

Jackie Lacey
District Attorney
<http://da.lacounty.gov>



NEWS RELEASE

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District Attorney Jackie Lacey Files Criminal Charges Against SoCal Gas for Aliso Canyon Leak

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey announced today that criminal charges were filed against Southern California Gas Co. for failing to immediately report the gas leak at its Aliso Canyon facility to the proper state authorities.

“While we recognize that neither the criminal charges nor the civil lawsuits will offer the residents of Los Angeles County a complete solution, it is important that Southern California Gas Co. be held responsible for its criminal actions,” District Attorney Lacey said.

“We will do everything we can as prosecutors to help ensure that the Aliso Canyon facility is brought into compliance. I believe we can best serve our community using the sanctions available through a criminal conviction to prevent similar public health threats in the future.”

The criminal complaint filed today charges the company with four misdemeanor counts: three counts of failing to report the release of hazardous materials from Oct. 23 to Oct. 26, 2015, and one count of discharging air contaminants, beginning on Oct. 23, 2015, to the present.

If convicted, the company could be fined up to \$25,000 a day for each day that it failed to notify the California Office of Emergency Services. The company also could be fined up to \$1,000 per day for air pollution violations.

Deputy District Attorneys Yael Massry and Daniel Wright in the Environmental Law Section are prosecuting the case.

Arraignment for the company in case 6SC00433 is set for Feb. 17 at the Santa Clarita Branch of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Department 3.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department is investigating the case.

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About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 71,000 felony defendants and nearly 112,000 misdemeanor defendants.

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Superior Court of California
County of Los Angeles

FEB 02 2016

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES Sherri R. Carter, Executive Officer/Clerk
By Laura Robles, Deputy

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
Plaintiff,
v.
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY
Defendant.

CASE NO.

6SC00433

MISDEMEANOR COMPLAINT

The undersigned is informed and believes that:

COUNT 1

On or about October 23, 2015 to October 26, 2015, in the County of Los Angeles, the crime of FAILURE TO REPORT RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIAL, in violation of HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTION 25510(a), a Misdemeanor, was committed by SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY, which failed, upon discovery, to immediately report a release or threatened release of hazardous material, to wit: NATURAL GAS OR ITS COMPONENTS (including, but not limited to, METHANE, METHYL MERCAPTAN, BUTYL MERCAPTAN, BENZENE AND BUTANE) to the California Emergency Management Agency and to the unified program agency.

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COUNT 2

On or about October 23, 2015 to October 26, 2015, in the County of Los Angeles, the crime of FAILURE TO REPORT RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIAL, in violation of LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE SECTION 12.56.030, a Misdemeanor, was committed by SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY, which had knowledge of an unauthorized release or threatened release of hazardous material, to wit: NATURAL GAS OR ITS COMPONENTS (including, but not limited to, METHANE, METHYL MERCAPTAN, BUTYL MERCAPTAN, BENZENE AND BUTANE) and failed to take all necessary steps to insure the discovery, containment and cleanup of such release or threatened release and failed to notify the health hazardous materials division of the forester and fire warden.

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COUNT 3

On or about October 23, 2015 to October 26, 2015, in the County of Los Angeles, the crime of FAILURE TO REPORT RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIAL, in violation of TITLE 19 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS SECTION 2703(a), a misdemeanor, was committed by SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY, which had knowledge of a release or threatened release of hazardous material, to wit: NATURAL GAS OR ITS COMPONENTS (including, but not limited to, METHANE, METHYL MERCAPTAN, BUTYL MERCAPTAN, BENZENE AND BUTANE) and failed to provide an immediate verbal report to the administering agency and the California Emergency Management Agency.

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COUNT 4

On or about October 23, 2015 to the present, in the County of Los Angeles, the crime of DISCHARGE OF AIR CONTAMINANTS, in violation of HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTION 41700(a), a Misdemeanor, was committed by SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY, which discharged air contaminants and other materials, to wit: NATURAL GAS OR ITS COMPONENTS (including, but not limited to, METHANE, METHYL MERCAPTAN, BUTYL MERCAPTAN, BENZENE AND BUTANE) that caused injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or that endangered the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any of those persons or the public, or that caused or had a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property.

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