Pipeline break triggers fire

A break in SoCal transmission line #1026 at 1880 N. El. Camino in San Clemente Jan. 9 caused a fire, destroyed four mobile homes, and resulted in outages to 917 meters. Cause of the break is under investigation.

A fifth mobile home was slightly damaged by fire, according to South Basin division superintendent Art Olson.

The 12-inch high pressure line cracked at the bottom, leaking gas through the porous soil into the mobile home park. It is believed that a pilot light ignited the gas causing the fire, vice president, Transmission Jim Mullin said.

The fire first was reported to the company at 2:06 p.m. Jan. 9. By 3:25, the flow of gas in the pipeline was under control. The flames were completely out at 7:14 p.m., according to Bob Pieper, division pipeline supervisor at Dana Point.

Olson said that normally nine people worked in this area. However, a call was issued for more help, and 16 people were pressed into service, working long hours to complete repairs. In addition, an outside contractor assisted.

From Orange County division, supervisor Ray Dyer said a total of 16 distribution people worked, rerouting gas, adjusting pressure at regulator stations and isolating the area.

Four Orange County field service representatives, headed by Cec West and Mike Brennan, walked the streets checking pressures and pilots.

A major outage occurred the following morning in a nearby area as a result of line 1026 being out of service. Outages were reported on 917 meters in the area south of San Diego Freeway to Coast Highway and down to Estrela.

Mail payments increase; more offices closed

In the past three years, 18 local payment offices have closed their doors. As the payment of gas bills by mail increases, the economy of maintaining payment offices in some communities declines.

Right now, according to Les Pickup, manager of customer services, Headquarters, about 80 percent of all gas bills are paid by mail in SoCal's serving area.

Accordinly, each division conducts a continuing economic analysis of payment office operations, with an overall goal to reduce the number of offices in locales where economic considerations no longer justify keeping them open. It has very little to do with population or size of the community. Some areas seem to have a traditionally heavy load of walk-in business. Often, these are communities of older established neighborhoods, where people got used to bringing their bills in to the office to pay them many years ago and prefer to do it that way today, Pickup said.

In other areas, it gradually becomes infeasible.
Gaslight solar control device conserves fuel during daytime

A new device has been designed to control the flow of natural gas used by gas lights. One of the new units has been installed at a residence in San Gabriel Valley division so that servicemen there may become familiar with it in the event they are called to service it.

The gas light control, manufactured by the General Controls division of International Telephone and Telegraph Corp., is a solar powered unit requiring no electrical connections. In normal use, the control is designed to save about 30-40 percent of the fuel used by the gas light.

The unit is the same size as the light post and fits between the top of the post and the base of the light. The device automatically dims the lamp during daylight hours, then allows it to burn brightly at night.

At dawn, a solar cell in the control unit energizes a valve to a semi-closed position. In this position, the valve allows approximately one-third the normal amount of gas to flow through, which is enough to maintain a low-‘pilot’ type of flame on the mantle.

At dusk, the solar energy decreases, and the valve automatically opens to allow a full flow of gas to the mantle.

The new solar gas light control will not be installed by SoCal servicemen — the San Gabriel Valley installation was on a one-time only basis at the home of field service representative Monte Rupp for familiarization purposes.

Les Pickup, customer service manager, Headquarters, stressed that decorative gas lighting should be turned off to conserve energy. However, the new solar control provides a way to cut back on the use of fuel in gas lights used for security and safety reasons.

Because of the current national energy crisis, the company is asking its restaurant customers to voluntarily discontinue the use of decorative gas appliances, Pat Shea, vice president of market services, said. Homeowners are also being asked to conserve energy by voluntarily eliminating use of decorative gas appliances. The company is offering assistance in shutting off these appliances.

PAGE TWO
Billing center remodeled

Remodeling and expansion of the Headquarters EDP operations at Monterey Park is expected to be completed this month. Added floor space now gives EDP a total of about 14,000 square feet of work area.

New computer equipment has been installed and is processing some 160,000 bills a day under the new centralized billing system, said Gene Allen, manager of EDP operations.

The work area for billing distribution and mailing has been increased. An adjacent loading and delivery dock with protective roof overhang is nearly finished. This dock will permit mail trucks to back up directly to the mail processing room for improved pick-up and delivery.

The 160,000 bills a day that are mailed from Monterey Park makes SoCal one of the largest commercial mailers in southern California, according to Allen.

One of the new areas — formerly the keypunch room — now contains 16 disc drive units. Each disc pack used on these units stores up to 100 million characters of information. This means that they now have storage capabilities of one billion 600 million characters.

