

August 12, 2022

Re: Casitas Springs Mobile Home Park  
8951 Nye Road, Casitas Springs, Ca 93001

**Ventura County Mobile Home Park Rent  
Review Board Rate Reduction Petition**

Dear Review Board Members:

We, the undersigned, wish to go on record as being opposed to the rent increase of 5.9 percent (the maximum amount allowed for 2022) which become effective for our homeowners on February 1, 2022. This rent increase was implemented by the owner of the Casitas Springs Mobile Home Park, who is purported to be Ben Garcia. Our objection to the continuance of this rent increase is due to an ongoing absence of services provided by the Casitas Springs Mobile Home Park to its homeowners. We respectfully request that this park's 2022 rent increase be discontinued for the remainder of this year (2022), and that their rent increase request for 2023 be closely examined.

The issues which exist in our mobile home park are long-standing. They include but are not limited to, the following:

**1) Power outages, surges, and unsafe electrical connections**

Lights will dim or flicker resulting in low and uneven lighting. There are also power surges which are worrisome and are potentially dangerous. Power surges have reportedly resulted in the need to replace electrical devices. A power surge may also have contributed to a mobile home burning down in January 2021. The fire inspector's report in this case stated that the home fire could have resulted from a power surge, but the report's findings were determined to be inconclusive.

Power surges are probably the result of multiple factors, which include: the manager frequently splicing into power lines, power lines being tangled in tree limbs, and all of the park's power poles being termite ridden and many poles not being properly secured into the ground. The park's power poles are secured using a small amount of cement, which starts to form cracks immediately. This has resulted in power poles leaning, having to be propped up with 2 x 4s, or falling. One pole fell onto a home and few years ago.

The manager has propped up some of the most termite ridden and poorly secured power poles with long 2 x 4 lumber, which is unsightly and takes up room in homeowners' yards. Reinforcing power poles with long 2 x 4s could endanger the park's children who have no other place to play outside, except in their very small yards.

In addition to the power surges and brownouts, the problems mentioned above have resulted in some homes receiving 220 volts while others receive 110 volts and electricity bills fluctuating widely, by as much as \$50 to \$300 per month for some homeowners.

## **2) Sewage backups occur both inside and outside homes**

All of this park's mobile homes are on septic tank systems with cesspools/leach lines. While many homes throughout this park have experienced sewage backups, the mobile homes in spaces 1 through 15 experience the most frequent and severe problems. This may be caused by the manager using spaces 3 and 4 to store old cars, boats, and large vehicles (e.g., one five-ton industrial forklift, one 32-foot motorhome, and a Chevrolet Tahoe Suburban SUV, all owned by the park's manager). These two spaces contain the septic tank leach lines for the homes located on spaces 1-15.

According to several online articles and two well-known septic tank companies that we contacted, parking large heavy vehicles on top of septic tank leach lines should never be allowed. According to these sources, parking heavy vehicles on leach lines is almost certain to damage these lines, which causes them to stop working. As mentioned, the vehicle storage area is used almost entirely by the park's manager, but park homeowners can pay a monthly fee to store their vehicles or other items on these two spaces at well. Every new storage rental increases the weight on the leach lines.

Another possible reason for the sewage backup problem is that the park may not be pumping their septic tanks as often as is recommended or required. Two septic tank companies have informed us that septic tanks must be pumped every 6 to 12 months. According to observations by park homeowners, and the septic tank service company used by the Casitas Springs Mobile Home Park, this park's septic tanks are pumped about once every 20 to 24 months. This has caused sewage to harden in the tanks, which makes it very hard to pump out and requires special cleaning.

## **3) The homeowners are not allowed to have washing machines in their homes**

The park's manager has a washing machine, but all park homeowners are forbidden to have one, and there is only one operating washing machine of the three in the laundry room – the other two washing machines have been inoperable for at least eight months. It is extremely unusual for more than one machine to work at a time. This makes things very difficult for the homeowners and is a reduction in the services the homeowners pay for.

The above actions by the park violate section 798.23 of the MRL, which states that the park's management shall be subject to, and comply with, all park rules and regulations to the same extent as residents and their guests.

**4) The park does not trim or take care of their trees**

As previously mentioned, some power lines are tangled in tree limbs. In addition, tree limbs are pressing against the roofs and awnings of some homes. Tree roots also are pushing up patios and retaining walls by as much as one foot. While this problem affects several homes, the spaces that have the largest problem with this are spaces 1 and 36. Space 1 recently filed an HCD MRLPP complaint regarding this issue, but nothing has happened with this complaint so far.

