

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of an Investigation into	)	
The City of New Florence, Missouri's	)	
Compliance with the Commission's	)	<b><u>File No. GS-2017-0324</u></b>
Rules Regarding Natural Gas Safety	)	
Found at 4 CSR 240-40.030 <sup>1</sup>	)	

**PROGRESS REPORT**

**COMES NOW** the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission, by and through counsel, and in response to the Commission's July 3, 2023, *Order Directing Staff to File Progress Report* ("Order"), states as follows:

1. The Commission's Order directing Staff to file its sixteenth progress report no later than December 15, 2023, was issued on July 3, 2023. On June 30, 2023, Staff had filed its fifteenth progress report in this matter. Staff also filed progress reports previously on December 19, 2022; June 27, 2022; December 22, 2021; June 30, 2021; December 15, 2020; June 30, 2020; March 31, 2020; December 27, 2019; September 30, 2019; June 28, 2019; March 29, 2019; December 28, 2018; June 29, 2018; and, December 29, 2017.

2. The Commission opened this investigation docket on June 28, 2017, in response to a *Motion to Open Case* filed by Staff on June 6, 2017, in which Staff requested the Commission open an investigation into the City of New Florence's (City) compliance with the Commission's gas safety rules.

3. As more fully explained in the attached sixteenth Progress Report Memorandum, the City has made progress towards achieving compliance with the

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<sup>1</sup> Commission rules have been moved to the Department of Commerce and Insurance and are re-numerated 20 CSR 4240-40.030.

Commission's pipeline safety rules since the previous progress report was filed on June 30, 2023. And as stated on page 20, Section D. Conclusions and Recommendations:

The City has made significant progress towards achieving compliance with the Commission's pipeline safety rules, and in qualifying City employees to perform routine and emergency operations and maintenance tasks on its pipelines. The City continues to use qualified outside parties to complete covered tasks that City employees are yet qualified to perform.

Based on the City's current compliance with Commission rules, Staff recommends that the Commission close this investigation case. Staff will continue to monitor the City's ongoing compliance with the Commission's pipeline safety rules as part of routine safety inspections.

4. Staff recommends that the Commission close the investigative case.

**WHEREFORE**, Staff submits its attached sixteenth Progress Report pursuant to the Commission's July 3, 2023, Order, and requests the Commission issue an order closing this investigation case.

Respectfully submitted,

**/s/ J. Scott Stacey**

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**ATTORNEY FOR STAFF OF THE  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been transmitted by electronic mail to counsel of record this 15<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2023.

**/s/ J. Scott Stacey**

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Missouri Public Service Commission  
Official Case File No. GS-2017-0324  
City of New Florence, Missouri

**FROM:** Safety Engineering Department  
Brian J. Buchanan, Compliance Inspector  
Evan P. Neuner, Compliance Inspector  
Greg A. Williams, Associate Engineer  
Kathleen A. McNelis, PE, Engineer Manager

/s/ Kathleen A. McNelis, PE 12/15/2023      /s/ J. Scott Stacey 12/15/2023  
Safety Engineering Department/ Date      Staff Counsel's Office / Date

**SUBJECT:** Staff's Progress Report in the Matter of an Investigation into the City of New Florence, Missouri's Compliance with the Commission's Rules Regarding Natural Gas Safety Found at 20 CSR 4240-40.030

**DATE:** December 12, 2023

On June 6, 2017, the Commission's Staff filed a Motion to open a case to investigate the City of New Florence's ("City" or "City of New Florence") compliance with the Commission's rules regarding natural gas safety found at 20 CSR 4240-40.030 and to assist Staff in conducting more formal discovery, including but not limited to the issuance of subpoenas, pursuant to the Commission's rules of practice and procedures.<sup>1, 2</sup> The Commission ordered Staff to undertake an investigation of the City's compliance with the Commission's rules regarding gas safety.

As discussed more fully in the *Current Progress and Status Report* section of this progress report, the City has made progress towards achieving compliance with the Commission's pipeline safety rules since the previous progress report was filed on June 30, 2023. Based on the overall progress the City has made since the case was initially opened, Staff recommends that the Commission close this case. Staff intends to continue monitoring for compliance as part of routine safety inspections at the City going forward.

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<sup>1</sup> See 20 CSR 4240-2.090 and 20 CSR 4240-2.100.

<sup>2</sup> Commission rules have been moved to the Department of Commerce and Insurance, and are now found at 20 CSR 4240-40.030; 20 CSR 4240-2.090 and 20 CSR 4240-2.100.