Just off the disc drive area is the EDP library, where discs and tapes used in the system are kept under strict temperature and dust control. These rooms are also protected with a Halon gas fire extinguishing system. Allen said Halon, which smothers fire, is not harmful to humans on a limited exposure. In addition, a smoke and heat protection system operates on temperature control in the area.

A new computer, an IBM model 370/158, has replaced the former model 370/155. As a comparison, Allen said when they were using the model 360/50, the time required to process 1.6 million bills was 12 hours. The new computer can do all 3.2 million of SoCal’s bills in nine to 10 hours.

In the busy billing distribution area, Allen pointed out, approximately 650,000 pieces of paper (bills, envelopes, inserts) per day are handled. Just getting rid of empty envelope cartons is a job in itself.

The click, click, click of the keypunch machines has become a rarity now in the data control and data entry areas. Here, information about turn-ons, turn-offs, cash, etc. is keyed to disc and then transferred to magnetic tapes. New keyboard units which are more silent, and which have small TV screens for viewing and verifying information as it is added or changed, have replaced the keypunches.

Interestingly enough, Allen said, these new units cost about $500 less per month than the former keypunch machines, and are proving about 20 percent more efficient.

A microfiche area offers a look at another sophistication in equipment: a Pertec 3700 microfiche filing unit photographs register pages on 4 x 6-inch film cards, at a rate of 224 pages to a single piece of film. Allen said a printer in the computer room which turns out 2,000 lines a minute is regarded as fast — but the microfiche film process is the equivalent of printing out 30,000 lines of information per minute.

Contractor for the remodeling project is Oltmans Construction Co. of Monterey Park.

MAIL PAYMENTS...

(continued from page 1)

to operate a payment office any longer. They are always replaced by at least one agency in the same general location — which often proves more convenient for customers, since the agency may be in a supermarket or drugstore where the customer regularly shops. There are currently 199 such agencies in the company’s service areas.

Right now, there are 68 company payment offices throughout SoCal. Some are located in division headquarters buildings; some also house district or local offices in various communities. In 1971 there were 86 such offices. Seven of them were closed that year. They were Elsinore (Eastern); West Los Angeles (Northwest); Newport Beach (Orange County); North Hollywood (San Fernando Valley); Lindsay (San Joaquin Valley); Lynwood (Southern); and Gardena (Western).

The next year, eight more were shut down. These were Brawley (Eastern); Claremont (Inland); Beverly Hills (Northwest); La Habra (Orange County); Azusa and South Pasadena (San Gabriel Valley); Tulare (SJV); and Redondo Beach (Western).

Last year, just three offices were closed. They were Redlands and Upland in Inland division, and Glenoaks in San Gabriel Valley division.

Pickup said no plans have been made for 1974 closings as yet, pending division recommendations, except for the Arcadia office, which will close in February.
Career counseling: now in session

Career counseling sessions are being held throughout the company between employees and their supervisors. This is a follow-up procedure in the current skills inventory program which began in November of last year.

The counseling meetings cover three main areas: (1) where the employee is now, (2) what it is the employee wants to do and (3) ways to get there, according to Dick Hession, management planning administrator, industrial relations, Headquarters.

In the discussions, said Hession, it is pointed out that no assurance can be given that a person with necessary skills will be selected for a specific position. Availability of the job and the individual's record of performance are major factors in such a decision.

These one-on-one discussions are intended to verify information provided by employees on the skills inventory questionnaire. They also provide a basis for meaningful talk about individual career interests, Hession said.

In the meetings, supervisors are attempting to assist employees in determining what they would like to do in the future. They counsel with them on various ways to achieve personal goals.

Employees in non-management, as well as those in management — at all levels of responsibility — have the opportunity to discuss their career ambitions in the program. Attention is also directed to the company's non-management job bid program.

During the discussions, supervisors may refer to their management planning handbook, said Hession, for a brief summary of functions performed in 15 major areas of the company. Also available in the handbook are examples of lines of progression in management for the major departments.

It is stressed in the counseling discussions that there are no formalized, rigid lines of progression in management, but movement usually is within a functional group.

In the meetings supervisors are also emphasizing that discussions of and specific preparation for management opportunities do not guarantee selection. Promotions, both within and without management, are made on a competitive basis and in most situations several well qualified candidates are available.

Participation by employees in the skills inventory and career counseling program is completely voluntary.

It is expected these counseling sessions will continue through the next two months. Deadline for return of the skills questionnaires to industrial relations is set for Feb. 28.

