

**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
CITY COUNCIL  
STAFF REPORT**

**Meeting Date:** April 5, 2016  
**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**From:** City Manager  
**Subject:** Presentation: PG&E Community Pipeline Safety Initiative  
**Recommendation:** That the City Council Receive the Informational Presentation  
**Funding:** Currently Budgeted: \_\_\_(YES) \_\_\_(NO) XX(N/A)  
Net General Fund Cost: N/A  
If Cost to Other Fund(s):

**INTRODUCTION:**

This item is to request the City Council Receive the Informational Presentation from PG&E on PG&E's Community Pipeline Safety Initiative.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of Sebastopol City Staff and PG&E representatives met to discuss the PG&E's Community Pipeline Safety Initiative to improve the pipeline safety and reliability in the City of Sebastopol. PG&E will be presenting to the City Council PG&E's ongoing gas safety efforts in Sebastopol.

**DISCUSSION:**

PG&E is focused on improving community safety by addressing potential risks to their gas transmission pipelines. Certain trees, brush, and structures can threaten gas safety because they can block first responders' access during emergencies and prevent PG&E crews from performing critical safety and maintenance work. In addition, tree and brush roots can damage underground pipelines over time by impacting the pipes' protective coating, leading to corrosion. National experts on pipeline safety and first responders agree that moving or replacing trees and other obstacles located too close to underground pipelines will make the community safer.

PG&E understands how important trees and landscape are to the residents of Sebastopol. PG&E will be closely reviewing the area above their gas transmission pipelines to ensure that they are only replacing those trees and bushes that pose a threat to public safety. While removing all vegetation from a minimum of 10 feet on either side of the transmission pipeline is industry best practice, PG&E will work with property owners to conduct a detailed assessment of trees located on or adjacent to residential private property as detailed below (additional information can be found in Attachment A).

- Trees and brush located between zero and five feet from the edge of the pipe will need to be removed to:
  - Help ensure first responders and emergency response crews have the minimum clearance (five feet on either side of the pipeline) for immediate access in an emergency;
  - Protect the pipeline from damage caused by tree and brush roots; and
  - Help improve community safety.

- For trees and brush located between 5.1 and 14 feet from the edge of the pipeline, they may be determined to be a manageable risk and can potentially remain in place with ongoing monitoring by PG&E professionals. In the future, if these trees become an unacceptable risk to the pipeline, PG&E will work with the property owner to address the situation at that time.
- PG&E will meet with the property owner to review the results of the safety assessment. When trees need to be removed for safety reasons, PG&E will work with the property owner and the Sebastopol Public Works Director to offer replacement trees, to be planted a safe distance from the pipe at appropriate locations on the property. A list of tree and plant species that are safe for planting in the area around the pipeline can be found in Attachment B.
- PG&E will work with the Sebastopol city staff to obtain ministerial encroachment permits and/or building permits associated with this gas safety work and offer mitigation options.

#### **Schedule for Outreach**

PG&E will be working directly with private property owners regarding all proposed tree removals in Sebastopol. Below is a timeline of proposed outreach. PG&E will continue to work in close coordination with designated city staff. Please note this timeline is subject to change based upon scheduling and availability of property owners.

- Week of April 11: PG&E will begin outreach to private property owners by mailing personalized letters to each property owner.
- Week of April 18: PG&E will work with private property owners to schedule onsite visits.
- Week of April 25: PG&E will begin meeting with property owners to explain the program, gather any additional information and jointly plans forward.

The timeline for beginning the safety work will depend upon agreements with the private property owners.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

This item is to request the City Council Receive the Informational Presentation from PG&E on PG&E's Community Pipeline Safety Initiative.

