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NOTICE OF VIOLATION

Mr. Vincent Tanguay:

Pursuant to Public Utilities Code section 326 and Government Code section 15475.1, the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (Energy Safety) has conducted an inspection of danger trees scheduled to be removed by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) in accordance with its 2024 Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP) and determined the existence of a violation. Energy Safety therefore issues PG&E a Notice of Violation (NOV), identifying noncompliance with an approved WMP or any law, regulation, or guideline within the authority of the Office.¹

In response to a public complaint received by Energy Safety, the Environmental Science Division (ESD) conducted an inspection of five dead and declining ponderosa pines in the vicinity of the city of Placerville, California in High Fire Threat District (HFTD) Tier 2 on September 6, 2024. Energy Safety had previously emailed PG&E about the public complaint on August 20, 2024. On November 12, 2024, Energy Safety's ESD conducted a second inspection to determine if PG&E had removed the trees pursuant to the WMP. During the November 12, 2024 inspection, Energy Safety confirmed that PG&E had not removed the trees resulting in the following violation as documented in the attached inspection report:

Violation 1. Energy Safety observed that in implementing 2024 WMP initiative 8.2.2.2 Distribution Second Patrol (VM-17) near coordinates 38.724635, -120.806162, PG&E failed to adhere to its protocol of removing dead or dying trees within 180 days of identification. Energy Safety considers this violation to be in the "Moderate" risk category.

Response Options

In accordance with Energy Safety Guidelines,² within 30 days from the issuance of this NOV, PG&E must provide a response informing Energy Safety of corrective actions taken or planned to remedy the above

¹ Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, section 29302(b)(2)

² Energy Safety Compliance Guidelines, pp 4-5

identified violation and prevent recurrence. Alternatively, should PG&E disagree with the NOV, PG&E must submit to Energy Safety a response stating it disagrees with the violation, the reason or justification for the disagreement and all supporting documentation.³ This response shall be filed in the Energy Safety e-Filing system under the 2024 NOV Docket⁴ and the associated file name(s) must begin with the NOV identification number provided above.

PG&E may also request an informal conference with Energy Safety's ESD for the purpose of disputing any issues raised in this NOV no later than five (5) business days before the 30- day response deadline.⁵ Requests for informal conference with Energy Safety must be e-mailed to environmentalscience@energysafety.ca.gov, with a copy sent to Elizabeth.McAlpine@energysafety.ca.gov. Pursuant to Government Code section 15475.4, if PG&E intends to request a hearing "to take public comment or present additional information," it must also do so within the 30-day timeframe. If a petition for hearing is not received by the deadline, then the determination and conditions set forth in this NOV become final.

Pursuant to Public Utilities Code section 8389(g), Energy Safety may refer this matter to the California Public Utilities Commission for consideration of an enforcement action.

Sincerely,



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Cc:

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³ Energy Safety Compliance Guidelines, pp. 4-5

⁴ <https://efiling.energysafety.ca.gov/EFiling/DocketInformation.aspx?docketnumber=2024%20NOV>

⁵ Energy Safety Compliance Guidelines, pp. 4-5



INSPECTION REPORT

Overview

The Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (Energy Safety) conducts inspections to verify the work performed by an electrical corporation as reported in an approved Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP), and to assess general conditions of electrical infrastructure that may adversely impact an electrical corporation’s wildfire risk. A Notice of Violation (NOV) is issued for any instances of noncompliance discovered during an inspection related to an electrical corporation’s execution of its WMP initiatives.

Energy Safety has designated this violation as moderate risk. PG&E must correct the violation pursuant to the timeline provided in Table 1.⁶

Table 1. Risk Category and Correction Timelines

Risk Category	Violation correction timeline
Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediate resolution
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 months (in High Fire Threat District (HFTD) Tier 3)• 6 months (in HFTD Tier 2)• 6 months (if relevant to worker safety; not in HFTD Tier 3)
Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12 months or resolution scheduled in WMP update

⁶ Energy Safety Compliance Guidelines, p. 3



Inspection Summary

The inspection location and WMP initiative summary is included in Table 2. The WMP inspection violation is included in Table 3.

Table 2: Inspection Location and WMP Initiative Summary

Electrical Corporation:	PG&E
Report Number:	NOV ESD_PGE_RIB_20241112_1000
Inspector:	Ramzi Ibrahim
WMP Year Inspected:	2024
Quarterly Data Report (QDR) Referenced:	N/A
Inspection Selection:	Energy Safety inspected the location based on a public complaint received by Energy Safety
Relevant WMP Initiative(s):	8.2.2.2 Distribution Second Patrol (VM-17)
Date of inspections:	September 6, 2024, and November 12, 2024
City and/or County of Inspection:	Placerville, CA, El Dorado County
Inspection Purpose:	Investigate public complaint and confirm if PG&E completed the work identified from its Second Patrol inspection.

