

From: [Hannan, Patrick \(DBI\)](#)
To: [Joe Eskenazi \(joe.eskenazi@missionlocal.com\)](mailto:joe.eskenazi@missionlocal.com)
Cc: [Panelli, Steven \(DBI\)](#)
Subject: RE: Gas lines in foundations
Date: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 5:16:00 PM

Hi Joe,

Below please find answers to the questions you posed to DBI Chief Plumbing Inspector Steve Panelli on May 3, 2021. Mr. Panelli's answers are in red.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Thank you,

Patrick Hannan

1. Mr. Collins' letter downplays to the extreme the very issues that so concerned you in 2017. Could you please go through his letter and, as the city's chief plumbing inspector, tell me your assessment of his claims?

Answer:

I agree with Mr. Collins that encasing gas pipes passing through a building's footings or grade beam is a common and acceptable construction method that complies with California Plumbing Code Section 1210.1.5.

That was not the issue that concerned me in 2017 and, in fact, your article wholly misrepresented my comments and subsequent statements to you.

At the 2017 meeting, I voiced concerns about sleeved gas lines running under a building's concrete slab (over which there is habitable space) without the proper conduit, namely the secondary piping system to ensure proper venting, as described in California Plumbing Code Section 1210.1.6.1. This is an entirely different issue than an encased gas line passing through a grade beam.

Should an unsleeved gas line be found running under a building's concrete slab or under habitable space on the house side of the meter where DBI has jurisdiction, we would not allow construction to continue until the gas pipe was properly encased and vented. Should this condition be found on the street side of the meter that is PG&E's responsibility, they would take the appropriate action to bring the condition into compliance.

2. Can you explain to me the rationales behind what you discussed in the 2017 meeting — that you wouldn't allow a sleeved pipe to go through the foundation? Why, apart from the jurisdictional issue, would this be impermissible and unwise in your view?

Answer:

Secondary sleeves around gas pipes running beneath building slabs ensures that the gas line has room to move in the event of an earthquake, and that, in the event of a gas leak, the gas can vent outside the structure and not build up beneath it.

3. Why would an unsleeved, unwrapped pipe also be impermissible and unwise? How risky would such a situation be in a seismic event?

Answer:

An unsleeved, unwrapped pipe may not have room to move in some soils in the event of an earthquake. The risk would depend on a number of factors including the surrounding soil, type of pipe, and size of the earthquake.

4. Please outline to me the relevant codes here, if you could. How problematic would it be for some — or perhaps most all — of those codes to be contravened?

Answer:

Please be more specific about the codes you are asking to be outlined. The California Plumbing Code is more than 600 pages.

5. Another question, that just occurred to me with regard to the following code(s):

*1210.1.6 Piping Underground Beneath Buildings. Where gas piping is installed underground beneath buildings, the piping shall be one of the following: (1) Encased in an approved conduit designed to withstand the imposed loads **and installed in accordance with Section 1210.1.6.1 or Section 1210.1.6.2.** (2) A piping or encasement system listed for installation beneath buildings.*

1210.1.6.1 Conduit with One End Terminating Outdoors. The conduit shall extend into an accessible portion of the building and, at the point where the conduit terminates in the building, the space between the conduit and the gas piping shall be sealed to prevent the possible entrance of a gas leakage. Where the end sealing is of a type that will retain the full pressure of the pipe, the conduit shall be designed for the same pressure as the pipe. The conduit shall extend not less than 4 inches (102 mm) outside the building, be vented outdoors above finished ground level, and be installed so as to prevent the entrance of water and insects. [NFPA 54:7.1.6.1]

1210.1.6.2 Conduit with Both Ends Terminating Indoors. Where the conduit originates and terminates within the same building, the conduit shall originate and terminate in an accessible portion of the building and shall not be sealed.

Have these codes been followed? If not, why? Can this be justified?

Answer:

Yes, these codes have been followed on projects that received a certificate of completion from DBI. If you or anyone else is aware of completed projects with these conditions that did not follow these codes, please contact (628) 652-3400 and report the address so we can investigate.

From: Panelli, Steven (DBI) <steven.panelli@sfgov.org>

Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 12:26 PM

To: Hannan, Patrick (DBI) <patrick.j.hannan@sfgov.org>

Subject: FW: Gas lines in foundations

From: Joe Eskenazi <joe.eskenazi@missionlocal.com>

Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 2:06 PM

To: Panelli, Steven (DBI) <steven.panelli@sfgov.org>

Subject: Re: Gas lines in foundations

Another question, that just occurred to me with regard to the following code(s):

*1210.1.6 Piping Underground Beneath Buildings. Where gas piping is installed underground beneath buildings, the piping shall be one of the following: (1) Encased in an approved conduit designed to withstand the imposed loads **and installed in accordance with Section 1210.1.6.1 or Section 1210.1.6.2.** (2) A piping or encasement system listed for installation beneath buildings.*

1210.1.6.1 Conduit with One End Terminating Outdoors. The conduit shall extend into an accessible portion of the building and, at the point where the conduit terminates in the building, the space between the conduit and the gas piping shall be sealed to prevent the possible entrance of a gas leakage. Where the end sealing is of a type that will retain the full pressure of the pipe, the conduit shall be designed for the same pressure as the pipe. The conduit shall extend not less than 4 inches (102 mm) outside the building, be vented outdoors above finished ground level, and be installed so as to prevent the entrance of water and insects. [NFPA 54:7.1.6.1]

1210.1.6.2 Conduit with Both Ends Terminating Indoors. Where the conduit originates and terminates within the same building, the conduit shall originate and terminate in an accessible portion of the building and shall not be sealed.

Have these codes been followed? If not, why? Can this be justified?

Yours,

JE

On Mon, May 3, 2021 at 10:00 AM Joe Eskenazi <joe.eskenazi@missionlocal.com> wrote:

Steve —

I will gladly do so.

1. Mr. Collins' letter downplays to the extreme the very issues that so concerned you in 2017. Could you please go through his letter and, as the city's chief plumbing inspector, tell me your assessment of his claims?
2. Can you explain to me the rationales behind what you discussed in the 2017 meeting — that you wouldn't allow a sleeved pipe to go through the foundation? Why, apart from the jurisdictional issue, would this be impermissible and unwise in your view?
3. Why would an unsleeved, unwrapped pipe also be impermissible and unwise? How risky would such a situation be in a seismic event?
4. Please outline to me the relevant codes here, if you could. How problematic would it be for some — or perhaps most all — of those codes to be contravened?

I am available at your convenience, sir.

Yours,

JE

On Mon, May 3, 2021 at 9:49 AM Panelli, Steven (DBI) <steven.panelli@sfgov.org>

wrote:

Joe would you be so kind as to email me your questions? Thank you in advance.

Steve Panelli.

From: Joe Eskenazi
<joe.eskenazi@missionlocal.com>
Date: April 30, 2021 at 4:14:46 PM
PDT
Subject: Gas lines in foundations

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Mr. Panelli —

This is Joe Eskenazi from Mission Local.

I'm including a letter from structural engineer Randy Collins to the supervisors who have called a hearing related to the matter you in 2017 explained in detail as unsafe and unlawful — the encasing of gas lines, either sleeved, wrapped, or unwrapped, in concrete footings.

Mr. Collins claims that this is not a safety hazard and would not lead to fires or other disruptions.

I would hope to speak to you about this at your soonest convenience.

Yours,

JE

510 290 6215

<Gas Lines in Footings.pdf>