#### **Attachments:**

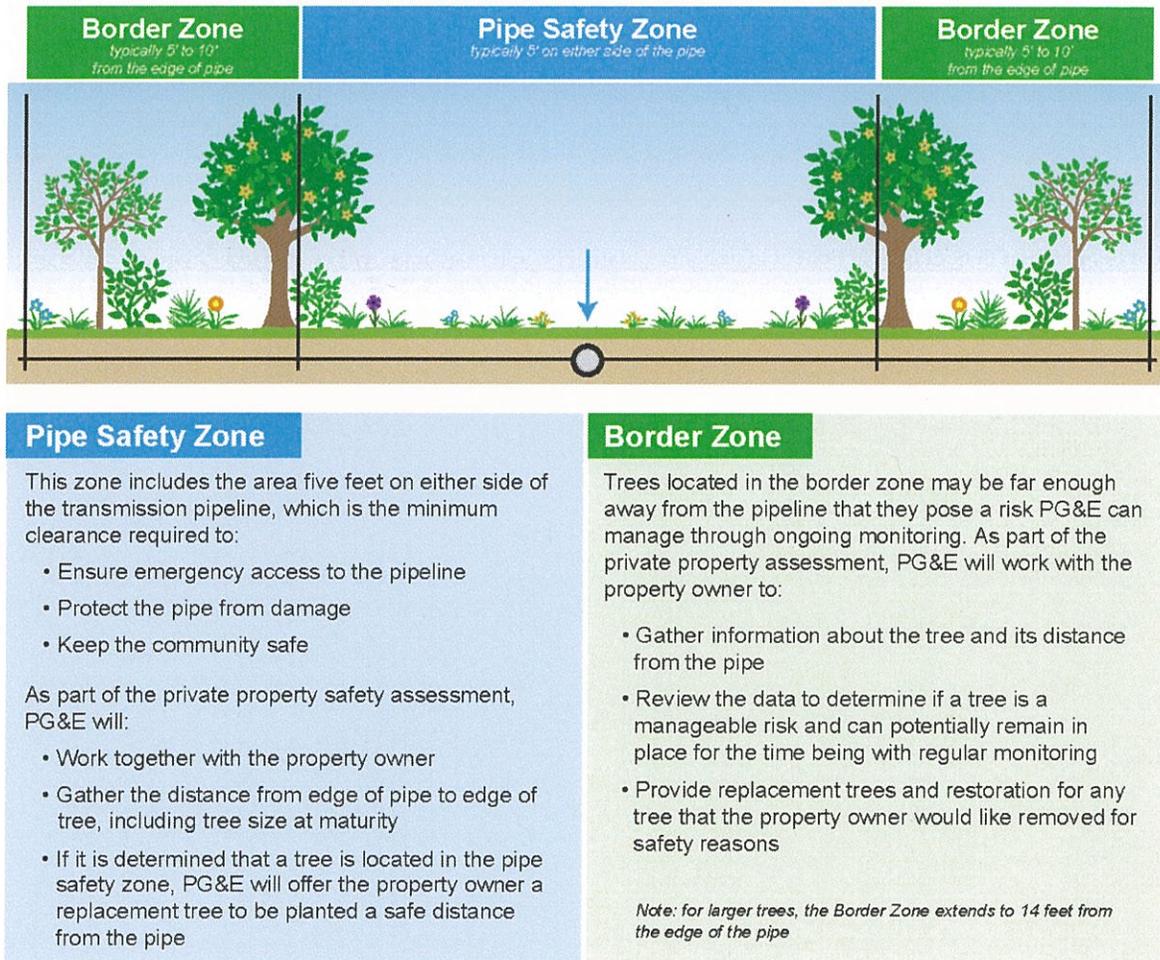
Attachment A – Private Property Safety Assessment  
Attachment B – Tree and Plant Species  
Attachment C – Slides  
Attachment D – Letter to Private Property Owners  
Attachment E – PG&E Flyer

## ATTACHMENT A

### Private Property Safety Assessment – Trees and Vegetation

PG&E understands how important trees are to customers, the community and the environment. To help ensure we are only replacing trees that pose a safety concern, we are conducting an assessment of trees located on private property. As part of this assessment, we will work with private property owners to share with them what we know about the safety risks and gather specific information about their tree and property. While removing vegetation from 10 feet on either side of the pipeline, and up to 14 feet for larger trees, is the industry's best practice to reduce safety risks, trees that are determined to be a manageable risk can potentially remain in place with ongoing monitoring and inspections by our PG&E safety professionals. In the future, it may be determined that these trees develop into a risk for the pipeline serving gas to the community, and we will work with the property owner to address the situation at that time.

The chart below outlines the steps PG&E will utilize to conduct the review of trees on private property. Please note the size of the tree canopy is not a factor affecting the safety review.

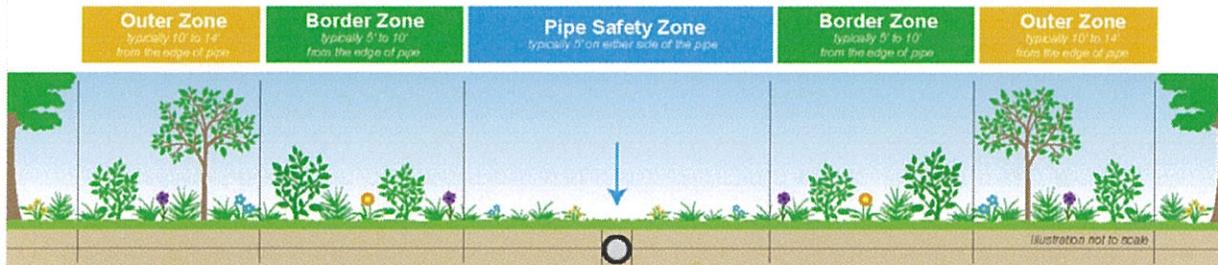


Please note for trees located on property owned by Sebastopol, PG&E will continue to work with city leaders to conduct an in-depth review of every tree.

