FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, July 22, 2020

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SAN RAMON VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT FINES PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC CO.

Citation and Demand for Violation of District Safety Ordinance

SAN RAMON, CA – On May 15, 2020, San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District personnel responded to an emergency fire and safety incident caused by a Pacific Gas and Electric Co. (“PG&E”) maintenance crew. PG&E deployed two Safety and Infrastructure Teams (“SIPTs”) within the District without providing advance notice to the District as required by the District’s Safety Ordinance No. 35. As a result, the District cited and fined PG&E $1,000 for failing to provide advance notice as required by local ordinance. PG&E SIPT crews are used for fire prevention and suppression activities and had responded to a transformer explosion. The District’s Safety Ordinance No. 35 was adopted as an urgency ordinance in October 2019 to address the fire threat to public safety caused by PG&E’s aging infrastructure and lack of maintenance. The local ordinance requires PG&E to notify the District in advance of deploying SIPT crews within the District and whenever PG&E performs “hot” work on power lines in high fire risk areas. Further, Ordinance No. 35 bans any hot work on power lines during a Red-Flag warning, except in the event of an emergency. Under the local ordinance, PG&E is also required to reimburse the District for $1,076.74 in costs it incurred to respond to the emergency fire and safety incident caused by the PG&E maintenance crew on May 15.

Board President Don Parker stated, “the District has zero confidence that PG&E will do the right thing from a public safety standpoint without proper regulation and oversight. PG&E is a company that has previously been convicted of felonies for multiple, willful violations of the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968 and failing to accomplish wildfire mitigation on its powerlines. The least they can do from a public safety standpoint is let us know ahead of time where their crews are doing dangerous work so we, as essential first responders, can prepare accordingly.”

If you would like more information about Ordinance No. 35 or the citation, please contact Fire Chief Paige Meyer: Pmeyer@srvfire.ca.gov