**A. Background**

The Commission has the authority to require each gas utility, including municipal gas systems, to operate its system in a manner that promotes and safeguards the health and safety of its employees, customers and the public.<sup>3</sup> A municipality that owns any gas plant is subject to the provisions of Section 386.572, RSMo, for violations of natural gas safety laws, rules or orders.<sup>4</sup>

The City of New Florence, Missouri, owns and operates a municipal gas system under Section 386.310, RSMo, and is subject to the provisions of Section 386.572, RSMo.

The Commission's Safety Engineering Department Staff ("Staff") performs routine inspections of the operators of pipelines that are jurisdictional to the Commission to determine compliance with the Commission's pipeline safety rules. A number of different types of inspections are performed at routine intervals, including but not limited to natural gas pipeline safety Standard Records and Field inspections<sup>5</sup>, Operations and Maintenance and Emergency Response Plan inspections<sup>6</sup>, Public Awareness Plan and

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<sup>3</sup> Missouri Revised Statutes Section 386.310.

<sup>4</sup> Missouri Revised Statutes Section 386.572.

<sup>5</sup> Standard Records and Field inspections focus on an operator's actions to comply with the requirements of the operating and maintenance (O&M) provisions of 20 CSR 4240-40.030. Staff reviews the operator's compliance with operating and maintenance provisions of 20 CSR 4240.40-030, including but not limited to: (1)(H), (4)(CC), (4)(DD), (4)(EE), (5)(D), (6)(H), (8)(O), (8)(P), (8)(Q), (9)(F), (9)(I), (9)(J), (9)(Q), (9)(K), (9)(L), (9)(M), (9)(N), (9)(U), (9)(V), (10)(D), (10)(E), (10)(F), (10)(G), (10)(J), (11), (12)(C), (12)(D), (12)(H), (12)(I), (12)(J), (12)(K), (12)(M), (12)(N), (12)(N), (12)(N), (12)(O), (12)(P), (12)(S), (13)(C), (13)(D), (13)(L), (13)(M), (13)(N), (13)(R), (13)(S), (13)(T), (13)(U), (13)(V), (13)(W), (13)(X), (13)(Y), (13)(Z), (13)(BB), and (14). Additionally, some of the provisions of 20 CSR 4240-40.080 are included in the Standard Records and Field inspections. Staff's goal is to perform Standard Records and Field inspections of each pipeline operator at a frequency of once every two years, with a maximum interval between inspections of 5 years.

<sup>6</sup> Operations and Maintenance and Emergency Response Plan inspections focus on an operator's plans and procedures for compliance with the operating and maintenance and emergency response provisions of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(C) and (12)(J). Staff performs Operations and Maintenance and Emergency Response Plan inspections of each pipeline operator at a maximum interval between inspections of 5 years.

Effectiveness Evaluation inspections<sup>7</sup>, Operator Qualification Program inspections<sup>8</sup>, and Distribution Integrity Management inspections<sup>9</sup>.

On July 6, 2016, Staff conducted a natural gas pipeline safety Standard Records and Field inspection of the New Florence municipal gas system. On July 8, 2016, Staff provided an inspection summary letter to the City which listed and explained twelve (12) Areas of Probable Violation (APVs)<sup>10</sup> and three (3) Areas of Concern (ACs)<sup>11</sup> which Staff found during its July 6, 2016 inspection. The letter requested a response from the City within 20 days describing actions taken or scheduled as a result thereof.

The City provided an update of its progress on July 21, 2016, and a partial response to Staff's inspection summary providing satisfactory responses to three (3) of the twelve (12) APVs, and one (1) of the three (3) ACs on December 14, 2016.

Staff sent a follow-up letter to the City dated February 6, 2017, requesting a response by February 26, 2017, and met with City personnel on February 23, 2017, to discuss the status of the items contained in the follow-up letter. During this meeting, Staff agreed to allow the City until March 8, 2017 to respond. Having received no response from the City by March 8, 2017, Staff contacted the City and agreed to allow the City until April 1, 2017 to respond to the letter dated February 6, 2017. Having still not received a response from the City, Staff Counsel sent a letter to the City dated May 5, 2017, requesting a response within ten days to the items contained in

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<sup>7</sup> Public Awareness Plan and Effectiveness Evaluation inspections focus on an operator's plans, procedures and actions for compliance with the public awareness provisions of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(K). Staff performs Public Awareness Plan and Effectiveness Evaluation inspections of each pipeline operator at a maximum interval between inspections of 5 years.