**ATTACHMENT B**

**PG&E** Community Pipeline Safety Initiative  
**Guide to Safe Landscaping Near Gas Pipelines**

When planning new landscaping near underground utilities, it's important to remember that the right plant in the right location can both enhance the natural beauty of your home and help protect the safety of your community. Trees and plants located too close to gas transmission pipelines can delay emergency access for safety crews and damage pipes. Below is a list of ultra-drought tolerant plant types that are safe in certain locations around the pipeline. Please note the suggested list is not all-inclusive.



Please note easement widths can vary and the above represents best practices and guidance for safe landscaping near gas pipelines.

Pipe Safety Zone				
Lawns, flowers, low-profile grasses and low-growing herbaceous plants are permitted within the Pipe Safety Zone. See the list below for plant suggestions.				
azure penstemon ( <i>Penstemon azureus</i> )	California poppy ( <i>Eschscholzia californica</i> )	grama grass ( <i>Bouteloua</i> spp.)	purple needle grass ( <i>Stipa pulchra</i> )	stonecrop ( <i>Sedum</i> spp.)
belladonna lily ( <i>Amaryllis belladonna</i> )	chalk lettuce ( <i>Dudleya</i> spp.)	June grass ( <i>Koeleria macrantha</i> )	sea lavender ( <i>Limonium</i> spp.)	thyme ( <i>Thymus</i> spp.)
blue eyed grass ( <i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i> )	daffodil ( <i>Narcissus</i> spp.)	kangaroo paw ( <i>Anigozanthos</i> spp.)	showy milkweed ( <i>Asclepias speciosa</i> )	UC Verde buffalograss ( <i>Buchloe dactyloides</i> 'UC Verde')
Bulbine ( <i>Calyptophus</i> spp.)	dymondia ( <i>Dymondia margaretae</i> )	Monardella ( <i>Monardella</i> spp.)	silverbush ( <i>Convolvulus cneorum</i> )	yarrow ( <i>Achillea</i> spp.)
				yellow sundrops ( <i>Calyptophus</i> spp.)

Border Zone				
Small to medium shrubs with a trunk or main branch less than 8" in diameter at full maturity are permitted within the Border Zone. Diameter is measured at chest height. See the list below for plant suggestions.				
Adam's needle ( <i>Yucca filamentosa</i> )	California fuchsia ( <i>Epilobium canum</i> )	coyote brush ( <i>Baccharis pilularis</i> )	pipetern clematis ( <i>Clematis lasiantha</i> )	silver bush lupine ( <i>Lupinus albus</i> )
agave ( <i>Agave</i> spp.)	California lilac ( <i>Ceanothus</i> spp.)	island tree poppy ( <i>Dendromecon</i> spp.)	rockrose ( <i>Cistus</i> spp.)	sticky monkey flower ( <i>Mimulus aurantiacus</i> )
bear grass ( <i>Nolina microcarpa</i> )	California native sage ( <i>Salvia</i> spp.)	manzanita ( <i>Arctostaphylos</i> spp.)	sacaton ( <i>Sporobolus</i> spp.)	westringia ( <i>Westringia</i> spp.)
buckwheat ( <i>Eriogonum</i> spp.)	California sagebrush ( <i>Artemisia</i> spp.)	matilija poppy ( <i>Romneya coulteri</i> )	smoke tree ( <i>Cotinus coggygria</i> )	wild rye grass ( <i>Leymus</i> spp.)
bush anemone ( <i>Carpenteria californica</i> )	coffeeberry ( <i>Rhamnus californica</i> )	mountain mahogany ( <i>Cercocarpus betuloides</i> )	snowberry ( <i>Symphoricarpos</i> spp.)	wooly blue curls ( <i>Trichostema lanatum</i> )

