

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Safety and Enforcement Division
Gas Safety and Reliability Branch
Gas Engineering and Compliance Section

Incident Investigation Report

Report Date: 12/15/2023

Incident Number: G 20230821-3587

Utility: Southern California Gas SoCalGas

Date and Time of the Incident: 8/21/2023, 7:45:00 AM

Location of the Incident: Mission Lakes Blvd & Western Ave
Desert Hot Springs ,CA
County: San Bernardino

Summary of Incident:

On August 21, 2023, at approximately 958 hours, SoCalGas became aware of damage to a 6-inch High-Pressure Distribution Main SL41-53 (HPDM SL41-53) in Desert Hot Springs. SED investigation found that Tropical Storm Hilary brought torrential rainfall and gusty winds to San Bernardino County causing widespread flooding and numerous mudslides and resulted in the rupture of SoCalGas HPDM SL41-53. Therefore, SED did not find any GO 112-F, Reference Title 49 CFR Parts 191 & 192 violations by SoCalGas.

Casualties: *Fatalities:* 0 *Injuries:* 0

Property Damage: \$3,610,616.0

Utility Facilities involved:

Pipe Material = Unknown, Pipe Size = 6 (inches), MAOP = 395 (psi),
Operating Pressure = 385 (psi)

Witnesses:

Name

Title

Phone

1	Gordon Kuo	CPUC Investigator	N/A
2	██████████	Pipeline Safety and Complia	(978) 719-3485

Evidence:

	<i>Source</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	██████████	Intial Form 420 on 8/23/23
2	██████████	Form 7100.1 on 9/20/23
3	██████████	Data Response 9/11/23
4	██████████	Data Response 9/20/23
5	██████████	Data Response 11/2/23
6	██████████	Data Response 11/9/23
7	Gordon Kuo	Photos
8	██████████	Form 7100.01 supl on 10/31/23
9	██████████	Data Response on 8/21/23

Observations and Findings:

On August 21, 2023, at around 958 hours, SoCalGas became aware of damage to a HPDM SL41-53 near Mission Lakes Blvd & Western Ave, Desert Hot Springs. SoCalGas crews arrived on site to discover that erosion of a wash due to heavy rain has snapped the HPDM SL41-53. There were no fatalities, injuries, or fires reported as the result of this incident. This incident resulted in \$3,610,616 in damages to SoCalGas facilities. This incident became reportable to CPUC due to operator judgement and was reported to the DOT due to exceeding \$139,7000 dollars in damages. The DOT incident reporting number is 1376821.

On August 21, 2023, SED received a data response from SoCalGas' representative ██████████. The HPDM SL41-53 is a steel line, installed in 1964 with a MAOP of 395 psig and a MOP of 385 psig. According to SoCalGas, the stormwater runoff and heavy water flow caused soil erosion and exposed the HPDM SL41-53 during Tropical Storm Hilary. SoCalGas' crews were able to isolate the affected section of HPDM SL41-53 and the gas flow was controlled at 1624 hours. SoCalGas' Engineering Department assessed the damage and determined that a temporary course of action was to cut out the damage section and cap both ends of the HPDM SL41-53.

On August 22, 2023, Gordon Kuo, SED investigator arrived at the scene, met with SoCalGas' representatives, took photos of the damaged section and the general area around HPDM SL41-53. In addition, Mr. Kuo surveyed the general area, observed the devastation and the extensive damage caused by Tropical Strom

Hilary, and found that the landscape was eroded approximately 7 feet causing the exposure of the HPDM SL 41-53. Furthermore, SED observed heavy damage to the section of the HPDM SL41-53 and large boulders in the wash as the result of the Tropical Storm Hilary that brought torrential rainfall and gusty winds to San Bernardino County resulting in widespread flooding and numerous mudslides.

On September 11, 2023, SED received another data response from SoCalGas' representative [REDACTED]. Since the HPDM SL41-53 was installed in 1964, the Engineering Department did not find any records of an assessment being performed prior to installation to determine if the area was prone to landslide hazards. However, due to the rupture on the HPDM SL41-53, the area has now been identified as a landslide-susceptible area.

On November 11, 2023, SED received another data response from SoCalGas representative [REDACTED]. Repairs on the HPDM SL41-53 were completed on 9/22/23 at 1700 hours. The section of replaced line was excavated and buried at additional 10 feet below the previous depth, along with bringing the grade back to near what it was before the Tropical Storm Hilary hit the area. This is a total of approximately 15 to 20 feet below grade level. The new depth also extends beyond the banks of the wash. A new trunnion valve was installed on the south end of the HPDM SL41-53, as a means of isolating this section in the event of unforeseeable future.

SED investigation found that the Tropical Storm Hilary brought torrential rainfall and gusty winds to San Bernardino County causing widespread flooding and numerous mudslides and resulted in the rupture of SoCalGas HPDM SL41-53. Therefore, SED did not find any GO 112-F, Reference Title 49 CFR Parts 191 & 192 violations by SoCalGas.

Preliminary Statement of Pertinent General Order, Public Utilities Code Requirements, and/or Federal Requirements:

None

Conclusion:

SED investigation found that the Tropical Storm Hilary brought torrential rainfall and gusty winds to San Bernardino County causing widespread flooding and numerous mudslides and resulted in the rupture of SoCalGas HPDM SL41-53. Therefore, SED did not find any GO 112-F, Reference Title 49 CFR Parts 191 & 192 violations by SoCalGas.