

# So Cal Edison Electrocutes Itself With Safety Incentive Programs



**Southern California Edison has participated in a massive misinformation campaign that has led to multiple communities hiring lawyers to fight not only Edison, but the California Public Utilities Commission and US Forest Service over a new 500kV Transmission Lines Corridor through Bouquet Canyon. An article in the L.A. Times regarding the deliberate rigging of safety data by Edison sheds more light on its history of dishonesty for financial gain at public expense:**

Southern California Edison Co. used faulty workplace safety data — and in some cases may have suppressed reports of on-the-job injuries — over the last seven years to win performance-related bonuses from the state, the utility acknowledged Thursday. Edison told the California Public Utilities Commission staff that it would forgo or return to the agency \$35 million in payments that the company said were based on flawed safety ratings. Many of the ratings were distorted by inadvertent omissions, others by what Edison called “inappropriate” efforts by managers to hide reportable incidents. In some cases, Edison found evidence that supervisors contacted outside medical personnel to influence treatment, change medical records or downgrade the seriousness of an injury. Other times, Edison said, its managers encouraged employees to dodge safety reporting requirements by undergoing physical therapy or using vacation days during recovery.

Why did SCE rig the numbers?

Because they had an incentive to do so. A 1997 Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) program rewards or fines utilities for a number of measures, including employee safety. The decision to grant rate increases is also partially dependent on these numbers. Another measure that goes into the rate increase calculation is customer satisfaction. SCE was also found to have rigged those numbers as well, and agreed to return \$14.4 million. Edison has now had to agree to return \$20 million in safety awards already paid to Edison, plus \$15 million pending for 2001 through 2003.

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At a June, 2007 meeting with residents and cabin owners from Bouquet Canyon, SCE representatives told attendees that they were on the public’s side with regard to its preferred placement of its massive new energy corridor scheme for the Canyon. They said they preferred the same route for its 500kV Transmission Lines as those in attendance preferred. Which put them on the side of the public, and in opposition to the CPUC and USFS. In attendance was Norm Hickling from the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors Michael Antonovich’s office. Mr. Hickling requested that SCE put their position in writing. Their representatives indicated that could be done. As of this writing, July 20, 2007, they have not done so. It appears SCE has thumbed its nose at Mayor Antonovich. Why does SCE speak out of both sides of its mouth, deliberately misleading the public? And Government officials? We can only believe because it has financial incentive to do so. They’ve done it before. - *Gorilla*