



SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT
Public Information Office

06/21/2012

Press Release

1530 Hrs

For Immediate Release PST
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Fire Chief and Pacific Gas and Electric Company Officials Identify Areas of Improvement

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. –Chief Joanne Hayes-White and San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) officials met with Pacific Gas and Electric Company’s (PG&E) top gas operations officials Thursday, June 21, to review a recent fire in San Francisco that started when a contractor working on a water line damaged a small-diameter gas line.

Nick Stavropoulos, PG&E’s Executive Vice President of gas operations, detailed improvements the company is making in dispatch, response and mapping processes in an ongoing effort to enhance coordination between the SFFD and PG&E and both discussed additional efforts to further enhance their coordination.

“Today’s meeting was positive and productive, and we’re confident that the SFFD and PG&E will continue to work together with the ultimate goal of keeping the public and employees safe during accidents like this,” said Stavropoulos. “We are always looking for ways to improve our operations, and we thank the Chief for the constructive conversation. We have incredible respect for all first responders. Our cooperation is absolutely essential to quick, effective emergency response.”

“We are in agreement that the ultimate priority is to keep our employees and residents safe and informed,” said Chief Hayes-White. “This is a collaborative and on-going process for both agencies. Mr. Stavropoulos and his team were responsive and transparent. We anticipate improvements in the area of emergency operations. A solid commitment to conduct interagency drills focused on gas-related emergencies has been made. In addition, PG&E officials have agreed to meet with us on a quarterly basis to provide updates on the implementation and modernization of their critical capabilities and infrastructure,” added the Fire Chief.

Chief Hayes-White and Stavropoulos acknowledged that the contractor involved in the fire last week could have avoided this accident by using safe and proper practices.

PG&E and SFFD remind anyone planning excavation projects that State law requires you to call 811 at least two days beforehand so that PG&E and other utility representatives can mark underground lines. Knowing where utility lines are located before digging is an essential step in ensuring personal and public safety.

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