



Observation Report

Address: 718 Tilton Ave.

Date: June 6, 2020

I was called out to the above address at approximately 9 am due to reported smoke and sparks under the kitchen sink. When I arrived the fire trucks had already left, however fire inspector Michael Zambrana was still there. He gave me a brief overview of the incident. He had mentioned the smoke and sparks coming from under the sink and that the electric power had been shut off at the main breaker.

At this point I decided to inspect the residence to determine if there were any safety issues involved that might prevent the continued occupancy of the residence.

I confirmed that the power was shut off at the panel and noted that the service main was rated at 50 amps which is low by today's standards but not unusual for an older Single Family Dwelling like this one. Next, I inspected under the kitchen sink and noticed blacked NM cables (Romex) running to the outlet for the garbage disposal. It appeared like the wires had over-heated, so I concluded that a licensed electrician should inspect the wiring just in case there was additional hidden damage in the walls which could cause further problems later.

Next, I looked for the electrical sub-panel to see if any damage had occurred. I found it in the basement and it appeared to be in good condition. However, at this point I noticed that dividing walls had been installed in the basement and it appeared like multiple families were living there. In one of the makeshift sleeping rooms I noticed a furnace, in another room I noticed a water heater. Both are a violation of the building code. Fuel burning appliances can not be in the same space as a sleeping quarter. So, I was very concerned to see a young child sleeping next to a furnace. I was also concerned to see a patchwork of electrical extension cords being used in the basement.

As I exited the basement I noticed what appeared to be two storage sheds in the back yard. I also noted another extension cord strung up from the house to one shed and then on to the other shed. As it turned out, people were living in those sheds. From a code standpoint I was very concerned about a dangerous circuit overload, sanitation, ventilation, proper lighting, heating and air conditioning. At this point it seemed like multiple families were living in sub-standard conditions at a house that was built as a Single Family Dwelling.

I called Building Official Mike Titsworth and discussed my observations with him. It was determined that due to unsafe electrical wiring conditions, and the fact that multiple families were using an underrated power supply, that the PG&E power would be turned off until these conditions could be corrected. Also, the sleeping rooms next to the furnace and water heater needed to be removed. Because of these conditions it was concluded that this building would be "Red Tagged" to prevent further occupancy. I posted 5 City of San Mateo Unsafe to Occupy signs (red tags) on the structures.

At this time, Code Enforcement supervisor Christine Civiletti arrived on scene and I as well as Michael Zambrana discussed our findings with her. We also conveyed our safety concerns with her about multiple families living on this property. Christine followed up with her own inspection of this property.

When the property owner and his son arrived, I recommended that he find a licensed electrician to test out the building wiring to determine if it safe to occupy.



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