

OFFICE OF ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY

A California Natural Resources Agency

Presentation to the National Conference of State Legislatures
Task Force on Energy Supply

May 19, 2022



Who We Are

On July 1, 2021, the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety was established as a new state department under the California Natural Resources Agency to ensure electrical utilities are reducing utility-related wildfire risk. Our mission expanded to underground safety with the addition of the Underground Facilities Safe Excavation Board in January 2022.

Our Vision

A sustainable California, with **no catastrophic utility-related wildfires**, that has access to safe, affordable, and reliable electricity.

Guiding Principles

- **Effective collaboration:** Coordinating an integrated utility wildfire mitigation approach
- **Local perspective:** Developing a flexible, localized utility wildfire mitigation approach
- **Long-term resilience:** Creating a planning horizon to focus on longer-term resilience and adaptation
- **Risk-informed, data-supported decisions:** Using data effectively to understand and plan for risk



Legislative History & Mandate

Created by Assembly Bill 1054 (2019) and Assembly Bill 111 (2019) in response to the tragic fires of 2017 and 2018.

- **Wildfire Safety Division** established January 2020
- **Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety** established July 2021
- **Underground Facilities Safe Excavation Board** transferred January 2022
Transferred through Senate Bill 856 (2020).

High-level Regulatory Scope

- 1) Oversee and enforce electrical corporation compliance with wildfire safety rules and regulations. (Pub. Util. Code, §§ 8385 et seq.)
- 2) Set “locate & mark” safety standards, coordinate education programs, and investigate excavation damage of underground facilities due to “dig-ins”. (Gov. Code, § 4216.12)



Innovative Regulatory Framework

Enacted to reduce utility-ignited wildfires through investments in electrical grid resiliency and mandated utility safety reforms.

Key Elements

- Separated **wildfire safety oversight** from ratemaking
- 3-year **Wildfire Mitigation Plan** w/ 23 specific content requirements
- Created a **Wildfire Safety Advisory Board** of technical experts to advise the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
- Created annual **safety culture assessments**
- Created a voluntary **Safety Certification** w/ seven conditions, which encourage electrical corporations to invest in safety, including requiring safety metrics in executive incentive compensation.



Core Statutory Responsibilities



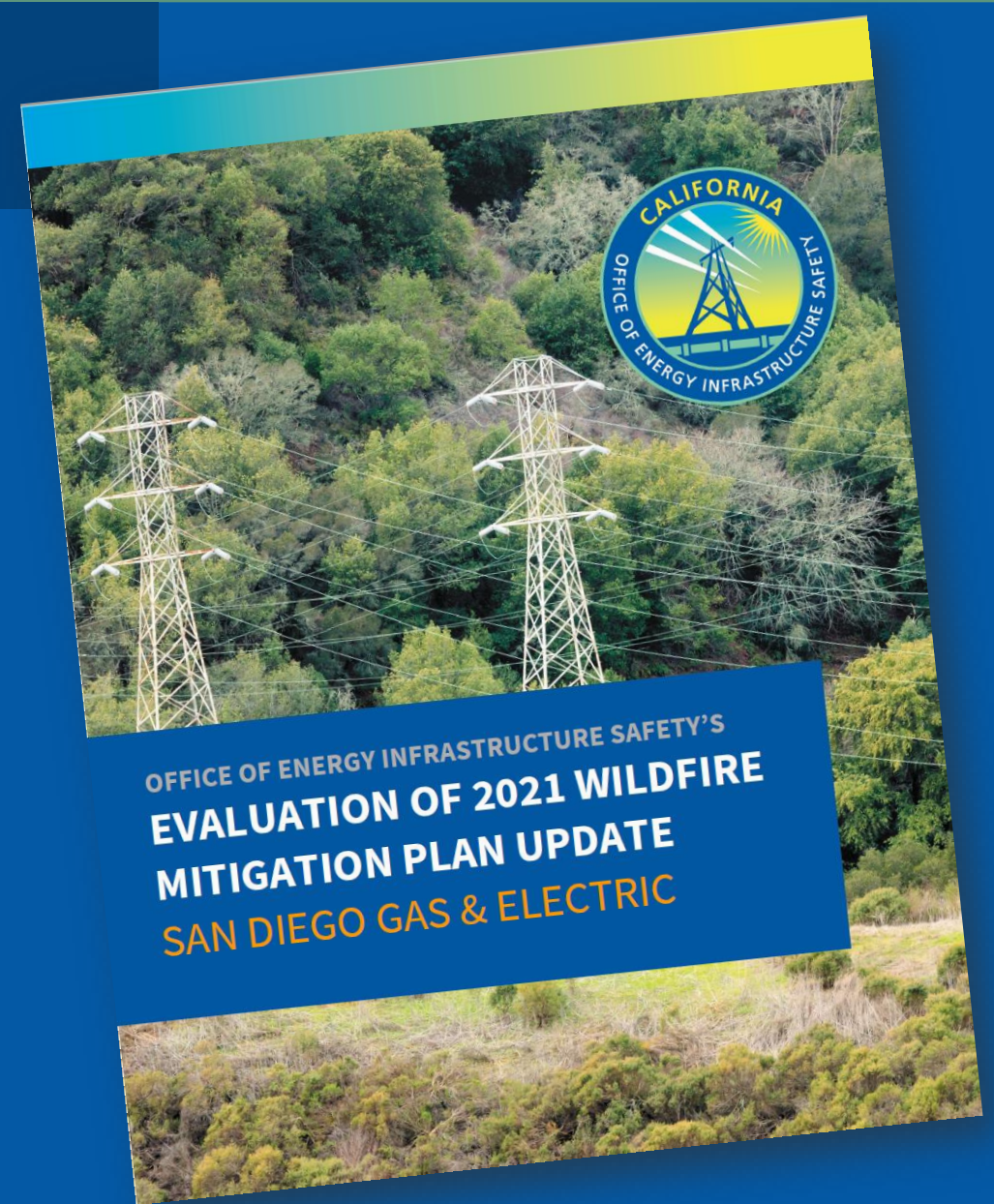
- Wildfire Mitigation Plans (WMP) Evaluation
- WMP Compliance Assurance
- Annual Safety Culture Assessments
- Safety Certification Review
- Executive Compensation Structure Review

