



Request for Action Regarding PG&E Safety Priorities

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To: CityCouncil@lovelafayette.org

Cc: Michael Dawson <mdawson@gmail.com>, Dave Kusters <dhk290@gmail.com>, Gina Dawson <gdawson@gmail.com>

Dear Mayor Tatzin and Members of City Council,

We understand that PG&E will be hosting an Open House on May 9, 2018, to discuss the Community Pipeline Safety Initiative. We are concerned this event is a prelude to imminent scheduling and removal of trees from our neighborhoods and parks. We respectfully ask City Council to provide documentation to PG&E that no tree removal will be allowed until PG&E appears before City Council as committed by Angus Coyle, PG&E CPSI Director, in his letter to Council dated May 25, 2017. Furthermore, we, along with 2700 residents petitioning Council to protect Lafayette trees from unnecessary destruction, ask Council to rescind the March 27, 2017 tree removal agreement with PG&E.

With due respect for Council's intention of protecting community pipeline safety, it's now clear that Council would be justified in rescinding the PG&E CPSI agreement as PG&E knowingly or negligently misrepresented the rationale they used as basis for the agreement. Specifically, PG&E misrepresents the significance of trees to community safety and their claims that trees block immediate access to pipeline are resoundingly rejected by first responders who respond to emergencies. PG&E also did not disclose alternatives for pipeline risk mitigation for Council to consider prior to the agreement as noted by former Mayor Anderson at the May 8, 2017 council meeting.

Trees had nothing to do with the tragic pipeline explosion in San Bruno. First responder access there was not obstructed by trees but by the inability of PG&E to turn off the flow of gas in a timely manner. The lack of automatic shut off valves in that city possibly cost lives and unquestionably added to property damage. The CPSI agreement promotes the wrong safety priorities in Lafayette. The more than \$640K PG&E spends in Lafayette for tree mitigation and lawsuits related to this agreement would be better spent on adding automatic shut off valves and other measures for pipeline safety compliance.

Over the past year, we've become increasingly aware of pipeline safety issues in addition to the exposed segment of pipeline that PG&E should prioritize for remedy before consideration of trees. We also know of PG&E's misrepresentation of important safety facts to not only Council and residents, but the CPUC, specifically regarding pipeline integrity testing.

A current example of PG&E mis-prioritization is the capacity project scheduled this summer along St. Mary's Road on transmission pipeline DFM-3001-01. Per PG&E project crew and PG&E pipeline report, it is first and foremost a capacity project to increase service to Moraga customers, which happens to replace a 1952 segment of the pipeline. Alarming, neither PG&E project crew, CPSI team, or CPUC have verified any testing records on this pipeline since 1983! Other segments of this same pipeline that lie north of the project, which are possibly older and run along Lafayette Moraga trail neighborhoods, are not scheduled for testing or replacement for years to come. These safety lapses are unacceptable.

Although the St. Mary's Road project will place new, larger diameter pipeline, it doesn't include an automatic or remote shut off valve. Ten years after San Bruno's explosion, Lafayette does not have an automatic valve that would immediately shut off gas in a pipeline emergency. We're glad PG&E is working to improve the system, but this project is one more example of PG&E putting corporate revenue growth ahead of significant safety improvement.

It is not responsible to blindly defer stewardship of our community safety into the hands of a company that has a history of prioritizing profits over safety and that is not addressing similar risk factors in Lafayette that led to the San Bruno explosion. In fact, PG&E's pipeline safety record is getting worse since the San Bruno tragedy. That this

billion-dollar corporation is financing Lafayette City's legal defense against residents also seeking community safety should disturb Council. It disturbs residents.

A year ago, at the May 8th, 2017 council meeting, multiple residents questioned PG&E safety priorities. After hearing these concerns, then Mayor Anderson stated to PG&E that "there has been a lack of integrity to the discussions that occurred", referring to prior meetings with Council. There continues to be a lack of integrity on PG&E's part. Residents, and we hope City Council, do not want to pursue actions or agreements of such great community impact that lack integrity, literally and factually, in terms of pipeline integrity and safety.

With respect, we again ask City Council to side with residents, and safety, by rescinding the tree removal agreement with PG&E. There is precedent for this approach, as the City of Palo Alto and County of Santa Cruz did not sign an agreement with PG&E after considering PG&E's lack of credible basis for the CPSI program. If there is merit to PG&E's stated goal of building trust in the community and their vision is indeed to be the safest gas company in the nation, PG&E will accept City Council's renouncement, and all parties will commence open, public discussions with Lafayette residents to assess, prioritize, and reduce risks to pipeline safety accordingly.

While this matter is under review, we ask that City Council provide formal documentation to PG&E and residents that tree removal will not be allowed. It's imperative the Council demonstrates their willingness to prioritize safety in our community now as the case could be tied in appellate court for up to two years.

Thank you for your public service and your consideration of this matter. We look forward to a response.

Sincerely,

Gina Dawson, Michael Dawson, Dave Kosters
Save Lafayette Trees