Resolution urging PG&E, Pacific Bell and manufacturers of non-wood utility poles to conduct a feasibility study of alternatives to chemically treated wood utility poles and urging all utility poll owners to take steps to protect public health and the environment from wood preservatives in utility poles.

WHEREAS, in 1999, the City and County of San Francisco adopted an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Ordinance stating that it shall be the policy of the City to aggressively pursue the goal of reducing the health and environmental impact of products used in its operations; and,

WHEREAS, in 1996, the City and County of San Francisco adopted an Integrated Pest Management Ordinance mandating that San Francisco minimize its pesticide use and reduce the negative impact of pesticides on people and the environment; and,

WHEREAS, the Integrated Pest Management Ordinance does not currently include any wood preservatives on the “Approved List of Reduced Risk Pesticides” for San Francisco; and,

WHEREAS, the U.S. EPA estimates that nearly 700 million pounds of wood preservatives are used annually in the United States; and,

WHEREAS, an analysis of EPA’s Inventory of Sources of Dioxin in the United States notes that treated wood is a large potential source of dioxin in the environment; and,

WHEREAS the Commission on the Environment and the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco have adopted resolutions urging the elimination of dioxin pollution; and,
WHEREAS, the City and County of San Francisco prohibits the use, requisition or purchase, directly or indirectly, by any City or County department or agency, of any tropical hardwoods or tropical hardwood wood products as well as virgin redwood or virgin redwood wood products; and,

WHEREAS, the US EPA has classified Pentachlorophenol (Penta), the most commonly used wood preservative, as a Group B2, probable human carcinogen, and,

WHEREAS, the contaminants of Penta, namely dioxins, furans, and hexachlorobenzene (HCB) are all recognized as carcinogens, mutagens, teratogens, and endocrine disruptors; and,

WHEREAS, Penta is banned in several countries outside of the United States due to health or environmental risks; and,

WHEREAS, the US EPA has classified Creosote, another common wood preservative, as a Group B1, probable human carcinogen; and,

WHEREAS, Creosote contains polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, which are classified as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and are listed on the US EPA’s Priority List of hazardous substances; and,

WHEREAS, at least 314 Superfund or chemical waste sites in the United States have been contaminated with Penta and 31 Superfund sites have been contaminated with Creosote; and,

WHEREAS, another common wood preservative, Copper Chromium Arsenic (CCA), contains inorganic arsenic which has been classified by the US EPA as a Group A, known human carcinogen; and,

WHEREAS, CCA also contains chromium VI, which is listed as a chemical known to cause cancer under California’s Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act and has
been classified by the US EPA as a Group A, known human carcinogen of high carcinogenic
hazard; and,

WHEREAS, other chemicals used to preserve wood utility poles may have adverse
impacts on human health and the environment; and,

WHEREAS, the handling of chemically treated wood utility poles and the retreatment
of existing chemically treated wood utility poles could expose the public to serious health
hazards; and,

WHEREAS, PG&E and Pacific Bell own the majority of the chemically treated wood
utility poles in San Francisco; and,

WHEREAS, PG&E and Pacific Bell have agreed to work with the Department of the
Environment to identify alternatives to chemically treated wood utility poles in a timely
manner; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
urges PG&E, Pacific Bell, and manufacturers of non-wood utility poles, including steel,
fiberglass, and concrete utility pole manufacturers, to conduct a feasibility study, within six
months of the passage of this resolution, of alternatives to chemically treated wood utility
poles, including an analysis of the effectiveness of wrapping chemically treated wood poles to
prevent leaching of chemicals into the environment, a plan for the safe disposal of chemically
treated wood poles, and an explanation as to why alternatives to chemically treated wood
poles cannot be used in particular situations; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors urges that utility pole owners,
as a precautionary measure, cover, within twelve months of the passage of this resolution,
the first five feet above ground level of all existing chemically treated wood poles owned by
them that are located within 100 feet of any elementary school or park and of all existing

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chemically treated wood poles owned by them that are located within 100 feet of any licensed
day care center, upon request of the day care center; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors urges that utility pole owners
present an annual report to the Commission on the Environment on the number and location
of poles that were replaced, including the types of replacement poles that were installed; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors urges utility pole owners not to
purchase utility poles made from old growth wood such as tropical hardwood or virgin
redwood; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors urges that all storage sites
within San Francisco of treated poles be covered from the elements of weather; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors urges the State of California to
conduct a feasibility study for wrapping chemically treated wood utility poles and to identify
and promote alternatives to chemically treated wood utility poles.
Resolution urging PG&E, Pacific Bell and manufacturers of non-wood utility poles to conduct a feasibility study of alternatives to chemically treated wood utility poles and urging all utility pole owners to take steps to protect public health and the environment from wood preservatives in utility poles.

June 18, 2001  Board of Supervisors — ADOPTED
Ayes: 11 - Ammiano, Daly, Gonzalez, Hall, Leno, Maxwell, McGoldrick, Newsom, Peskin, Sandoval, Yee

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on June 18, 2001 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Gloria L. Young
Clerk of the Board

Mayor Willie L. Brown Jr.