Outer Zone				
Large shrubs and small trees with a trunk less than 36" in diameter at full maturity are permitted within the Outer Zone; however, if space allows, we recommend planting trees at an even greater distance from the pipeline. Diameter is measured at chest height. See the list below for small tree suggestions.				
bottlebrush ( <i>Callistemon viminialis</i> )	chitalpa ( <i>X Chitalpa tashkentensis</i> )	honey mesquite ( <i>Prosopis glandulosa</i> )	madrone/strawberry tree ( <i>Arbutus</i> spp.)	toyon ( <i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i> )
Catalina cherry ( <i>Prunus ilicifolia</i> spp. lyonii)	desert willow ( <i>Chilopsis linearis</i> )	lemonade berry ( <i>Rhus integrifolia</i> )	Olive (Fruitless) ( <i>Olea europaea</i> 'Swan Hill')	tree yuccas ( <i>Yucca</i> spp.)
Catalina ironwood ( <i>Lyonothamnus floribundus</i> ssp. <i>asplenifolius</i> )	flannel bush ( <i>Fremontodendron</i> spp.)	lilac chastetree ( <i>Vitex agnus-castus</i> )	paloverde ( <i>Parkinsonia</i> spp.)	western redbud ( <i>Cercis occidentalis</i> )



**Be Safe. Dig Safe.**

Before you begin any landscaping work, always call 811 at least two business days in advance. With one free call to 811, PG&E will send a crew that can mark our underground gas and electric facilities before you begin work, helping you plan a safe project.

The above list includes water-wise plants suited for most California climate zones, however each location is different. PG&E makes no representation or guarantee that these plants are suitable for every location. Please consult your local nursery for more information. If there is an electric powerline on or near your property, there may be additional land use restrictions. Please take care to consult any easement agreement you may have for your property or call PG&E at 1-877-259-8314.

# Community Pipeline Safety Initiative

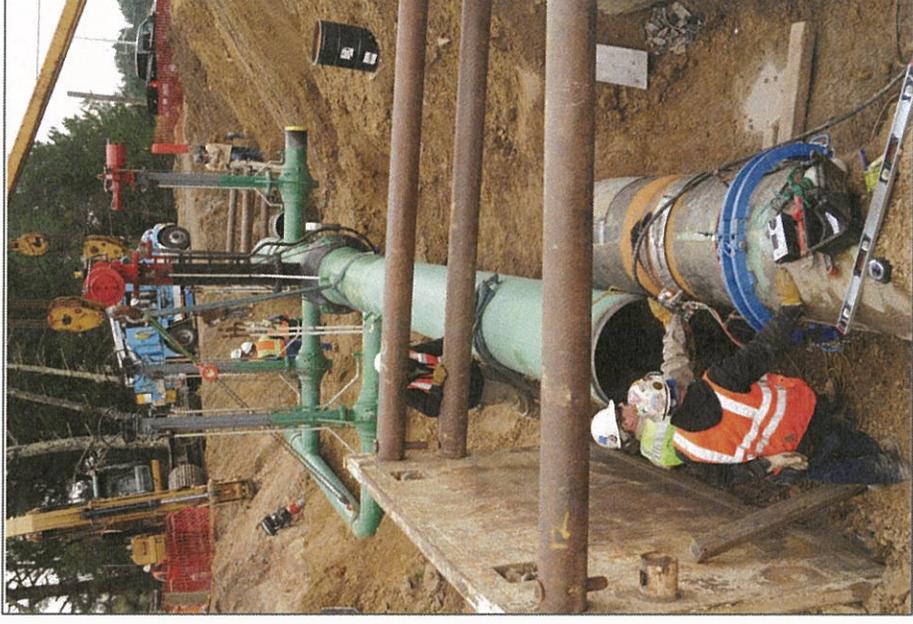
## City of Sebastopol

March 21, 2016



## Improving Pipeline Safety and Reliability

- PG&E's top priority is the safety of our customers and communities – we are testing, studying and upgrading our gas system, including:
  - **Hydrostatic pressure testing** which verifies the pipeline's strength and safe operating pressure
  - **Internal pipe inspection robots** to check for signs of corrosion
  - **Valve automation** to allow faster response during gas emergencies
  - **Leak survey** of our entire gas pipeline system more frequently
  - **Aerial and ground patrols** to identify any excavations, signs of construction and other potential safety concerns