The manager cut into the trunk of one the trees in the backyard of space 1. The purpose of this action was to kill this tree. A power pole fell onto a home a few years ago and now it appears that there is a good chance of a tree falling onto a home in the very near future.

When homeowners complain to the park's owner/manager about tree problems, they are told that no action needs to be taken unless it is affecting the power lines. The manager has also told homeowners that the trees are their responsibility to trim or cut down when necessary.

**5) Power meters are housed in very old wooden boxes with open bottoms and these meters are not calibrated or replaced as needed**

Over half of the park's power meter protective boxes are made of wood and are very old, with open bottoms. Because these power boxes are outside and are not completely enclosed, they are very dirty and full of spiders and spider webs. Some were also observed to have rat droppings.

Some meters are not securely fastened inside their wooden boxes. In addition, when the manager replaces meters, the park residents have noticed that he sometimes uses meters taken out of service from other homes that were removed because they did not function properly. The manager then hand writes dates on the meter's weights and measures tags, which is probably illegal. The few meters which appear to still have original weights and measures tags (i.e., tags that have not been altered by the manager), typically have inspection dates over 20 years old. Some weights and measures tags are so worn and torn that they can't be read. This may be why park residents have reported utility bills varying from month to month, sometimes by as much as \$200.

**6) The manager/owner does not post or distribute notices or information required by the Mobile Home Residency Law (MRL)**

- The sign on the park's front gate (that probably used to show a map, in addition to providing other important information) has faded to a point that it hasn't been readable for years.
- The few notices posted in the park's laundry room are dirty, torn, and mostly unreadable. They are taped to the laundry room walls with blue painter's tape. When a date can be deciphered, these are 10 to 15 years old.
- The park has failed to distribute copies of the Mobile Home Residency Law as is required under the provisions of California Civil Code §798.15.
- The park has never posted a copy of the park's emergency preparedness plan or informed the residents of the park where a copy of the plan may be obtained as is required under the provisions of California Health & Safety Code §18603.
- The park has not posted a "MOBILE HOME ASSISTANCE CENTER" sign in accordance with the requirements of California Civil Code §18253.5.
- The park has failed to post or make available to the residents of the park specific current residential utility rates as published by the serving utility or provide the internet website address where those rates can be obtained, as required by California Civil Code §798.40.

**7) It is impossible to contact the owner of the park**

- The park's office phone has also been disconnected for over two years.
- Ben Garcia, the alleged owner of the park, can't be contacted because he changed or disconnected his cell phone number.
- The manager can be contacted by cell phone, but the park homeowners are reluctant to contact him because he is frequently verbally abusive. On occasion the manager has also been physical abusive. Further, the park homeowners don't know when or if the manager shares their communications with the park's owner, or if he does, how much this information is altered prior to being shared.

**8) The park's owner failed to respond to two certified written requests for a meeting to discuss the park homeowners' concerns**

Two certified letters were mailed to Ben Garcia, the alleged owner of the Casitas Springs Mobile Home Park. These were mailed on February 28, 2022 and on April 29, 2022. Copies of these letters were also provided to James Garcia, the park's manager.

According to the MRL section 798.53, which states the management shall meet and consult with the homeowners, upon written request, within 30 days of the request. Ben Garcia failed to respond to either of these letters.

9) **The owner did not respond to two certified written requests for park ownership information**

Two certified letters were sent to Ben Gracia, the alleged owner of the park, requesting park ownership information on 06/19/2022 and 7/26/2022. Copies of these letters were also provided to James Garcia, the park's manager. The California State Mobile Home Residency Law (MRL) section 798,28, states that the management of a mobile home park shall disclose, in writing, within 10 business days, the name, business address, and business telephone number of the mobile home park owner upon the request of a homeowner. Ben Garcia did not respond to either of our letters.

The address where we, the undersigned, reside is 8951 Nye Road, Casitas Springs, Ca 93001

DEANE BROCK #23 Deane Brock

Printed Name	Signature
Susan Gordon #1	
Harold William #27	
Jean Green #22	Jean Green #22
Alois Bustillos #7	
DALE ROSS #30	Dale Ross
Julie Ross #30	Julie Ross
Peter Marshall #36	PETER MARSHALL