<sup>8</sup> Operator Qualification Program inspections focus on an operator's plans, procedures and actions for compliance with the operator qualification provisions of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(D). Staff performs Operator Qualification Program inspections of each pipeline operators at a maximum interval between inspections of 5 years.

<sup>9</sup> Distribution Integrity Management inspections focus on an operator's plans, procedures and actions for compliance with the distribution integrity management program provisions of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(17). Staff performs Distribution Integrity Management inspections of each pipeline operator at a maximum interval between inspections of 5 years.

<sup>10</sup> Staff defines APV as follows: An Area of Probable Violation (APV) means that based on our inspection findings, there has been a probable violation of either a pipeline safety regulation (20 CSR 4240-40.020, .030 or 0.080) or a document provision that is included by reference in the pipeline safety regulations (e.g. American Petroleum Institute's (API) Recommended Practice (RP) 1162 (incorporated by reference in 49 CFR 192.7 and adopted in subsection 20 CSR 4240-40.030(1)(D)).

<sup>11</sup> Staff defines Area of Concern as: An Area of Concern means that while no area of probable violation (see definition of Area of Probable Violation) was found, there are issues that the operator should address to either prevent an area of probable violation in the future, or to improve its safety program.

Staff's February 6, 2017 follow-up letter. Not receiving a response, Staff filed a motion to open this case. On June 28, 2017, the Commission opened case number GS-2017-0324.

*Staff Witness: Kathleen A. McNelis, PE*

## **B. History of the Investigation**

On June 28, 2017, the Commission opened case number GS-2017-0324. This is the sixteenth progress report Staff has filed since the investigation case was opened.

### **1. First Progress Report:**

On December 29, 2017, Staff filed a progress report discussing the City's progress towards completing the twelve remaining APVs and three remaining ACs from the July 6, 2016, Standard Records and Field inspection. At the time of the December 29, 2017 filing, the City had satisfactorily addressed all of the ACs and all except one of the APVs.

Additionally, during the interim between opening the case on June 28, 2017, and the December 29, 2017 progress report, Staff conducted two additional routine inspections:

- A Public Awareness Plan (PAP) and Public Awareness Effectiveness Evaluation (PAPEE)<sup>12</sup> inspection was conducted on September 11, 2017, which resulted in Staff sending an inspection summary to the City on September 12, 2017 listing the actions necessary to meet the regulatory requirements.
- A Distribution Integrity Management Program (DIMP) inspection was conducted on October 30, 2017. In order to comply with the Distribution Integrity Management Program (DIMP) requirements specified in 20 CSR 4240-40.030(17), a distribution pipeline operator must among other things re-evaluate threats and risks on its entire pipeline at least every five years<sup>13</sup>. The City's initial DIMP evaluation of threats and risks was provided with its initial DIMP Plan, dated August 2, 2011. The City had not conducted the required re-evaluation at the time of Staff's inspection. Staff sent an inspection summary to the City on November 7, 2017, stating among other things that the City must perform a complete program re-evaluation as required by 20 CSR 4240-40.030(17)(D)6 and provide a copy of the results to Staff. Staff requested a response within 60 days,

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<sup>12</sup> The regulatory requirements are in 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(K).

<sup>13</sup> 20 CSR 4240-40.030(17)(D)6.

which would have been January 6, 2018, after the date of the December 29, 2017 progress report.

- An Operator Qualification (OQ) Program inspection was conducted on October 31, 2017. Staff sent an inspection summary to the City on November 6, 2017. Staff requested a response within 30 days; however, no response was received by the time of the December 29, 2017 progress report.

## **2. Second Progress Report:**

On June 29, 2018, Staff filed a progress report discussing the City's progress towards completing the twelve remaining APVs and three remaining ACs from the July 6, 2016, Standard Records and Field inspection, and the unresolved inspection items from the DIMP and OQ inspections.

- With respect to the Standard Records and Field inspection, the City had made progress but had not fully complied with the requirements of the remaining APV of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(D), which prescribes the minimum qualifications for person performing each covered task<sup>14</sup> that an operator performs on its pipelines.
- With respect to the PAP and PAPEE inspection, the City had made progress, but had not yet completed all of the required effectiveness evaluations. Natural gas pipeline operators in Missouri are required to follow the requirements outlined in 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(K). 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(K)2. requires that the operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of the American Petroleum Institute (API) Recommended Practice (RP) 1162. One of the requirements in the API RP 1162 is to conduct periodic PAP effectiveness evaluations at a frequency of no more than 4 years apart. The City had made progress towards completion of this task, but had not yet completed all of the required effectiveness evaluations. Staff provided the City with details on the remaining requirements, in a letter dated May 11, 2018 and discussed the letter with the City during Staff's June 14, 2018 on-site follow-up with the City.
- With respect to the DIMP inspection, the City provided a revised DIMP plan to Staff on June 11, 2018. Staff reviewed the plan and found that it did not satisfy all