- Set Safety Standards for Locate & Mark and Excavation Practices
- Coordinate Education and Outreach programs
- Investigate Excavation Dig-ins & Recommend Enforcement Actions



Wildfire Mitigation Plans

- How do utilities understand their wildfire risk?
- How are they applying mitigations to reduce that risk?
- How are they improving over time?

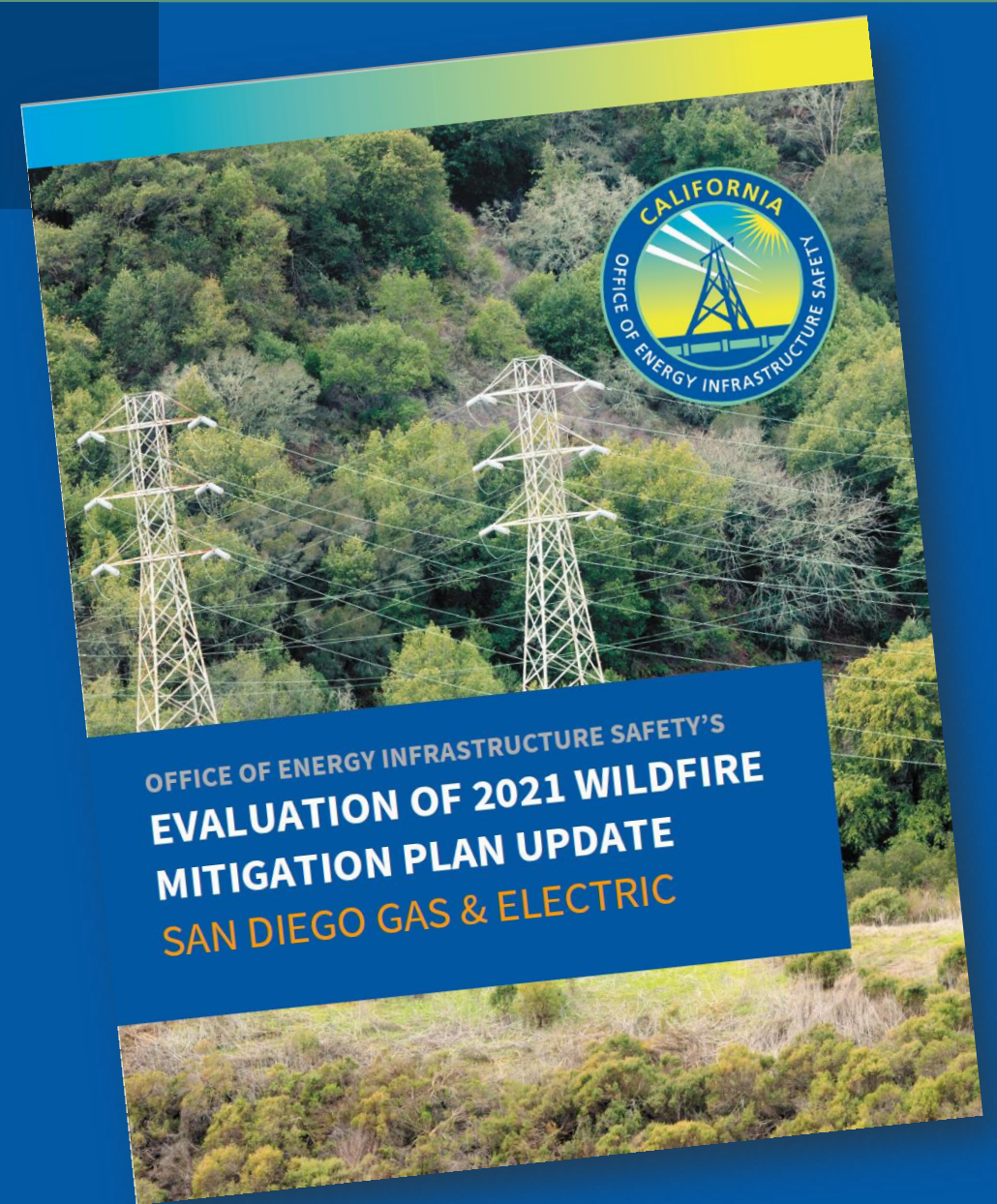


Plan Evaluation Process

Established new, public evaluation process in 2020 to enable cross comparisons and encourage growth.