Cesar Amador #19

Charlie Branham #10

Sanice Williams #11

Veronica Flores #32

CARMELO DESANTIAGO #33 CARMELO DESANTIAGO

Judy Dixon #08 Judy Dixon

Daniel Lima #18

Lizbeth Obregon Lizbeth O. #14

# Casitas Springs Pictures



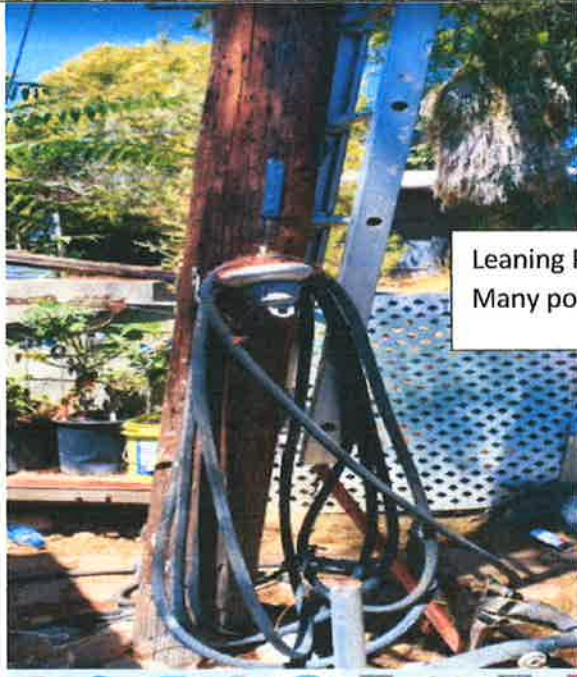
Only one working washing machine for over 8 months. This is the rule not the exception.



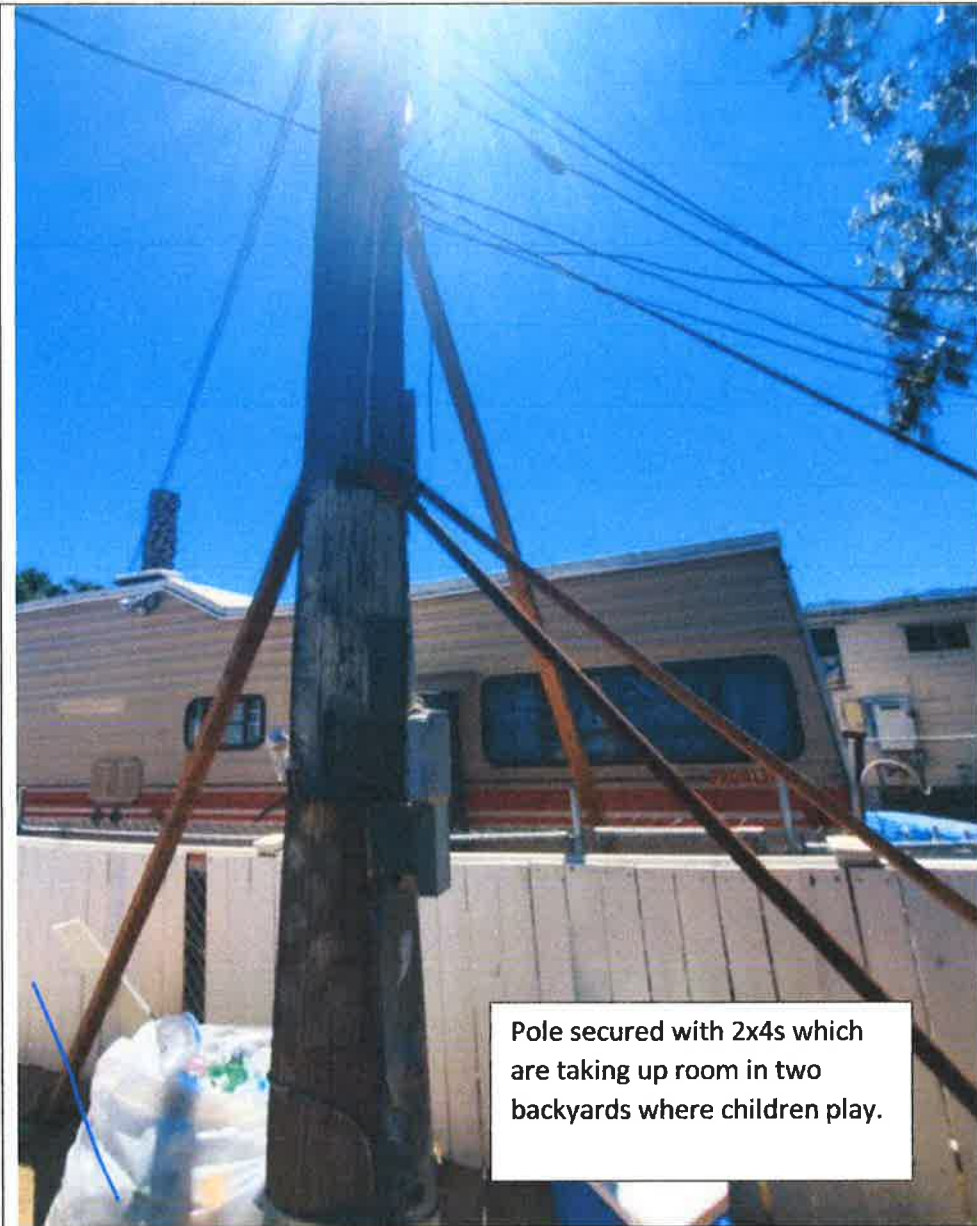
Laundry Room- Only one washing machine working for the last eight months. 36 homes in the family park.