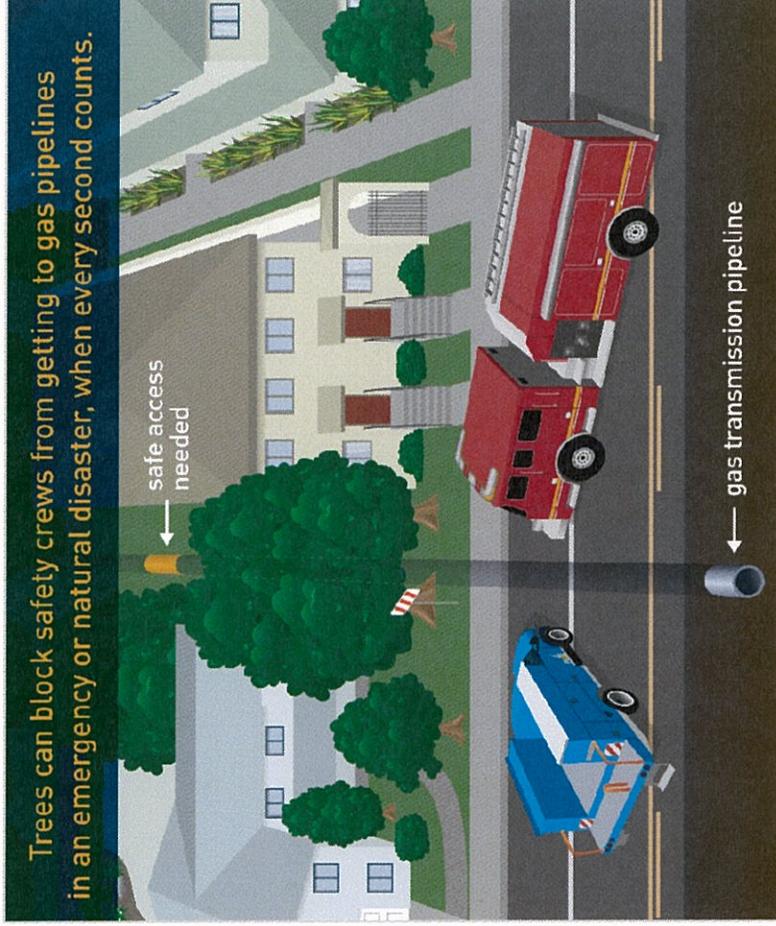


# Community Pipeline Safety Initiative – Sebastopol

## Program at a Glance

### WHAT WE'RE DOING

	Checking the area above the gas transmission pipeline for trees and structures that pose an emergency access or safety concern
	Helping to ensure immediate access for safety crews, and preventing potential damage to the pipe
	Working with our customers and communities where a safety risk has been identified to develop shared solutions
	Planting new trees at a safe distance from the pipeline and restoring the area to preserve the natural beauty of our communities





## Community Pipeline Safety Initiative – Sebastopol

### Working with First Responders

“PG&E’s gas pipeline safety work is vitally important to the first responders and the neighborhoods we work to protect across the Peninsula. Ensuring first responders can easily access gas pipelines in the event of an emergency is necessary to public safety and the upgrade work being performed.”

**John Healy, Fire Chief for Belmont,  
Foster City and City of San Mateo**



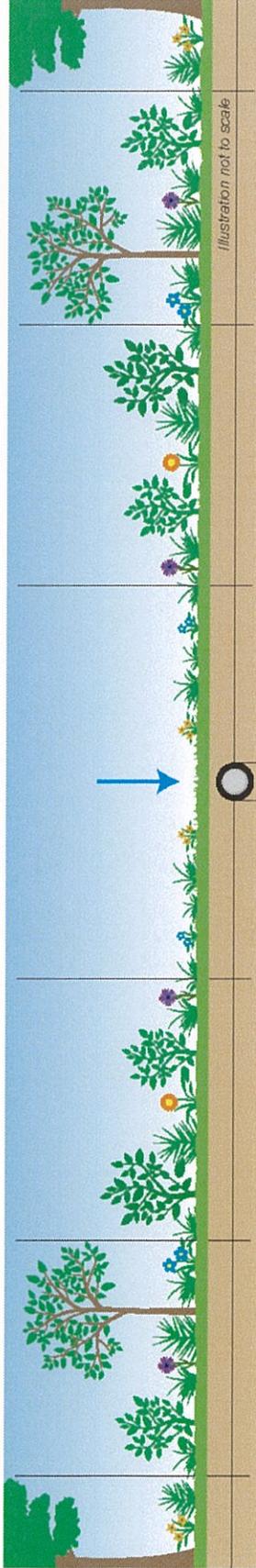
First responders depend on immediate access in an emergency



# Community Pipeline Safety Initiative – Sebastopol

## Guide to Safe Landscaping

**Making sure the right plants and trees are located in the right location adds to the safety and natural beauty of your community**



<b>Pipe Safety Zone</b>	Lawns, flowers, low-profile grasses and low-growing herbaceous plants work well within the Pipe Safety Zone.
<b>Border Zone</b>	Small to medium shrubs with a trunk or main branch less than 8" in diameter at full maturity work well within the Border Zone. Diameter is measured 4.5 feet above the ground.
<b>Outer Zone</b>	Large shrubs and small trees with a trunk or main branch less than 36" in diameter at full maturity work well within the Outer Zone. Diameter is measured 4.5 feet above the ground.