- Standardized Template
- Performance Metrics
- Maturity Survey
- Assess Plans for:
 - a) Completeness
 - b) Technical Feasibility
 - c) Resource Use Efficiency
 - d) Forward-looking Growth

Have authority to require revisions to a Plan before decision.

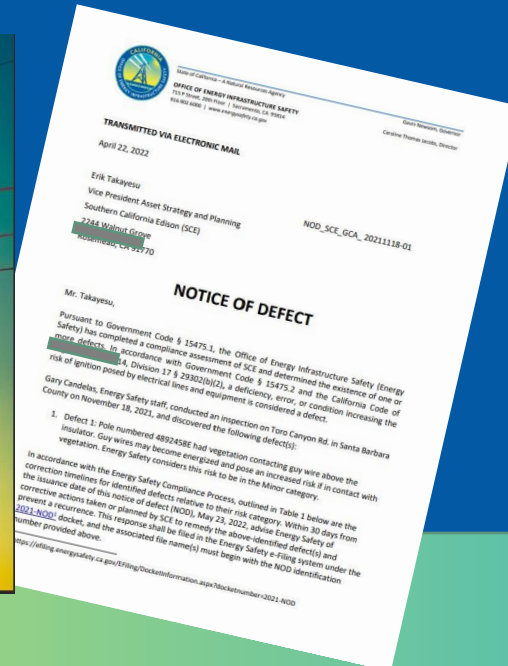
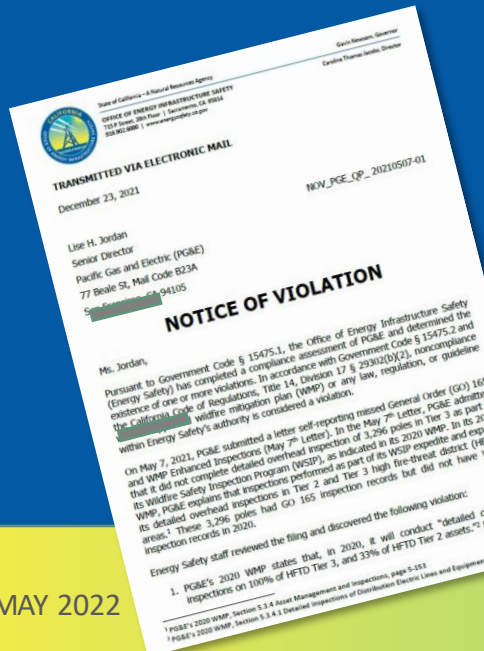


Plan Compliance

Inspections, Audits, and Investigations

since program inception in May 2020

- Conducted over 15,000 inspection activities
- Directed corrective action on over 500 defects & violations
- Directed Independent Evaluation of 2020 & 2021 Plan implementation
- Issuing final compliance report for 2020 Plans in Fall 2022

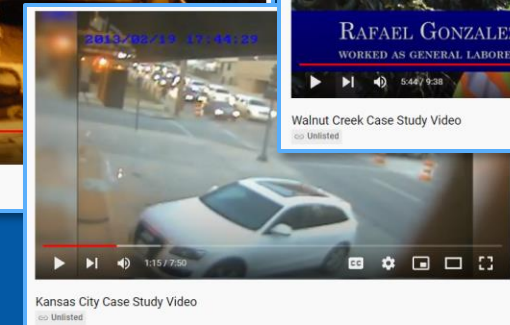
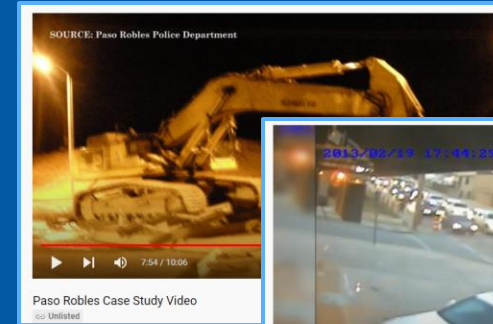


Underground Safety Board



Nine-Member Board of Experts in Contract Excavation, Utility Management and Locating, and Agricultural Operations

- Issued 30 Notices of Probable Violation since 2020
- Developed in-house, case study-based education course for Dig Safe Law violators
- Partnered with agricultural community to promote farmer “call before you dig” participation
- Developed regulations on power tool use around buried utilities and requirements for onsite meetings for farming tickets
- Currently developing standards for abandoned line management, identifying utility location through potholing, and the planning and design of excavation work





DATA DRIVEN FORWARD-THINKING INNOVATIVE SAFETY FOCUSED

www.energysafety.ca.gov

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