Sewage Backup Space 5.  
About one year ago.



Leaning Power Pole.  
Many poles lean.



Pole secured with 2x4s which are taking up room in two backyards where children play.

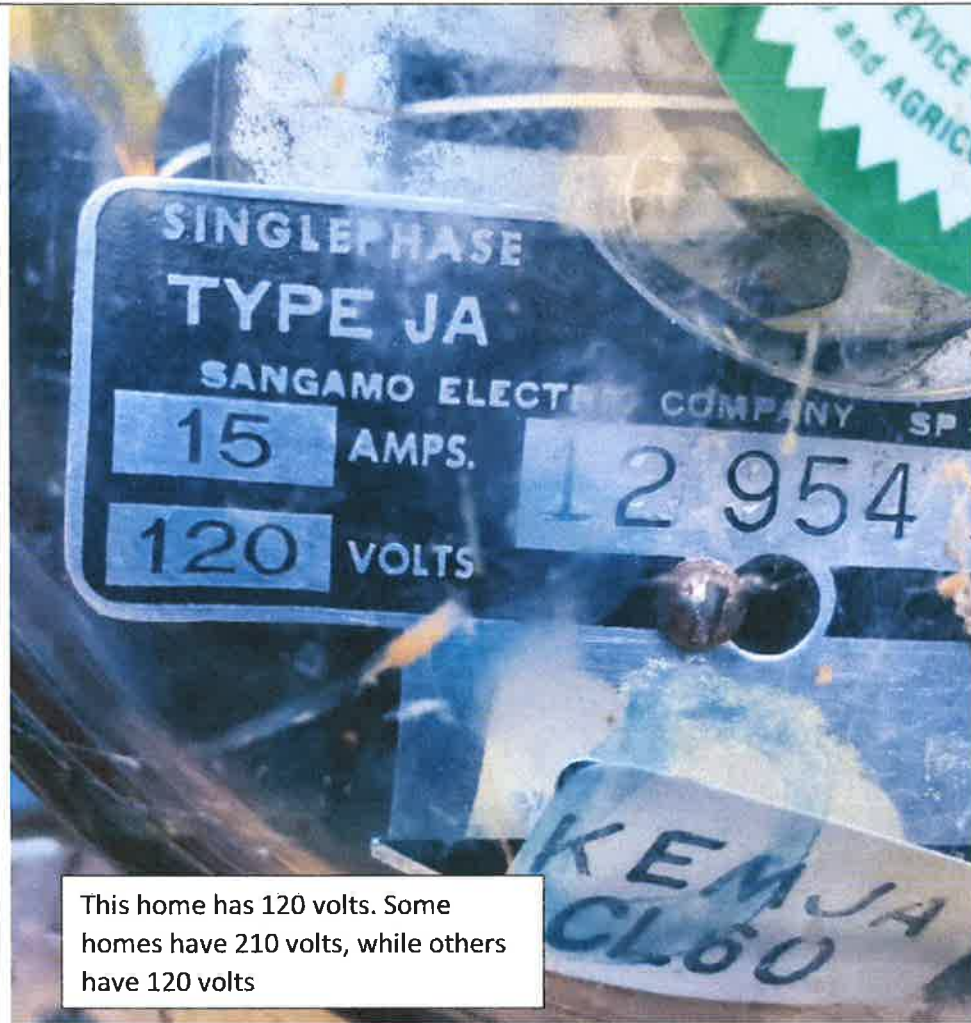




Typical park power pole. This pole has large cracks in it that can't be seen in this picture.