*Please note easement widths can vary and the above represents best practices and guidance for safe landscaping near gas pipelines.*



### Tree-by-Tree Review

- We understand how important trees are to your community and the environment
- To ensure we are only replacing trees that pose an emergency access or safety concern, we conduct a review of all trees near the gas pipelines
- The review is completed by gas safety experts and involves analyzing factors such as tree height, species and distance from the pipe
- We share the results with the city or property owner and, together, work to develop a path forward
- If a tree poses a safety concern and needs to be replaced, PG&E works together with the property owner to offer replacement trees and restore the area





## Community Pipeline Safety Initiative – Sebastopol

### Community Partnership and Outreach

- It is important to us that our customers fully understand and support this safety work
- Our outreach includes:
  - Meeting with city officials and staff to discuss the safety risks and work together to plan for gas safety work in public areas
  - Communicating about gas pipeline safety to all residents within 500-feet of the safety work
  - Notifying nearby residents before any safety work takes place
  - Hosting answer centers near work areas
  - Contacting private property owners regarding any safety work proposed for their property
- We will not move forward with any planned work until we have a signed agreement in place with the customer





## Community Pipeline Safety Initiative – Sebastopol

### Next Steps

- Answer all of your questions
- Gather feedback and recommendations
- Reach agreement on a plan forward
- Begin outreach to private property owners

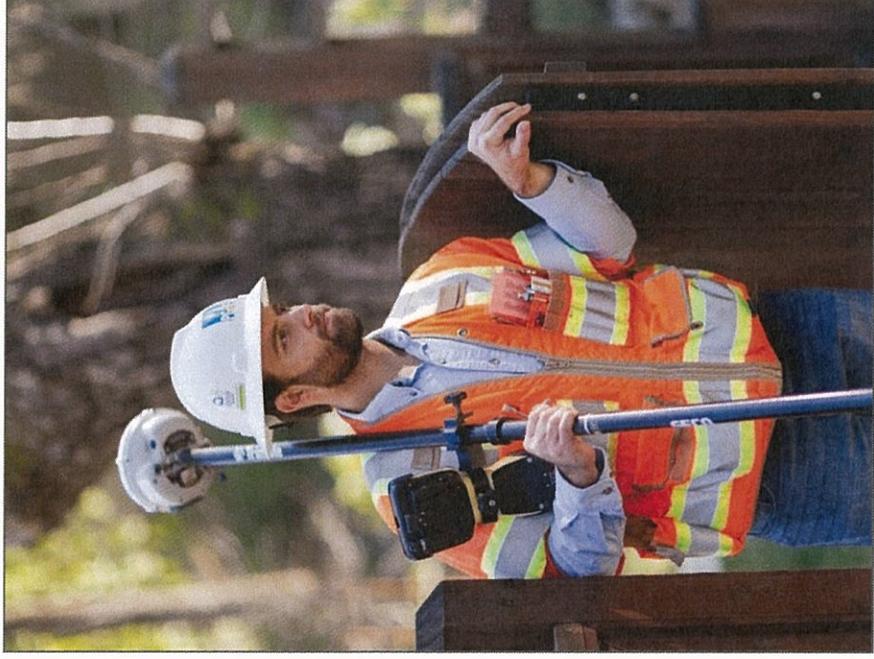




## Community Pipeline Safety Initiative – Sebastopol

### Contact Information

- For questions regarding the upcoming pipeline safety work, please contact Greg Gillis, your Local Customer Outreach Specialist, at **1-415-815-7286** or by email at **[greg.gillis@pge.com](mailto:greg.gillis@pge.com)**
- For more information, visit us at **[pge.com/GasSafety](http://pge.com/GasSafety)**



Thank You





**Pacific Gas and  
Electric Company**

«Date»

«Customer Name»

«Mail Address»

«Mail City, Mail State Mail Zip»

RE: Your Property at «Site Address», «Site City»

Dear «Customer Name»:

Every day, we lead gas pipeline safety efforts across Northern and Central California to ensure that the millions of customers we serve have the safest and most reliable gas system in the nation.

**As part of a community pipeline safety initiative, we are looking at the area above and around the natural gas transmission pipelines to be certain that all first responders, including firefighters and our own emergency response crews, have immediate access to the pipeline in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.**

During a recent safety review, we noticed items above the transmission pipeline that runs on or near your property that are located too close to the gas pipeline and need to be addressed. I will be contacting you within the next few days so that we can work together to ensure these items are placed a safe distance away from the pipe.

