

**MOORPARK CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA REPORT**

TO: Honorable City Council

FROM: Hugh R. Riley, Assistant City Manager

DATE: January 11, 2011 (CC Meeting of 1/19/2011) 

SUBJECT: Consider a Gas Pipeline Safety Presentation by Michele Pettes of the Southern California Gas Company

BACKGROUND

As Council is aware, on September 9, 2010, a 30-inch steel natural gas pipeline owned by Pacific Gas & Electric exploded in flames in the city of San Bruno, about 2 miles west of San Francisco International Airport. The loud roar and shaking led some residents of the area, first responders, and news media to believe initially that it was an earthquake or that a large airplane had crashed. It took crews nearly an hour to determine it was a gas pipeline explosion. The death toll was eight people. The explosion and the resulting fire leveled 38 houses and damaged many more. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) registered the explosion and resulting shock wave as a magnitude 1.1 earthquake. Eyewitnesses reported the initial blast "had a wall of fire more than 1,000 feet high". Since the San Bruno incident, there has been heightened awareness and concern regarding the possibility of a similar tragedy occurring in communities across the nation.

On October 29, staff attended a *Pipeline Safety Briefing* by the Southern California Gas Company to address these concerns. The Gas Company provided an overview of their pipeline system, proactive safety measures in Gas Company operations, and extra steps the Gas Company has taken since the San Bruno Incident.

The Gas Company believes its Pipeline Integrity Program and safety practices are effective. Among its components are semi-annual leak surveys, corrosion monitoring, valve maintenance, and cathodic protection of steel pipes. Cathodic protection can help prevent stress corrosion cracking by using low-voltage electricity to retard corrosion.

The public also has a key role to play in pipeline protection. California's Underground Service Alert system, a.k.a. "DigAlert," or "USA Alert," is the "One Call Notification Center" that supports all of Southern California. This free service locates and marks underground utilities at job sites. DigAlert is a simple process to help homeowners, contractors, and other utilities avoid the costly error of cutting a fiber optic cable or damaging a power line or a gas main. Everyone is advised to "call before you dig." The free service will mark the location of any underground pipelines or conduits at any job site, large or small. DigAlert can be contacted by dialing 811, or 1-800-227-2600, or visiting <http://www.digalert.org/>.

DISCUSSION

If it pleases the Council, Michele Pettes, the Ventura County Public Affairs Manager for the Southern California Gas Company, will give a brief presentation on gas pipeline safety.

Ms. Pettes began working with The Southern California Gas Company in late 2007 as the Ventura County Public Affairs Manager. Prior to joining The Gas Company, Ms. Pettes was the President and CEO of the Economic Development Collaborative—Ventura County (EDC-VC).

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Hear the presentation.