

February 21, 2025

Patrick Doherty
Program Manager | Compliance Assurance Division
Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
715 P Street, 20th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Energy Safety-ID: NOV_CAD_PGE_ATJ_20240813_1556
Notice of Violation: Government Code § 15475.1 and the California Code of Regulations,
Title 14, Division 17 § 29302(b)(2)

Dear Mr. Doherty:

This letter is in response to the above referenced Notice of Violation (NOV), dated January 24, 2025 (NOV Letter). This NOV arises out of the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety's (Energy Safety) inspection of Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) 2023 Wildfire Mitigation Plan initiatives, on August 13, 2024, in the vicinity of the city of Mariposa, California.

Energy Safety based its compliance assessment on the following statute and code sections:

California Government Code Section 15475.1, states:

- (a) The office may determine that a regulated entity is not in compliance with any matter under the authority of the office. If necessary, the office may undertake an investigation into whether the regulated entity is noncompliant with its duties and responsibilities or has otherwise committed violations of any laws, regulations, or guidelines within the authority of the office.*
- (b) The office's primary objective is to ensure that regulated entities are reducing wildfire risk and complying with energy infrastructure safety measures as required by law.*

California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 29302(b)(2), "Investigations, Notices of Defect and Violation, and Referral to the Commission" states in part:

"The Director may designate a compliance officer to consider the findings of any investigation. The compliance officer may issue any of the following:

...

(2) Notice of violation, identifying noncompliance with an approved Wildfire Mitigation Plan or any law, regulation, or guideline within the authority of the Office."

Energy Safety's August 13, 2024, inspections identified the following violation:

Violation 1. Energy Safety observed that in implementing 2023 WMP initiative 8.1.2.1 – covered conductor installation - distribution, PG&E failed to provide accurate data in reporting that covered conductor installation was completed over nine spans, between ten poles (pole ID's 121479485, 121479578, 121479484, 121479483, 120128597, 121026973, 120771076, 110309725, 121075191 and 121075190), with a Grid Hardening ID 35374559. Energy Safety observed new bare conductor with upgraded pole equipment. Energy Safety issues a violation referencing to the first (pole ID 121479485) and last (pole ID 121075190) poles where covered conductor installation was reported completed.

Response

PG&E disagrees that it was in violation of Gov. Code § 15475.1 or CCR § 29302(b)(2) and respectfully requests that Energy Safety rescind this NOV. Specifically, in our Q4 2023 Quarterly Data Report (QDR), we did not inaccurately report 2023 WMP Initiative 8.1.2.1 – Covered Conductor Installation for Grid Hardening ID #35374559. There was no inaccuracy or violation because PG&E did not report that covered conductor was completed over these nine spans between ten poles (pole ID's 121479485, 121479578, 121479484, 121479483, 120128597, 121026973, 120771076, 110309725, 121075191 and 121075190).

Instead, PG&E planned and constructed the system hardening of these spans as an underground project, not covered conductor. The poles and spans identified in this NOV were planned as undergrounding project, Grid Hardening (GH) ID #35374559.

PG&E reported in its Q4 2023 QDR that system hardening on project GH ID #35374559 was completed via undergrounding on December 12, 2023, as designed. The WMP Initiative Activity is identified as Undergrounding.¹ The project is listed under both of PG&E's system hardening WMP initiatives: GH-04 (Undergrounding) and GH-01. Per Energy Safety's requirements, GH-01 is labelled Covered Conductor due to historic WMP naming conventions, but the initiative is inclusive of covered conductor, line removal, and undergrounding activities. Because GH-01 is inclusive of undergrounding work completed in GH-04, an undergrounding project such as GH ID #35374559 is reported as GH-04 and GH-01, though in both cases the activity type indicates that it was completed as undergrounding, not covered conductor or line removal.

When the GH ID #35374559 job was completed, those nine spans were temporarily left in place overhead because they were needed to power a home that was to be serviced by an adjacent undergrounding project (GH ID #35374687) which was not yet complete at the time of the in-field audit. The temporary overhead spans that Energy Safety observed in August 2024 were removed on October 24, 2024, when project GH ID #35374687 was completed and the new service feed for the home referenced was established.

Below is a timeline of events to describe this scenario:

¹ The Q4 2023 QDR was submitted to Energy Safety on February 1, 2024.

- *December 12, 2023*: Undergrounding project #35374559 is completed (with temporary overhead spans remaining).
- *February 1, 2024*: Undergrounding project #35374559 is reported as complete as part of targets GH-04 and GH-01 in our Q4 2023 QDR.
- *August 13, 2024*: Energy Safety performed its in-field audit for undergrounding project #35374559.
- *October 24, 2024*: Adjacent undergrounding project #35374687 is completed and overhead bare wire for the nine identified spans was deenergized and removed.

For these reasons described above, we respectfully request that this NOV be rescinded. Please contact the undersigned at Jerrod.Meier@pge.com if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Jerrod Meier,
Director, Electric Regulatory Compliance

cc: Yana Loginova, Program Manager, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
Anthony Trujillo, Inspector, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety