

SDG&E Posts Statement on Concerns About EMF Levels Near Schools in Alpine – February 18, 2016



2-18-16

The following is our statement regarding EMF's and especially related to the recent East County Magazine article which was posted on The Alpine Community Network website. SDG&E will be taking our own measurements to determine if something unusual is occurring along the route but at this time we have no reason to believe it is.

“SDG&E is committed to providing safe, reliable and environmentally sound gas and electric service to our customers. We rely on a number of internationally recognized scientific organizations — such as the World Health Organization — and independent regulatory advisory groups that have conducted scientific reviews and health research literature to give us guidance related to electromagnetic fields (EMF). Although science has been unable to determine whether there are health effects from EMF exposure, we recognize the concerns of our customers. It's why we take proactive measures to lower EMF levels and provide free EMF services and information to our customers.

We are aware of newspaper articles that reference magnetic field readings by two citizens in Alpine. It is unclear whether SDG&E's underground transmission line is the only source of these readings, as magnetic fields measured at any given location may include contributions from multiple sources.

EMFs are extremely low-energy fields associated with electric current. It is important to note that magnetic field values vary greatly with the amount of electric current and the distance from the source or sources of the current. Equally importantly, magnetic field values weaken over distance from the source.

Many common household appliances can create magnetic fields equal to or greater than the values cited by the newspapers articles. A microwave oven – even from 12 inches away – could create a magnetic field from 40 to 80 milligauss (4 to 8 microtesla), and a hairdryer from 1 to 70 milligauss (0.1 to 7 microtesla). Other sources of magnetic fields in homes, businesses and schools are electrical wiring and, in some cases, plumbing.

The issue of EMF and possible health effects has been investigated extensively for more than 40 years and is followed by the California Public Utilities Commission. Until research and the scientific community provide greater direction, the company, under the direction and regulation of the California Public Utilities Commission, will continue to take proactive measures on our customers' behalf. Some of these measures include:

- Maintaining an EMF Center staffed with informed representatives available to talk with customers about EMF issues, and provide free magnetic field measurements upon request.
- Providing customers with objective EMF health literature.

- Reducing EMF on new or upgraded electric facilities by implementing low-cost and no-cost measures to reduce magnetic fields associated with the projects.
- Supporting, funding and monitoring EMF research and participating in discussion forums and regulatory proceedings to remain current on all EMF-related issues.

Additional information:

- A number of internationally recognized scientific organizations and independent regulatory advisory groups have conducted scientific reviews of the EMF and health research literature, including:
 - World Health Organization (WHO)
 - National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) U.K – now part of the Public Health England
 - California Department of Health Services (CDHS) – now the California Department of Public Health
 - National Academy of Sciences (NAS)
 - International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP)
- Without exception, these major reviews report that the body of data, as large as it is, does not demonstrate that exposure to power-frequency magnetic fields causes cancer or other health risks, although the possibility cannot be dismissed. Most reviews recommend further research, and appropriately, research is on-going worldwide.
- There are no health-based state or federal government standards for long-term EMF exposure.

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