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**Los Angeles County Fire Department and the Department of Public Health,
along with SoCalGas, Form Unified Command Structure
to Address Aliso Canyon Gas Leak**

LOS ANGELES – Jan. 22, 2016 – Los Angeles County Fire Department and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, along with Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) jointly announced today that they will form a unified command structure to manage the response to the Porter Ranch natural gas leak incident.

Unified command is a collective approach to develop strategies to achieve incident objectives and streamline priorities and restrictions. This structure also will enable improved collaboration with state regulatory agencies to expedite the response to the gas leak.

“Together we will protect the public, provide one voice communication and information, and ensure the successful resolution of the leak incident,” said County Fire Chief Daryl L. Osby.

Officials with both county departments began working closely with SoCalGas within days of the detection of the leak in October at the Aliso Canyon natural gas storage facility north of Los Angeles. SoCalGas said it agreed to the command structure as the best way to ensure the safety of the public, on-site employees, contractors and first responders. In addition, the unified structure ensures that all entities are working toward the same goal.

“Public Health will continue to independently evaluate data and make health assessments to ensure the health of communities well beyond the repair of the gas leak,” said Jeffrey Gunzenhauser, MD, MPH, Los Angeles County Interim Health Officer. “While the situation continues to evolve, unified command officially structures the coordinated response and provides Public Health more access to information and pertinent data as it is discovered.”

SoCalGas announced earlier this week that a relief well being drilled to intercept the leaking well and stop the leak was ahead of schedule and could reach its objective by the end of February, if not sooner.

“We believe this phase of our effort to stop the leak should be jointly coordinated with the fire department and Public Health,” said Jimmie Cho, SoCalGas Senior Vice President of Gas Operations and System Integrity, and SoCalGas Aliso Canyon Incident Commander. “Both departments are highly skilled at hazard response and well-equipped to protect lives, the environment, property and public health.”

The unified command structure will be based at the SoCalGas Aliso Canyon facility. The public and media may contact the following people for additional information related to the Aliso Canyon well leak incident:

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