

MOTION

Every year in Los Angeles., the LAFD and/or the DWP respond to numerous natural-gas and propane gas (LP) leaks. While many of these emergencies can be controlled quickly and safely, the results of an uncontrolled natural-gas leak could be deadly for utility workers, firefighters and the families and properties they protect.

While the potential effects of a natural-gas or propane gas fire or explosion can be devastating, there are actions that local governments, homeowners and landlords can take to reduce and/or eliminate the risks associated with these leaks. Aggressive prevention efforts save lives and money.

Most of the incidents fire departments and local utilities are called to respond to could potentially be prevented by the installation of a safety device called an Excess Flow Gas Safety Device (EFV). EFV's are designed to allow a gas line to function normally during regular circumstances; however, they automatically respond when the flow of gas exceeds the design limits of the valve. The activation of the valve on a ruptured or disconnected gas line reduces gas flow to a non-hazardous level to prevent the build-up of gas in a structure and can ultimately help prevent explosions and/or fires.

The City of Los Angeles Municipal Code SEC 94.1219.0 currently requires the installation of Seismic Gas Shut-off Valves in every home. While these devices are effective in stopping the influx of gas into a structure in the case of a seismic event of 5.4 on the Richter scale and higher, they do not prevent gas build-up in the case of a leak or ruptured gas line. Most other cities and counties in California require either an Excess Flow Gas Shut-off Device (non-motion sensitive) or Gas Shut-off devices that are activated by motion in every household. It is prudent for the City of Los Angeles to investigate whether or not its code should be expanded to require either EFVs or Seismic Shut-off valves offering its residents a product option that provides protection from non-seismic related gas leaks that can threaten lives and property.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of Building and Safety (LADBS) and the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD), in conjunction with the City Attorney, be requested to report back to the City Council within 60 days with an analysis and recommendation regarding the expansion of the LAMC SEC 94.1219.0 to potentially include Excess Flow Shut-off Valves.

FURTHER, if LADBS and LAFD conclude that the LAMC should be amended, the City Attorney be requested to prepare an ordinance amending the provisions of LAMC SEC 94.1219.0 as appropriate.

PRESENTED BY: _____


DENNIS P. ZINE
Councilmember, Third District

August , 2006

SECONDED BY: _____

