



# Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Four Top California Law Firms Begin Filing Series of Lawsuits On Behalf of Camp Fire Victims And Challenging PG&E's False and Misleading Ads Touting Their Concern for Customer Safety

“If PG&E had spent their monopolistic profits on infrastructure upgrades instead of promoting a false image of safety, this incident would never have happened.”

- *Frank M. Pitre of Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy, LLP*

“After the tragedy of October 2017 in wine country, we watched PG&E blanket the airwaves on a daily basis for 14 months advertising that they were interested in the safety of their customers and the prevention of wildfires.

All of that money spent on advertising should have been spent on prevention.”

- *Mike Kelly of Walkup, Melodia, Kelly & Schoenberger*

**CHICO, Calif.** – This is the first and only case filed that directly challenges PG&E for misleading over 16 million customers that safety is its first priority. Two different complaints filed today in Butte County Superior Court seek to compensate victims and recoup monies spent by the utility giant for misleading advertising expenditures. The first of the cases was filed on behalf of *Lila Williams* (93 years old) and *Louise Howell* (67 years old), who while fleeing for her life to escape the intense blaze of the Camp Fire on November 8, 2018, was forced to abandon her car and seek refuge underwater in Lake Concow to stay alive. The second case was filed by *Chardonnay Telly*, who lost her father, Richard Brown, fondly referred to by friends and neighbors as the “Mayor of Con Cow”.

“The Complaint seeks not only to recover damages for the Plaintiffs, but also to: (1) stop PG&E officers and directors from spending the company’s monopolistic profits and ratepayer assessments on advertising to promote a false and misleading picture of safety surrounding their operations; and (2) recoup all monies spent by PG&E for advertising to promote their false image of safety since September 9, 2010.”

As the Complaint alleges, PG&E diverts “necessary safety related expenditures into funding corporate bonuses, boosting shareholder profits, and fueling advertising campaigns” that are untrue and mislead the public into a false sense of security regarding PG&E’s ability to safely deliver power, all while ignoring the serious and irreparable nature of the public safety threat posed by its aging infrastructure and ineffective vegetation management practices. As a result, “the people of the State of California have paid for corporate greed with the lives of their loved ones, their homes, and their most cherished belongings.”

This diversion of funds and “abdication of responsibility for assessing the effectiveness of their risk management practices to prevent catastrophic wildfires is exacerbated by the fact” that PG&E has long been on notice that its risk management programs are ineffective and that its infrastructure is aging, which has led to several horrible and irreparable fires over the past decade in Northern California and six-felony criminal convictions, for which PG&E is currently on probation, but still “choose[s] to ignore the lessons learned.”

*Attorneys at Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy LLP, Dreyer Babich Buccola Wood Campora, LLP, Panish Shea & Boyle LLP, and Walkup, Melodia, Kelly & Schoenberger represent **Lila Williams, Louise Howell, and Chardonnay Telly** against PG&E Corporation and Pacific Gas & Electric Company.*

### **About Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy LLP**

Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy only represents people or entities in cases involving just principles or causes. The key to the firm's success is its experienced attorneys and staff and their innovative approach to litigating complex matters in a cost-effective and efficient manner. Firm attorneys consistently tackles this problem head-on with its teamwork approach to obtaining fair and reasonable resolutions. The firm is also known for the breadth of its practice and the diversity of its clients: CPM attorneys are experienced in personal injury, consumer class actions, state and federal false claims matters, antitrust law, securities actions, and employment law among other practice areas.

### **About Dreyer Babich Buccola Wood Campora, LLP**

Dreyer Babich Buccola Wood Campora, LLP is the premier personal injury law firm in the Sacramento area and in Northern California. The firm has been serving clients for 30 years. Our well-honed skill in this field gives us the ability and compassion to fight for



people who have been harmed by the carelessness of others. When large businesses ignore your safety or insurance companies fail to uphold your rights, you can turn to us. We are the firm that doctors, lawyers and judges call when they and their loved ones are injured

### **About Walkup, Melodia, Kelly & Schoenberger**

As one of the premier personal injury firms in the United States, attorneys at Walkup, Melodia, Kelly & Schoenberger have successfully represented injured people in both state and federal courts, before arbitration hearing boards and in mediation and settlement conferences. For nearly six decades, we have helped establish new law and used personal injury litigation to compel corporations to produce safer products. As leaders in the areas of personal injury and wrongful death litigation, our attorneys have helped shape personal injury law, while securing millions of dollars in financial compensation for injured clients.

### **About Panish Shea & Boyle LLP**

Panish Shea & Boyle LLP is a plaintiff's personal injury law firm that takes on large corporations and government entities whose negligence causes our clients' injuries, and holds them accountable. In addition to obtaining the largest personal injury verdict in U.S. history (\$4.9 billion against General Motors), the attorneys at Panish, Shea & Boyle LLP have repeatedly and consistently obtained some of the largest verdicts against a utility including a \$41.8 million verdict and subsequent settlement for a motorcyclist struck by a SoCal Gas truck in 2018 and a \$19.8 million jury verdict in 2014 to a man who suffered severe burn and traumatic brain injuries when his rental home exploded as a result of a Southern California Gas Company's negligence. Panish Shea & Boyle LLP also represented numerous plaintiffs in the San Bruno PG&E gas explosion cases and is currently serving as Plaintiffs Co-Lead Counsel in the Southern California Fire Cases against Southern California Edison as a result of the 2017 Thomas Fire and subsequent debris flows in Montecito, CA, and representing thousands of clients in individual and class action lawsuits against SoCal Gas and Sempra Energy following the October 2015 gas well blowout at the Aliso Canyon Storage Facility in Porter Ranch.

For more information visit [www.wildfirevictims.com](http://www.wildfirevictims.com)

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