REACTIONS TO COUNSELING PROGRAM

Interviews draw candid employee comments

When SoCal began phase two of its skills inventory program — career counseling — Gas News editor Marylyn Holdren visited San Fernando Valley and Northwest divisions to talk with employees about their reactions to the project.

Non-management people were being included for the first time in a program that would list their skills and aspirations. Employees were asked what the program meant to them, whether they felt inclusion in the project would prove beneficial.

Their answers were varied and interesting. Six non-management people and one management employee talked at length about the program.

Their comments:

"I think the program is tremendous," Bill Martinez said.

"I think it's long overdue and that the company has lost some good people because this wasn't done sooner," Martinez said.

"The fact that I can give management an indication of the way I want to go and to voice my opinion is great. It opens up new avenues for me. I can't say enough. It's tremendous and I think the company will benefit as well as the employees," he concluded.

Martinez, collections control clerk in customer services, San Fernando Valley division, started with the company in January 1963 as a meter reader. He used the job bid program to move several times, leading to his present job. Now, he looks forward to further advancement.

Dottie Shuben, control clerk in San Fernando Valley division, was "glad to see something like the skills inventory and career counseling program come out."

"What does it mean to her? "That someone cares, that perhaps you can move into other promotional positions, into other areas of work if you are qualified," she said.

"However, I feel that there are areas of misunderstanding about the program. I feel it should be clarified as to how the information given on the skills inventory will be used," Dottie said.

"There were some people who did not bother to fill in or answer the forms. They reasoned that since they were not interested or would not be considered for supervisory positions, that they would not bother to fill in the forms."

"Asked about goals, Dottie said, "I am interested in people and would enjoy moving into any position in personnel or sales-oriented, public contact work."

Field technician Bill Butler said, "I think the skills inventory career counseling program is a good idea. It may help me and others like me to advance."

Butler, who was hired by SoCal in 1964, said he used the job bid program to move to his current job. Now he believes that he will be able to move into other jobs and possibly to management level jobs if input from his skills inventory form is used.

Butler expressed enthusiasm over his personal plans to again attend classes and continue his studies in mathematics and business. He is optimistic that this will help him to further advance his GasCo career.

Tom Alujevic wondered how information submitted on the skills inventory would be used. He said the new program, if used properly, is a good opportunity for employees to express their hopes.

"As soon as he heard the program was launched, Alujevic began to seek opportunities that could benefit him. He said, "I feel it proper to express my hopes."

"I asked what I could do with the program and he said it would be beneficial to him, Alujevic said, "Maybe."

Alujevic, who received his bachelor's degree in psychology last June, began as a crewman in 1969 and is ambitious. He is a technical assistant in distribution, Hollywood, Northwest division. He is interested in working in personnel, in the employee or industrial relations area.

Joyce Ridley, customer services representative in Northwest division said: "I think the skills inventory and career counseling program will prove to be advantageous. It lets the company know about the resources of some of its people."

Joyce, who attends Los Angeles City College at night, will receive her associate of arts degree in business administration in June. She has applied to Cal-State, Los Angeles for entrance and now will be investigating the company's Pepperdine program. Prior to the skills inventory program, Joyce was unaware that she could have notified her supervisor about her schooling.

Joyce views the opportunity for non-management people to tell their career hopes and scholastic backgrounds as an excellent idea. Her present ambition is to earn a higher degree in business management so that she will be qualified for positions in the area of labor law or employee benefits.

Steve Outlaw is an order checking clerk in customer services, Northwest division. Outlaw began work on a part-time basis in 1966. He earned a bachelor's degree in sociology in 1971 from Cal State, Los Angeles. Outlaw said he was "shocked" when told about the skills inventory and career counseling program.

The shock was pleasant, Outlaw said, because "I feel the company has been some kind of program where skills of non-management employees would be included a long time ago."

Outlaw views the program optimistically: "If it is the way of life it will be for the future you are ambitious. It gives you a chance to let the company know your
Outlaw’s goal is to earn a master’s degree in public relations. He is saving money to enroll in classes this year. He has also investigated the company’s educational assistance program. Right now he views this period of his life as a time for adjustment and coming up with final determinations on where to go and what to do to make it in the company.

“I would like,” he said, “to get into community relations eventually.”

For Joe Berta, field distribution supervisor at Juanita base, Northwest division, the job skills inventory has double meaning. He views the program from both the non-management and the management standpoint.

Berta is a management employee who started in 1955 as a messenger, a non-management job.

“Till 1967 and ‘68, Berta said, I was involved in a pioneer program in Southeast division where a similar project was completed.”

Berta rates the present program as excellent.