#### Putting Safety First

Ensuring the safety of our customers, their families, our employees and the communities we live in and serve will always be our number one priority. When trees, bushes and structures are located too close to a gas transmission pipeline, they can threaten safety because they can block emergency access for firefighters and can prevent our crews from performing important safety work. Tree roots also pose a safety risk because they can damage the protective coating of underground pipelines — leading to corrosion and leaks.

#### Working Together

California has some of the most beautiful trees on earth. They matter to our environment, our employees, and the customers we proudly serve. Wherever we work, we work hard to protect trees and wildlife. But protecting the safety and reliability of our gas system will always be our number one priority.

We are committed to sharing what we know about the safety risks and developing a plan that keeps you safe and respects your property. Please be assured I will work with you to restore any impacted areas of your property, at PG&E's expense, and I will only move forward with work once we have reached an agreement together.

#### Learn More

For more information about our safety efforts to maintain the area above the pipeline, please visit our website at [pge.com/GasSafety](http://pge.com/GasSafety). As an important reminder, always dial 811 before digging, excavating, or conducting any operations close to the gas pipeline right-of-way. With one free call to 811 at least 48 hours in advance, PG&E will send a crew that can mark our underground gas and electric facilities before you begin work, so you can dig safely. Enclosed is a brochure describing additional steps we are taking to ensure continued safe operation of the pipeline in your community.

I look forward to working with you to complete this important safety work. Thank you.

Sincerely,

«Land Management Name»  
Department of Safety, Health and Environment  
Pacific Gas and Electric Company  
«Phone Number»

**We will be contacting you soon  
about important gas safety work  
to help ensure first responder  
safety access.**

- 要用粵語/國語請求協助, 請致電: 1-800-893-9555
- Kung kailangang makipag-usap sa nakakasalita ng Tagalog, tumawag sa: 1-800-743-5000
- Để được giúp đỡ bằng tiếng Việt, xin gọi: 1-800-298-8438



**Pacific Gas and  
Electric Company®**

**Pronto nos pondremos en contacto con usted acerca de un importante trabajo de seguridad en la distribución de gas, para ayudar a garantizar el acceso seguro del personal de primeros auxilios.**

Estimado vecino,

Todos los días, enfocamos nuestros esfuerzos para garantizar la seguridad de las tuberías de gas en el norte y centro de California, para que los millones de clientes a los que les brindamos nuestro servicio, tengan el sistema de gas más seguro y más confiable del país.

**Como parte de una iniciativa comunitaria respecto a la seguridad de las tuberías, estamos observando el área por encima y alrededor de las tuberías de transmisión de gas natural para estar seguros que el personal de primeros auxilios, que incluye los bomberos y nuestro propio equipo de respuesta a emergencias, tengan acceso inmediato a la tubería en caso de una emergencia o desastre natural.**

Durante una reciente evaluación, descubrimos algunos elementos ubicados encima de la tubería de transmisión que se encuentra dentro o cerca de su propiedad, y están localizados demasiado cerca de la tubería de gas, debiéndose hacer algo al respecto. Me pondré en contacto con usted en los próximos días para que trabajemos juntos con el fin de que estos elementos sean movidos a una distancia segura de la tubería.

#### **Poniendo la seguridad primero**

La seguridad de nuestros clientes, sus familias, nuestros empleados, las comunidades donde vivimos y proveemos servicio, siempre será nuestra primera prioridad. Cuando los árboles, los arbustos y las estructuras están ubicados demasiado cerca de las tuberías de transmisión de gas, pueden representar una amenaza para la seguridad, ya que pueden obstruir el acceso de los bomberos durante emergencias y pueden impedir que nuestro personal realice importantes trabajos de seguridad. Las raíces de los árboles también pueden representar un riesgo porque pueden dañar la capa protectora de las tuberías subterráneas, lo cual puede provocar corrosión y fugas.

#### **Trabajando juntos**

California tiene algunos de los árboles más hermosos del mundo. Son de importancia para nuestro medio ambiente, para nuestros empleados y para los clientes a quienes con orgullo les proveemos servicio. Donde sea que trabajemos, nos esforzamos por proteger los árboles y la vida salvaje, pero la protección y confiabilidad de nuestro sistema de gas, será siempre nuestra prioridad número uno.

Estamos comprometidos a compartir lo que sabemos acerca de los riesgos de la seguridad y desarrollar un plan que lo mantenga seguro y que respete su propiedad. Por favor tenga la certeza de que trabajaremos con usted para restaurar cualquiera de las áreas afectadas en su propiedad. Los gastos serán asumidos por PG&E, y solo comenzaremos a trabajar una vez que hayamos llegado juntos a un acuerdo.