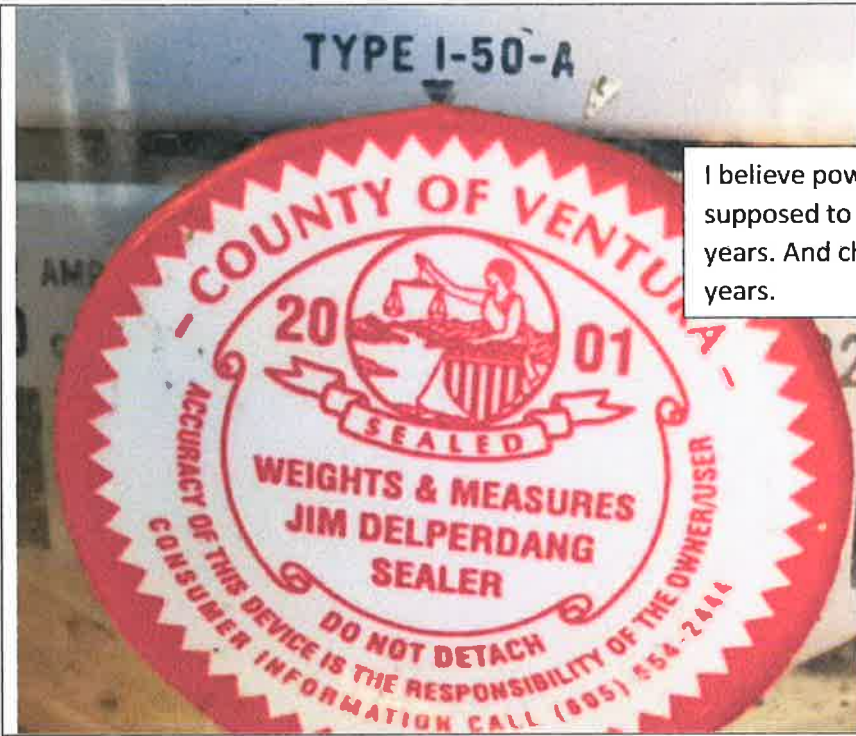
Trees against awning, roots lifting patio at least by one foot.



This home has 120 volts. Some homes have 210 volts, while others have 120 volts



Handwritten dates on many W&M tags



I believe power meters are supposed to be checked ever few years. And changed out every 10 years.



How will emergency services find a home when the arrive?