“I am glad that it has been opened to all employees,” he said. “The new program will help people determine where they want to go. It will let them know what opportunities are available to them and what areas they may explore for future advancement.

“Along with this, it will help supervisors, because they will be aware of the abilities, needs, interest and talents of employees. The smart supervisor will have the opportunity to guide his people. Also, it will probably create new avenues of understanding between supervisors and employees as well as perhaps stimulating more interest on the part of all employees in the company.”

According to Dick Hession, management planning administrator, industrial relations, Headquarters, material on the skills inventory will be maintained in a central file. When candidates are being considered for management positions this background information is available. This same information can be used in preparing lists of candidates for any given job assignment.

In addition, immediate supervisors become acquainted with employees’ skills and interests. As openings occur on the non-management level, employees can be considered for those jobs in which their interest is shown by bids and in which they have the knowledge, skills, training or experience.
Six move to new jobs

Six people began new job assignments as a result of management promotions and transfers last week.

Bobby Coker is promoted from mapping specialist to drafting supervisor in engineering. Coker is replacing Ray Wendt who is retiring in February. He reports to Harlan Stratiff.

Gwen Cooper moves from organization and compensation specialist in industrial relations, Headquarters, to inventory assistant in administrative services, Headquarters. She reports to Don Lowe.

Jerry Karger, staff accountant, moves from information systems, Headquarters, to accounting and financial controls, Headquarters.

DeWayne Nelson is promoted from payment processing supervisor in accounting and financial controls, Headquarters, to cost analyst in Pacific Lighting Exploration Co. He reports to Bill Owens.

Bob Powert is promoted from staff supervisor, customer services training in operations support, Headquarters, to special projects administrator in general administration, Headquarters. He reports to Earl Quibell.

Lateral transfers made

Five people have begun training in the company's management development program as a result of temporary lateral transfers.

Joe Barta moves from technical supervisor to field distribution supervisor at Juanita Base in Northwest division. He reports to Dowdell Smith.

Clara Bollman moves from budget and cost control supervisor in customer services, Headquarters, to service center supervisor in customer services, San Gabriel Valley division. She reports to Sid Johnson.

Eloy Duran moves from industrial engineering specialist in operations support, Headquarters, to budget and cost control supervisor in customer services, San Gabriel Valley, to industrial engineering specialist in operations support, Headquarters. He reports to Ron Miller.

Ron Wilson moves from field distribution supervisor at Juanita Base to technical supervisor in distribution, Northwest division. He reports to Stan Kahan.

Bridge team is league champ

SoCal's bridge team has won the 1973 Commercial Bridge League championship.

Bob Holmes of information systems, Headquarters, was captain of SoCal's winning contingent, which had a record of eight wins and two losses over the year.

Team members are Bob Alvey, Harry Beck, Bob Cochran, Marv Douglas, Hank Ebert, Curt Feece, Rex Garfield, and Holmes.


Holmes said the Commercial Bridge League is an 11-team organization including, besides SoCal, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Los Angeles city engineering department; Air Pollution Control District; Security Pacific National Bank; Occidental Insurance; United California Bank; Times-Mirror Co.; Bechtel Corp.; Fluor Corp.; and Pacific Telephone.

The winners were scheduled to receive a new trophy, symbolizing the championship, last week.

A 90,000-lb. turbine engine to power the new Dedano compressor station was hoisted onto its concrete pad Fri., Dec. 28. Supervising placement of the 12,000 lb unit is Mike Hoyt (right), construction welding mechanic, North Inland Division. Unit is undergoing alignment and testing prior to mid-March start-up. (Photo by Don Walkenhorn)
Initial hearings end on coal gasification plans

Phase one of hearings on SoCal's amended application to its coal gasification project has been completed.

The amended application calls for Pacific Coal Gasification Co., a SoCal affiliate, and its partner in the joint venture, synthetic natural gas (SNG) project, Transwestern Coal Gasification Co., to sell SNG directly to Pacific Lighting Service Co. (for SoCal) and Cities Service Gas Co. of Oklahoma City.

Under original plans, Transwestern Pipeline Co. (parent of Transwestern Coal Gasification) was to have sold the SNG to its two customers. Transwestern Pipeline, one of SoCal's major out-of-state suppliers, will transport the SNG to the state border where it will enter SoCal's transmission lines.

It is expected that an initial output of 250 million cubic feet per day of SNG will be produced at the proposed coal gasification plant.

The plant is to be built near Farmington, New Mexico.

SoCal would receive three-fourths of this, or 187.5 million cfd. The remainder would go to Cities Service.

