



City of Woodland

REPORT TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

DATE: September 15, 2009

SUBJECT: Certificate of Appreciation for Mark Hedington

Report in Brief

On June 23, 2009 Mark Hedington, Signs & Markings Technician for Public Works, prevented a potentially major disaster in the City of Woodland by identifying a burning gas leak and acted to prevent an explosion and fire in the sewer and storm drains. He then called for assistance and activated an emergency response by the proper authorities with speed and accuracy.

Staff recommends that the City Council recognize Mark Hedington with a Certificate of Appreciation for his exemplary initiative and service to the community in relation to the June 23, 2009 natural gas leak incident.

Background

On the morning of Tuesday, June 23, 2009, Mark Hedington was preparing to apply thermal plastic (which is used for street markings) on the crosswalks at the intersection of Cross Street and West Street. While maneuvering the thermal equipment, which carries an open flame at the bottom, gas that was leaking from the vent holes in a sewer manhole lid ignited. Mark rapidly realized the burning gases coming out of the sewer system had the potential for a large explosion that could damage homes and vehicles and injure anyone located near the blast. With quick thinking, he ran to his vehicle and grabbed an aluminum sign and then, at significant risk to himself, he ran back into the danger zone to slide the sheet of aluminum over the flaming vent holes to smother the flames. With the flames extinguished, Mark immediately notified the Public Works Utilities Supervisor of the situation.

After a quick investigation by the Sewer response team, explosive gas readings were also found in the City's storm main lines. The Fire Department and PG&E were notified of the situation and Public Works crews immediately closed the roads leading to the intersection.

PG&E staff arrived soon after and began their own investigation for the high gas readings. It was confirmed by their staff that a natural gas line was leaking in the immediate area. Residences in the

adjacent area were evacuated by the Fire Department for their own safety. PG&E crews located the gas leak and worked diligently throughout the night to complete the repairs. The Fire Department remained on scene until repairs were completed at approximately 3:00AM on the morning of June 24, 2009.

Because of Mark's quick thinking and years of experience, a potentially major local disaster was avoided.

Public Contact

Posting of the City Council agenda.

Recommendation for Action

Staff recommends that the City Council recognize Mark Hedington with a Certificate of Appreciation for his exemplary initiative and service to the community in relation to the June 23, 2009 natural gas leak incident.

Prepared by: Vince Ayon,
Utilities Maintenance
Supervisor

Reviewed by: Gregor G. Meyer,
Public Works Director

Mark G. Deven
City Manager

Attachment: Certificate of Appreciation

City of Woodland

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

PRESENTED TO MARK HEDINGTON

WHEREAS, on June 23, 2009, a gas leak was discovered in the sewer and storm drains at the intersection of Cross and West Streets when the gas was ignited by a piece of equipment; and

WHEREAS, Mark Hedington, an employee of the City of Woodland, quickly realized that the burning gas coming out of a manhole lid represented a severe threat to the surround homes and residents; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Hedington, at great risk to himself, smothered the fire with an aluminum sign board, notified the appropriate emergency response personnel, and waited for their arrival; and

WHEREAS, Mark Hedington's actions allowed for the timely notification and evacuation of surrounding residences and for a quick response by PG&E and City of Woodland Fire personnel to limit gas leak danger; and

WHEREAS, Mark Hedington has provided outstanding and exemplary service to the City of Woodland.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Woodland does hereby recognize Mark Hedington as a distinguished employee of the City of Woodland who displayed great initiative and community service to the City of Woodland during a gas leak on June 23, 2009.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 15th day of September 2009.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Woodland to be affixed.

Marlin H. Davies, Mayor

Artemio Pimentel, Vice-Mayor

Martie L. Dote, Council Member

William L. Marble, Council Member

Jeff W. Monroe, Council Member