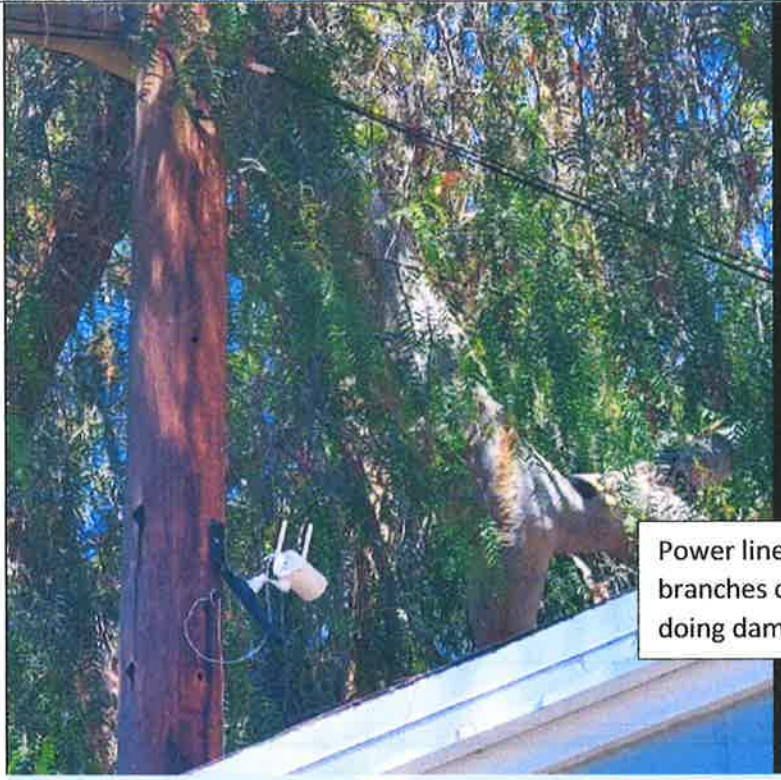
Map and info at park entrance



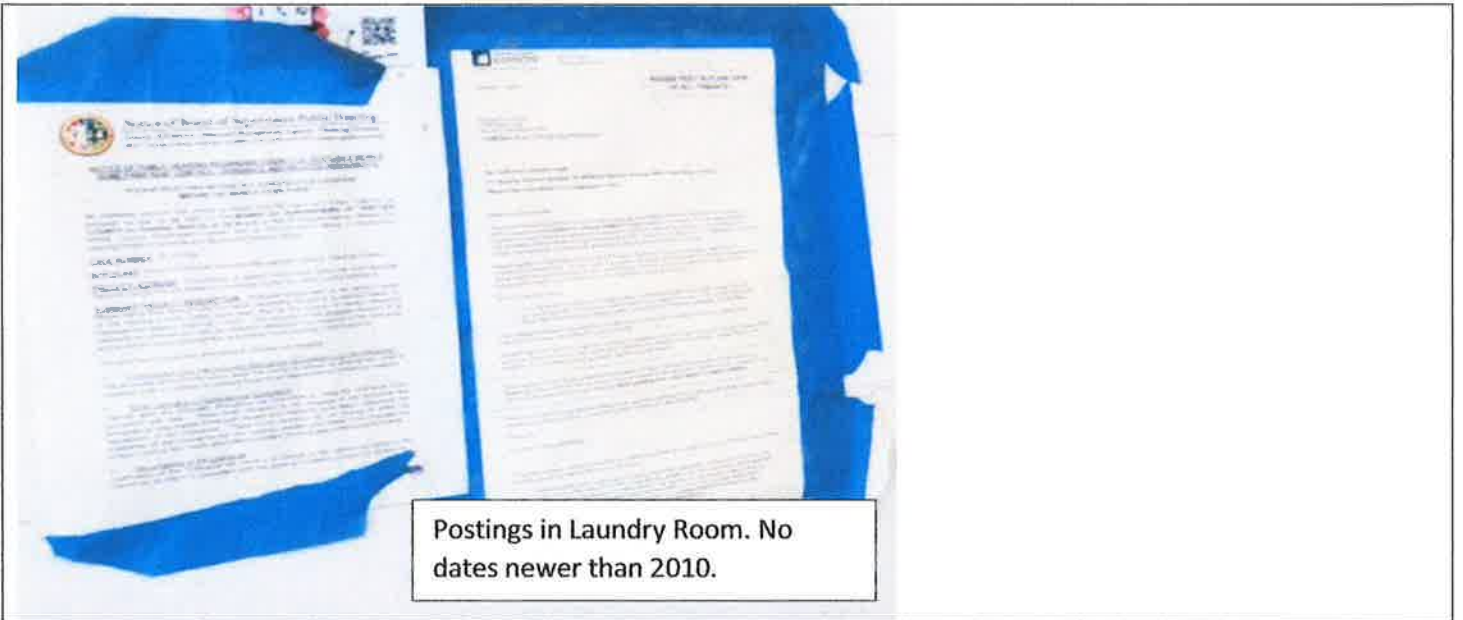
Tree cut by manager to kill it. Backyard of space #1



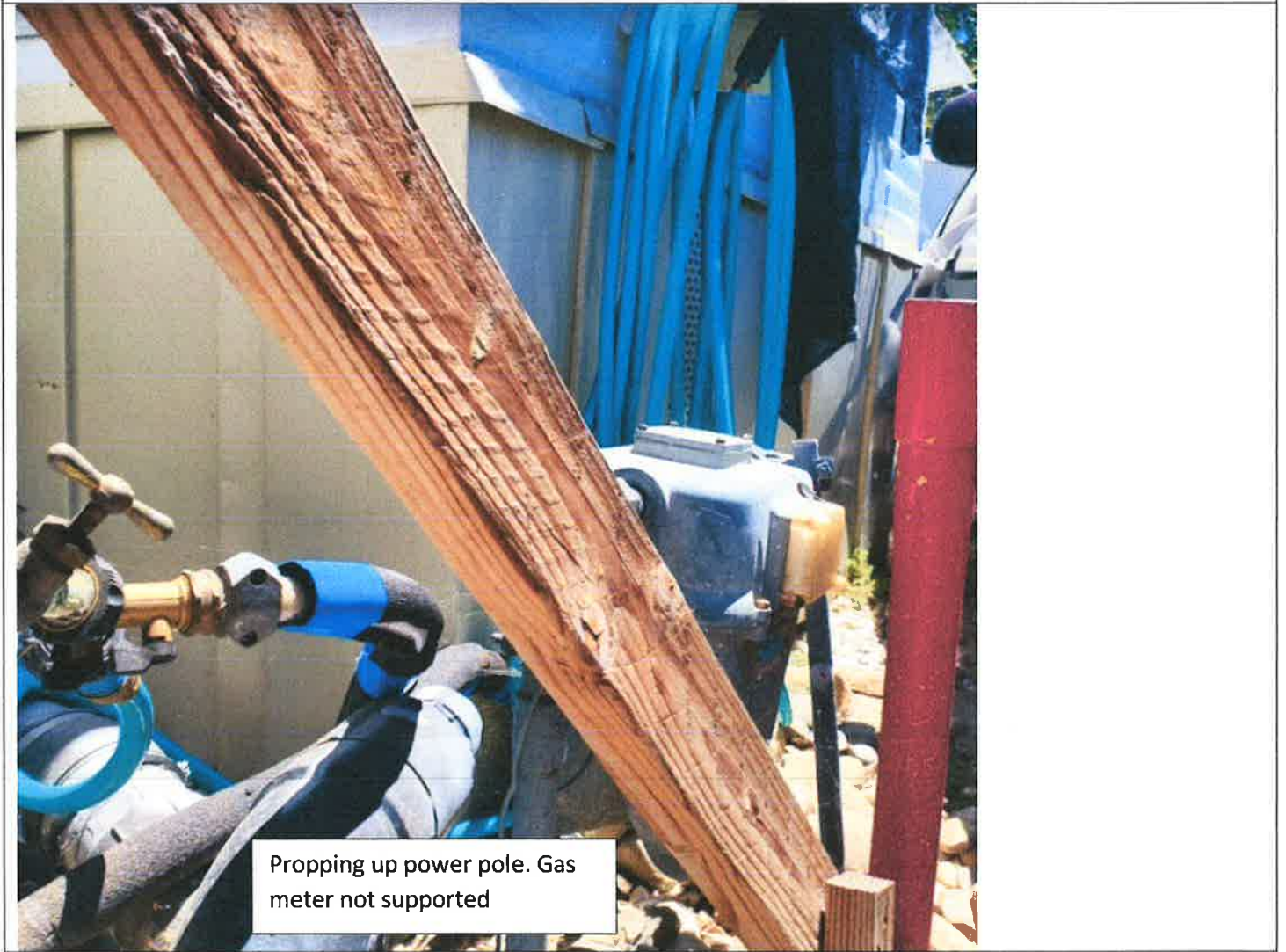
Power lines in tree branches.  
Roots damaging walls and home.  
Space 1