#### **Más información**

Para más información acerca de nuestros esfuerzos por mantener segura el área encima de la tubería, por favor visite el sitio [pge.com/GasSafety](http://pge.com/GasSafety). Un importante recordatorio: siempre llame al 811 antes de cavar, excavar o llevar a cabo cualquier operación cerca del derecho de paso de una tubería de gas. Con una llamada gratuita al 811, por lo menos 48 horas antes de excavar, PG&E enviará personal que puede marcar nuestras instalaciones subterráneas de gas y electricidad antes que usted comience a trabajar, ayudándolo así a planear un proyecto seguro. Adjuntamos un folleto en el que se describe con detalle, los pasos adicionales que estamos tomando para garantizar la operación segura de las tuberías en su comunidad.

Espero poder trabajar con usted para completar este importante trabajo de seguridad. Muchas gracias.

Atentamente,

«Land Management Name»  
Departamento de seguridad, salud y medio ambiente  
Pacific Gas and Electric Company  
«Phone Number»



# Community Pipeline Safety Initiative Sebastopol, California

March 2016

## WHAT WE'RE DOING



Checking the area above the gas transmission pipeline for trees and structures that pose an emergency access or safety concern.



Helping to ensure immediate access for safety crews, and preventing potential damage to the pipe.



Working with our customers and communities where a safety risk has been identified to develop shared solutions.

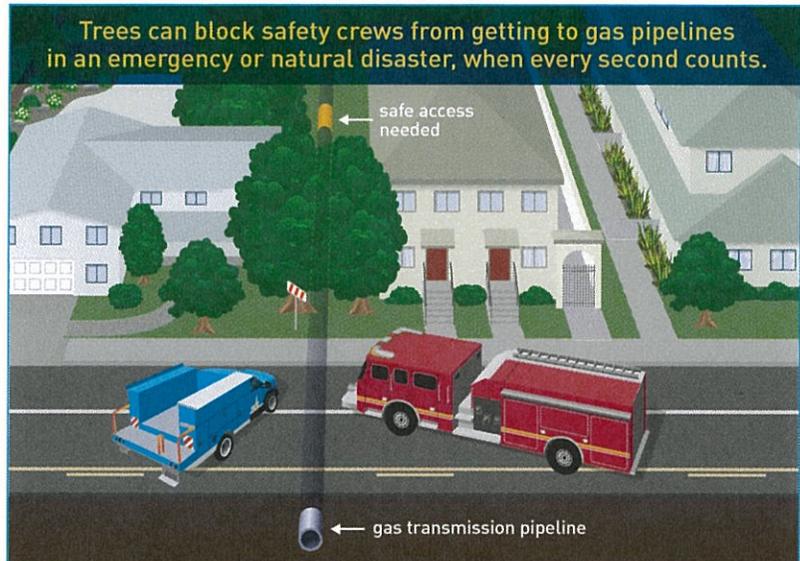


Planting new trees at a safe distance from the pipeline and restoring the area to preserve the natural beauty of our communities.

## LEARN MORE

- If you have questions about this upcoming gas safety work, please contact Greg Gillis at [1-415-973-2137](tel:1-415-973-2137) or by email at [greg.gillis@pge.com](mailto:greg.gillis@pge.com).
- For more information about PG&E's pipeline safety programs, please visit our website at [pge.com/GasSafety](http://pge.com/GasSafety).

Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) top priority is the safety of our customers and communities. As part of this commitment to safety, we are checking the area above and around our natural gas transmission pipelines to help ensure immediate access for safety crews and prevent damage to the pipe.



## Improving Emergency Access

In an emergency or natural disaster, every second counts. Items like structures, trees and bushes located too close to gas pipelines can threaten safety because they can block emergency access to the pipeline. They can also prevent our crews from performing important safety and maintenance work.

## Working Together

PG&E is working with customers and community leaders to share what we know about pipeline safety risks and, together, develop plans that preserve the unique characters of our communities while protecting public safety. When a tree or structure needs to be replaced for safety reasons, we work together to replace the item at a safe distance from the pipeline and restore the area – all at PG&E's expense. Please note that we will not move forward with any planned work on private property without a mutual agreement in place.



**Be Safe. Dig Safe.** Damage from excavation is the most common cause of pipeline accidents. Before you begin any landscaping work, always call 811 at least two business days in advance. With one free call to 811, PG&E will send a crew to mark our underground gas and electric facilities before you begin work, helping you plan a safe project.