



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Tuesday, December 15, 2015

ENGLANDER CALLS FOR CITY TO SUPPORT COUNTY STATE OF EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION & LISTS DEMANDS OF SOCAL GAS

LOS ANGELES— Today Councilmember Mitchell Englander, Chair of the Public Safety Committee, submitted four emergency motions all approved today in City Council relating to the Southern California Gas Company (SoCal Gas) Aliso Canyon Gas Leak which has persisted now for 53 days. The motions cover four major aspects of the crisis: support for the County's Declaration of a State of Emergency, relocation efforts, residential tax relief and business tax relief.

Englander submitted a resolution to support the County Board of Supervisors' Proclamation of Existence of a Local Emergency and Request for a State Proclamation. The resolution urges Governor Jerry Brown to declare a Local Emergency to expedite access to State and Federal resources and any other appropriate Federal Disaster Relief programs.

“Due to the mass relocation of residents, short term health effects experienced and the poor air quality in the vicinity of the gas leak, compounded by the uncertainty as to when a solution will be reached, it is imperative that the Governor step in and declare a local emergency so this community can receive the resources it needs,” said Councilmember Mitchell Englander.

The second motion addresses the shortcomings of the SoCal Gas Company relocation process and asks that their Relocation Plan be amended to include many provisions, including:

- Incentives to landlords to enter into short-term leases, including premiums, if necessary to provide comparable housing
- Immediate cash compensation for those who cannot be immediately moved, upon request, to comparable housing
- Compensation for householders who have relocated with relatives or friends for the disruption to their lives
- Provision of out-of-pocket health-related costs to relocated residents or those declining relocation to assess current or on-going health effects
- Food allowance per diem – even for those relocated to properties with kitchen facilities
- Provision of moving companies to help relocate residents
- Per diems for pets that may not be allowed in relocated housing
- Private security patrols 24/7 for vacant residences so as not to put an undue burden on LAPD
- Provision of maintenance and landscaping services for vacated properties
- Particular assistance for seniors or the disabled who have special needs and may not drive or be able to easily relocate
- Monetary consideration and accommodation for residents that receive assisted nursing services in their homes

- Reimbursement for additional transportation costs related to relocating farther away from places of employment or schools
- The Cessation of billing all residents in the affected area for natural gas services until the resolution of this event

The third motion requests the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor to make available Revenue and Tax code section 170 relief – a program that provides property tax relief and is normally available if property is damaged or destroyed by a calamity

The fourth motion requests the Office of Finance to immediately begin work with the Franchise Tax Board to assess options for Business Tax Relief related to the Porter Ranch Gas Leak, including a Disaster-Related Tax Deduction.

On October 23, 2015 SoCal Gas crews discovered a leak at one of its natural gas wells located in its Aliso Canyon storage field in the Los Angeles County Unincorporated Area adjacent to the Porter Ranch Community. L.A. City and County Fire and Hazmat Departments, the L.A. County Department of Health, the California Division of Oil, Gas & Geothermal Resources, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District have been onsite regularly.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LADPH) was notified on October 28, 2015. Odors related to the gas leak have been affecting residents in the Porter Ranch area. According to LADPH, a community meeting hosted by SoCal Gas focused on exposure to methane gas and mercaptans, which are odorants added to natural gas. LADPH advised that methane gas itself poses little direct health threat upon inhalation in an outdoor space. Mercaptans, however, do pose a health threat to the community, including short-term neurological, gastrointestinal, and respiratory symptoms that may result from inhalation. Community complaints of nosebleeds, headaches, nausea and other symptoms persist.

In their November 19, 2015 Directive to SoCal Gas, Dr. Cyrus Rangan, Director of the Bureau of Toxicology and Environmental Assessment and Angelo J. Bellomo, Deputy Director for Health Protection stated: "Southern California Gas Company should continue the abatement process to characterize and repair the subject gas leak, and eliminate odorous emissions, on an expedited basis in consultation with the appropriate regulatory agencies. All mitigation plans should cite public health protection as the highest priority."

In the interim, Southern California Gas Company is offering free temporary relocation to any area residents affected by odors from the Aliso Canyon site. As of December 14, 2015, there have been 3,948 inquiries, 1,883 families relocated with 1,433 in process and 149 yet to be contacted.

See attached motions.

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