Preliminary Report on the Hollister Earthquake of August 6, 1979

August 6, 1979

MR. B. W. SHACKELFORD:

At 10:06 a.m. on August 6, 1979 a moderate size earthquake occurred in the Hollister area. The seismological station at U.C.-Berkeley reported its magnitude to be 5.9 at the location about 18 miles north of Hollister on the Calaveras Fault, with the hypo-central depth of 6 miles. The epicenter appears to be near Coyote Reservoir near Morgan Hill. The duration of strong shaking was 10-12 seconds. We understand that graduate students from UC-Berkeley are in the field now looking for evidence of surface rupture. Although the earthquake was felt widely from north of the San Francisco Bay Area to Morro Bay, damage appears to be limited to electric distribution outages in Gilroy and Hollister. There have been no reported damages to the Moss Landing and Morro Bay generating plants or to the major substations located near the Calaveras Fault, although detailed field investigations will be made.

Diablo Canyon personnel reported they didn't feel the earthquake.

The gas transmission lines 103, 301-A and 301-G are instrumented with strain gauges where they cross the Calaveras Fault. Department of Engineering Research will take readings to determine if there is any evidence of movement where the lines cross the fault.

There was no report of gas distribution problems in the Gilroy area. However, in Hollister there was one customer report of a cracked flexible coupling connector to a water heater which caused a gas leakage. The only building damage reported was a report of a crack in the marble in the low-rise lobby of the General Office complex by a security guard.

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