Table 3: WMP Inspection Violation

Violation #	Structure ID	VMP ID	Lat/Long	HFTD	Initiative Number	Violation Type	Severity	Correction Timeline	Violation Description
Violation 1	121575549	N/A	38.724635, -120.806162	Tier 2	8.2.2.2.2 Distribution Second Patrol (VM-17)	Adherence to Protocol	Moderate	6 months	Failure to adhere to the protocol to complete the identified dead/dying tree work within 180 days for HFTD.

Inspection Findings

Violation 1:

Relevant Requirement:

PG&E's WMP states the following regarding initiative number 8.2.2.2 Distribution Second Patrol (VM-17): "The objective of Second Patrol is to maintain radial clearance between vegetation and conductors by identifying trees that will encroach within the MDRs [Minimum Distance Requirement] and by identifying dead, dying, and declining trees that may fail and strike conductors. PG&E has implemented a plan to complete the identified dead/dying tree work within 180 days for HFTD areas and within 365 days for non-HFTD areas."⁷

Additionally, PG&E's Revision Notice response further clarifies that "PG&E counts the time to work completion by starting with the day the tree was listed for work.... Hazard and Dead and dying trees are to be completed within 180 [days] of identification."⁸

Finding:

Energy Safety concludes that Violation 1 is classified as "Moderate" because the trees are neither touching the conductors nor leaning in a way that suggests imminent failure, however the trees show signs of decline such as loss of foliage and dead branches which increases fire ignition risk.

On September 6, 2024 and November 12, 2024, Energy Safety Environmental Science Division (ESD) inspectors conducted inspections of five declining and dead ponderosa pines (*Pinus ponderosa*) located within strike potential of the conductors between pole IDs 121575549 and 121424322 along Sacramento Street in Placerville. These inspections were in response to a public complaint received by Energy Safety. In advance of the September 6, 2024 inspection, Energy Safety sent PG&E a data request regarding these trees on August 20, 2024. PG&E's response stated that the five subject trees were designated for removal⁹ on May 2, 2024 during its Second Patrol program.¹⁰ As a result of this designation, PG&E should have removed the trees by October 29, 2024. However, as of November 12, 2024, the trees had not been removed. Energy Safety's November 12, 2024 inspection date is 194 days from the identification date and is beyond the 180 days required by PG&E's WMP initiative number 8.2.2.2 removal protocol. The inspector's observation is documented in Violation 1 photographs, which are exhibits to this report. Photo numbers Item1GImg1, Item1GImg2, and Item1GImg3 depict the location of the trees on Sacramento Street. Photo numbers Item1IA1Img1, Item1IA1Img2, and Item1IA1Img3 depict the location of five dead ponderosa pines east of pole ID 121575549.

⁷ PG&E's 2023-2025 WMP (Rev. #4.1, Jun. 7, 2024), p. 667
(<https://efiling.energysafety.ca.gov/eFiling/Getfile.aspx?fileid=56791&shareable=true>, accessed Nov. 12, 2024).

⁸ PG&E's 2023-2025 WMP (Rev. #4.1, Jun. 7, 2024), p. 639.
(<https://efiling.energysafety.ca.gov/eFiling/Getfile.aspx?fileid=56791&shareable=true>, accessed Nov. 19, 2024).

⁹ Response to DRU14204, question 1, attachment
"DRU14204_Q01_Atch02_AnnualDetermination_Hwy_49_Coloma_Pville_Q2_CEMA_2024_AC_Redacted.xlsx".

¹⁰ Response to DRU14204, question 1, attachment "DRU14204_Q01_Atch01_00000346_Span Inspection work order_Redacted.pdf" (Work Order No. 00112384).

Exhibits

Exhibit A: Photo Log

Structure ID: 121575549

Violation 1

	
<p>Item1Gimg1: Location of pole ID 121575549 to the east with the first two declining ponderosa pines.</p>	<p>Item1Gimg2: Photograph of Sacramento Street looking to the west toward pole ID 121461981.</p>



Item1G1mg3: Photo of the second and third pines along Sacramento Street near pole 121424322.



Item1IA1mg1: Photograph taken from across the street east from pole ID 121575549. The first tree is north of the conductors at 0.2 span and second, third, and fourth trees are north of the conductors at 0.4 span.



Item1IA1mg2: The five declining trees west of pole ID 121424322.



Item1IA1img3: Fifth tree (in the foreground) directly north of pole ID 121424322 showing evidence of dieback.