband & Video Association (“CalBroadband”),¹ and Sonic Telecom, LLC (collectively, the “Communications Providers”) respectfully submit these reply comments in response to comments filed by another party on the Draft 10-Year Electrical Undergrounding Plan Guidelines (“Draft Guidelines”) issued by the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (“Energy Safety”).

The Investor-Owned Utilities (“IOUs”) Should Not Be Relieved of Their Obligation to Provide Pole Attachment Information

In its opening comments, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (“PG&E”) recommends that the Draft Guidelines be modified to require the IOUs to provide information about third-party equipment on their poles only when the IOU has a lease or agreement with the owner of that equipment. PG&E claims it cannot provide information about equipment on poles when the communications company has a lease or agreement with another entity.²

PG&E’s request is inconsistent with the California Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) Resolution SPD-15, which requires that a 10-year Undergrounding Plan Application include “[t]he ownership *and use* of existing utility poles where undergrounding projects are planned.”³ Resolution SPD-15 does not limit this obligation to equipment attached pursuant to agreements with the electric utility. Nor would it make sense to do so because all equipment on the pole is potentially affected by undergrounding.

¹ CalBroadband is a trade association consisting of cable companies that have invested over \$45 billion in California infrastructure since 1996 to provide video, voice, and Internet service to millions of customers statewide.

² PG&E Opening Comments, p. 15.

³ Res. SPD-15, Attachment 1, p. 10 (emphasis added).

Limiting the obligation to provide information as proposed by PG&E would ignore an enormous number of communications attachments on utility poles. In PG&E's territory, most communications equipment is attached in the "communications space" pursuant to agreements with a communications joint pole owner, not through agreements with PG&E. PG&E does not explain, and it is not clear, why it "cannot" provide information about whether there is third-party equipment attached pursuant to other agreements. PG&E knows which poles are jointly owned with communications providers, and thus which poles include communications equipment. In addition, the IOUs are required by Resolution SPD-15 to provide this information to the Commission, so there is no reason why it also cannot be provided to Energy Safety.

To be clear, the Communications Providers do not seek for IOUs to disclose the names of the communications equipment owners; indeed such disclosure would compromise competitively sensitive information and threaten the security of this critical infrastructure. Rather, the Communications Providers merely ask that the Draft Guidelines require the IOUs to identify *whether* communications equipment exists on poles for circuits subject to undergrounding.

Conclusion

For these reasons, the Communications Providers respectfully request that PG&E and the other IOUs not be relieved of their obligation to identify the use of existing poles, including use by communications companies.

Very truly yours,

/s/ David J. Miller

David J. Miller

Assistant Vice President – Senior Legal Counsel, AT&T California

For the Communications Providers⁴

⁴ The signatory has been authorized to submit these comments on behalf of all the Communications Providers.