



*Saddle Creek Community Services District, 1000 Saddle Creek Drive, Copperopolis, CA 95228  
"Committed to Serving our Community"*

*Board of Directors: President Sue Russ, V/P Steve Marsden, Director/Secretary Bob Kenyon  
Director Dennis Merrill, Director Charlie Robinson*

CSD Staff

January 29, 2007

*General Manager  
Charlie Martin  
Home Phone/Fax  
(209 295-3414)*

JS West & Symons Propane  
564 W. Stockton Street  
Sonora, CA 95370

*CSD Clerk/Treasurer  
Phyllis Richards  
Phone  
(209 785-0100)  
Fax (209 785-6260)*

Re: Concerns over Propane Operations

Dear Sir's,

*Site/MVCD Manager  
Greg Hebard  
Phone  
(209 768-5678)  
Fax  
(209 785-6260)*

Since early December 2006 there have been two (2) separate propane service line breaks (December 30, 2006 & January 10, 2007) resulting from contractor excavation activities.

According to the information we have received, USA was contacted prior to the digging and the line breaks occurred because the propane lines were not properly identified.

While we do not know for certain if the information we have received on these line damage problems is accurate, we believe that safety concerns warrant an immediate investigation of the matter by your company. If the incidents did occur as a result of improperly identified propane lines, it is highly likely that the same situation exists with other lines and that similar damage (with potentially more serious consequences) will occur during future construction activities.

After the propane line damage on December 30, 2006, CSD staff contacted your office to request you provide us with locations of all the shut off valves. As the on-site governmental agency we are likely to be the first responders and felt this information was essential to our public safety response. Your office informed our staff person (Maintenance Manager Hebard) that they would be unable to make an on-site inspection to locate all the shut-off valves until April 2007.

As we believed safety concerns warranted a more prompt identification of the shut-off valves, we ask Copperopolis Fire District officials to contact your office to see if the process could be speeded up. Copperopolis Fire District officials later informed us that they had received the same response as we had, shut-off valve locations could not be identified until April.

The District was somewhat dismayed with the lack of prompt response to this safety issue. In addition, we were surprised that your company did not have current maps of all shut-off valve locations.

It is our understanding that after the propane line break on January 10, 2007; your company did perform an on-site inspection to locate all shut-off lines. We do not know if all the valves were identified and to date we have not received a shut-off valve location map.

In addition to our concerns over the propane line damage, residents have complained about significant pressure loss, pilot lights going off and soot in their heaters. The most recent pressure loss incident occurred on January 15/16, 2007. On this particular occasion, one resident experienced a water heater fire which he believes may have resulted from pressure loss problems.

While District Staff does not have any expertise in propane operations and thus has no position with regards to the possible cause of the fire, we are concerned with the inconvenience and potential safety problems that residents experience as a result of propane pressure loss and we urge that you promptly review and resolve this situation. Additionally, we suggest that your company schedule an on-site, informational meeting to explain why the problem is occurring and what the residents can expect and should do when it does occur.

At present, a significant number of our residents consider propane operations as one of the most serious concerns within our community and the CSD Board of Directors agrees. Your prompt response in addressing the concerns identified in this letter would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Charles J. Martin, GM  
Saddle Creek CSD

Cc: Saddle Creek CSD Board of Directors  
Dave Haley, Castle & Cooke