Power lines in branches. Tree  
branches on roof and roots  
doing damage. Space 1



Postings in Laundry Room. No dates newer than 2010.



Propping up power pole. Gas meter not supported



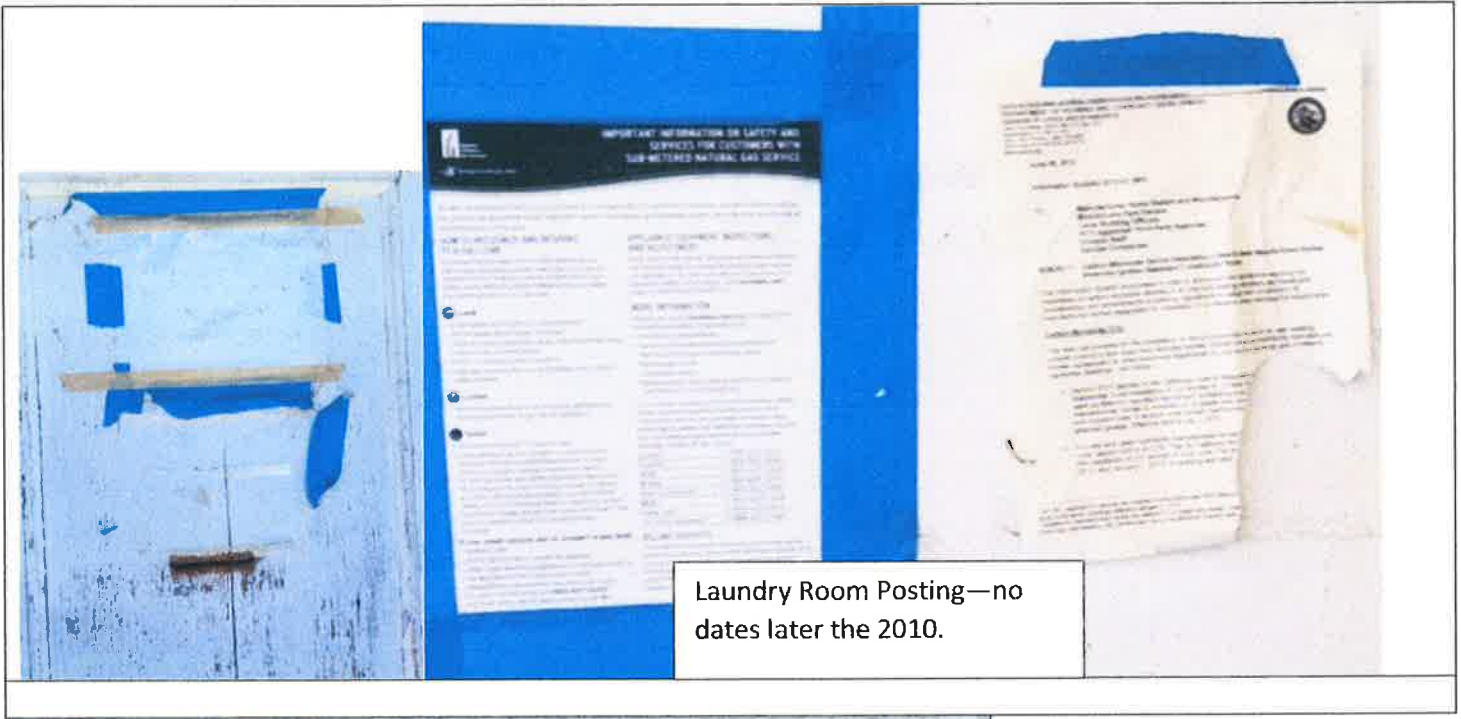
Manager's heavy vehicles on leach lines. Eight months ago. More vehicles and a boat now.



