

# Governor makes a call on Arvin pipeline leak

**Theo Douglas, Bakersfield Californian, 10-30-14**

The Arvin gas pipeline leak that has displaced eight families from their homes since March got swift action from Gov. Jerry Brown at Wednesday's get-out-the-vote rally.

Informed by a Telemundo reporter at the rally in Arvin that the families have not yet been cleared to return to their houses on Nelson Court, Brown said he knew about the incident and would get involved.

"This was just brought to my attention. I will talk to the head of the Division of Oil and Gas today. In the next two hours, I will call him and see what we can do to get it resolved," Brown said, to applause, admitting, "You've given me a lot of work to do."

Then he kept his word and got to work.

Department of Conservation spokesman Ed Wilson said in an email late Wednesday that Brown had spoken to state oil and gas Supervisor Steve Bohlen of the state Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources.

In a statement, Bohlen said DOGGR is "continuing to work with Kern County. We anticipate the evacuation order will be lifted soon, with additional air quality analysis to be conducted in the near future.

"Upon receiving the results of the additional testing, DOGGR and the county will meet with the community to discuss the results."

In an interview after the rally, Arvin Councilman Jose Gurrola Jr. said he was encouraged by Brown's commitment.

"Yeah, I think that's huge," Gurrola said. "It'll speed it up."

Gustavo Aguirre, director of organizing for the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment, told Brown during the rally that neighbors of the eight families also have been affected by the pipeline break.

He, too, was hopeful after hearing Brown's response.

"I think it's good because in terms of the families, he's aware because we sent a copy of a letter to him and DOGGR and other agencies," Aguirre said. "I think he's aware. That's great that he mentioned it."

The spill could be costly for Kern County and the city of Arvin. Residents filed 416 legal claims last month against the two entities, seeking more than \$10 million in damages in connection with the disaster.