Company witnesses who testified before the FPC were Ray Todd, vice president of SoCal and president of Pacific Coal Gasification Co.; Bill Wood, executive assistant to Bob McIntyre, vice president and assistant to the chairman of SoCal; and Pete Wilson, SoCal manager of gas requirements, gas balance and rate design.

The hearings began Dec. 17 before the Federal Power Commission in Washington, D.C. A second phase may resume in February.

NON-MANAGEMENT MOVES

Jobs change for 24

Twenty four people moved to new job assignments as a result of non-management transfers and promotions. They are:

- Draftsman
- Leadman
- Inland
- Welder
- Mtr & Reg Man
- Western
- NC
- Crewman
- Inland
- Storeroom Keeper
- Executive Secretary

Special Clerk
Utility Clerk
Lillian Clodi
Beverly Haupert
June Stanley
Sylvia Wonzo
Kathy Yonemura
William Clutterham
Ronald Fox
Richard Hemminger
Kent Jackson
Southern
Gary Lemon
Richard Ortiz
Richard Swain
Southern
Willie Brown
Sylvia (Sch.)
Alvin Pass
Northern

SANTA MONICA — Elsie L. Martin died Dec. 1 at the age of 80. She served with Southern Counties from 1920 until her retirement from the old Santa Monica Bay division.

ARCADIA — Edwin Johnson, 66, died Dec. 2. He was a servicerian at Belvedere base in Metro division. He had served 26 years with SoCal.

BIG BEAR LAKE — Sanford Hallimore, who retired in 1957 as distribution foreman in the old Central division, died Dec. 24. He was 81.

Mr. Hallimore is survived by his widow, Maude.

ANAHEIM — Arthur G. Lindell, who retired in 1960 as meter supervisor for Pacific Lighting Gas Supply Co., died Dec. 9. He was 81.

Mr. Lindell is survived by his widow, Margarethe.

WHITTIER — Thomas Terry, who retired in 1958 as trucking foreman in the old purchases and stores department of Central division, died Dec. 24. He was 84.

Mr. Terry is survived by his widow, Cora, and a sister, Mae Maridle.

VISALIA — Glenn Stanton, draftsman in distribution, San Joaquin Valley division, died Dec. 23. He was 51. Mr. Stanton entered service with the company in 1956. He is survived by his widow, Virginia.

REDLANDS — Joseph Wayman, 95, died Dec. 23. He retired in 1945 as a mechanic in engineering. Eastern division after a career of 26 years. He is survived by his widow, Ella.
STORMS...
(continued from page 1)

in the area. A dozen employees who work at the
base were taken home Friday night in company
vehicles which were equipped with tire chains. The
employees left their cars at the base.

The cold temperatures, which hit the
southland a few days prior to the storms,
necessitated the shutting down of service to all
SoCal interruptible customers for the first time in
nearly a year.

"A" block customers - the 22 largest
interruptibles - have been curtailed almost con-
tinuously since late last November. Service to "B"
and "C" block customers was suspended at noon
Jan. 2. About 155 customers are in these two
blocks.

"D" and "E" block interruptibles were shut
down the following day. These two blocks are
comprised of about 1,230 high priority
customers. As temperatures began to warm up a little last
week, service was restored to customers in these
two blocks.

In other weather-related developments
reported by SoCal divisions:

- Eastern division reported high winds, rain
and snow. Messengers carrying inter-office cor-
respondence were unable to reach some bases.

- The Arrowhead Highlands base in Inland
division was closed, with as much as seven feet of
snow recorded. In addition, many employees living
in mountain and foothill areas were snowed-in and
unable to report to work.

- In Northern division, vehicles were forced to
use chains in many areas, including the Antelope
Valley, Newhall-Saugus and Valencia.

- Distribution crews in San Fernando Valley
division were kept indoors due to heavy flooding in
many valley areas.

- In Orange County division, an 8-inch main
gave way on a street torn up by storm drain
construction. Pressure in the line fell from 170
pounds to 40 pounds. Nine small businesses in the
area recorded outages.

- In Coastal transmission division, several
large trees were blown down during high winds
which lashed the area. The trees damaged fences at

Six to eight inches of wet snow blanketed Newhall on Friday, Jan.
4, giving rows of scrubbers a very unusual setting. Menacing
clouds in background brought rain to wash away snow over the
weekend. (Photos by Larry Lee)

while the weather was inconveniencing a lot of
SoCal people, at least two weren't complaining.
San Gabriel Valley division secretary Tang Keefer,
and retiree Steve Mokri from Orange County
division were married Saturday, Jan. 5 in Palm
Springs. Because of the snowed-in highway, they
were unable to leave the next night so she could
return to work Monday.

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