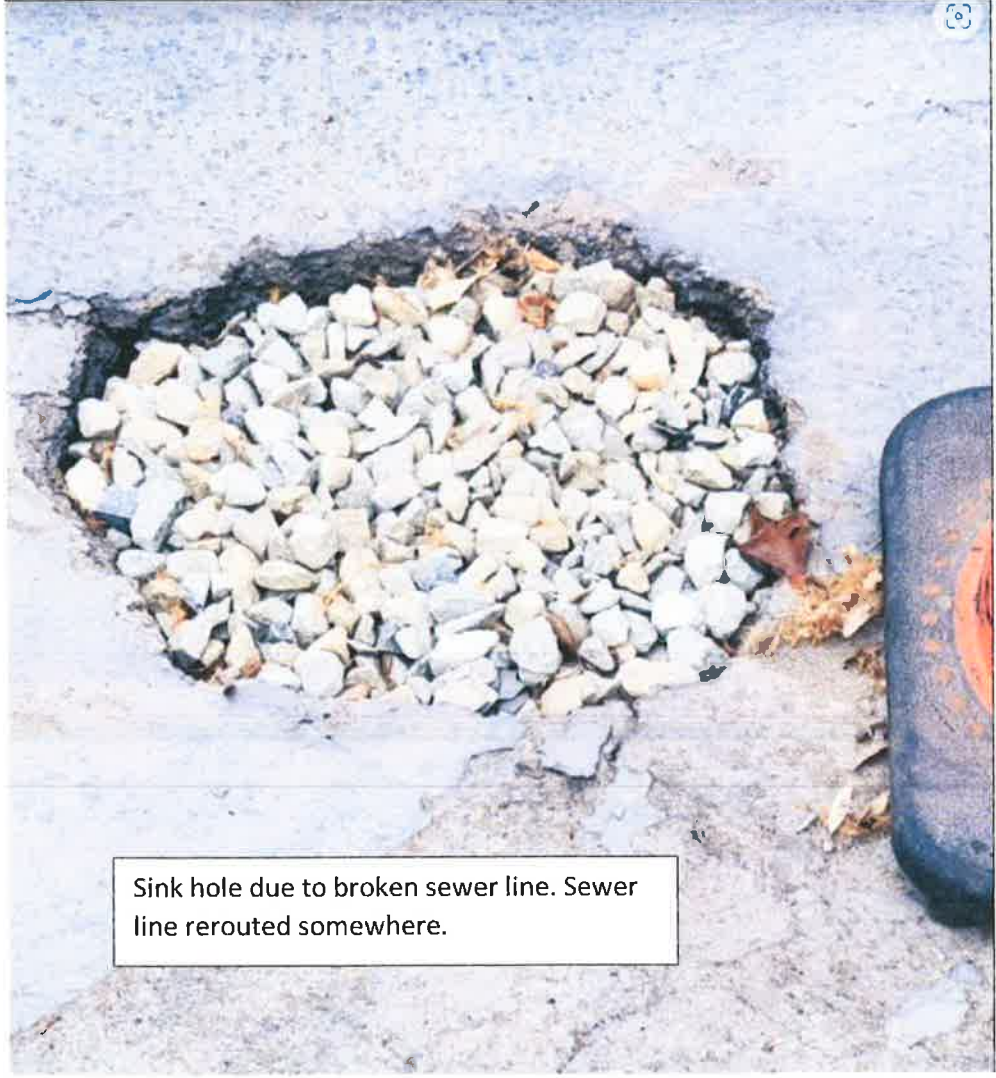
2x4s supporting power pole. Very little cement with cracks



Unsecured power meter. No date on W&M tag.



Laundry Room Posting—no dates later the 2010.



Sink hole due to broken sewer line. Sewer line rerouted somewhere.