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<sup>14</sup> 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(D)1. B. defines a covered task as an activity, identified by the operator that is 1. Performed on a pipeline facility, 2. Is an operations, maintenance or emergency-response task, 3. Is performed as a requirement of this rule and 4. Affects the operations or integrity of the pipeline.



of the requirements of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(17)(D). Staff met with the City on June 14, 2018 to discuss the required amendments. Staff sent a follow-up letter to the City describing the required amendments on June 21, 2018, and requested the City to provide a revised plan by July 30, 2018.

- With respect to the OQ inspection, the City did not provide a response. Staff provided the City with the details on the remaining requirements in a letter dated May 11, 2018 and discussed them with the City during Staff's June 14, 2018 on-site follow-up with the City.

### **3. Third Progress Report:**

On December 28, 2018, Staff filed a progress report addressing certain changes in City personnel who are involved with operation of the natural gas system, and the City's progress on unresolved inspection items.

*With respect to personnel changes:*

On August 7, 2018, the Mayor of the City of New Florence informed Staff that the City Superintendent had been replaced. The Mayor stated the new City Superintendent would be in contact with Staff regarding the unresolved inspection items.

On August 17, 2018, Staff contacted the new City Superintendent by telephone to set up a meeting. It was agreed that Staff would visit either August 22 or 23, 2018. During the phone call, the City Superintendent mentioned that the City had some turnover with its mayor. On August 20, 2018, Staff called the City Superintendent to confirm the meeting the following week. The City Superintendent informed Staff he planned to terminate his employment with the City effective sometime during the same week.

On August 21, 2018, Staff was informed by the City Clerk that the City Superintendent had terminated his employment with the City. Staff was informed that the City of Hermann would be operating the natural gas system for the City of New Florence.

In the past, the City of New Florence retained the City of Hermann as a contractor to perform certain covered tasks on the City of New Florence's natural gas system, including certain tasks that the New Florence City Superintendent was not qualified to perform. Apart from this work, the City of Hermann operates natural gas systems in the cities of Hermann and Middletown, Missouri, and provides natural gas to the City of New Florence. There were no

unresolved findings as the result of Staff's most recent Standard Records and Field Inspection, and Operator Qualification Program Inspection conducted with the City of Hermann.

Staff contacted the new Mayor Pro Tempore of the City of New Florence on August 21, 2018. The Mayor Pro Tempore stated that the City of New Florence intended to contact the City of Hermann to let it know of the situation in the City so that it will be prepared to respond in the event of an emergency.

On September 13, 2018, Staff contacted the City of New Florence City Clerk to inquire about the status of the operation of the City's natural gas system. The City Clerk informed Staff that a new City Superintendent was in the City's employ, but was not yet prepared to take over the City's natural gas system. The City stated that the City of Hermann had been retained for any emergency work necessary on the system.

On November 1, 2018, Staff met with the City of New Florence's new City Superintendent. Staff discussed operator qualification requirements for natural gas operators in the State of Missouri. Staff also informed the City Superintendent that the City was due for a Standard Records and Field inspection, and that someone from Staff would be in contact to set up a date for the inspection.

*With respect to unresolved inspection items:*

- The remaining APV from the July 6, 2016 Standard Records and Field inspection pertained to the qualification of the City's former superintendent to perform specific covered tasks on the pipeline. Since that individual was no longer employed by the City, Staff no longer found this issue relevant to this investigation. Staff stated that it planned to address any new or continuing issues with the new City Superintendent. Staff then scheduled a Standard Records and Field inspection of the City for January 2, 2019, with the new City Superintendent.
- No additional progress was made by the City on its PAP and PAPEE inspection findings. Staff intended to renew its efforts to ensure compliance with the requirements of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(K) following the January Standard Records and Field inspection.
- No additional progress was made by the City on its DIMP inspection findings. Staff intended to renew its efforts to ensure compliance with the requirements

of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(17) following the January Standard Records and Field inspection.

- No additional progress was made by the City on its OQ inspection findings. Staff intended to renew its efforts to ensure compliance with the requirements of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(D) following the January Standard Records and Field inspection.

Additionally, during the interim period between the June 29, 2018 and December 28, 2018 Progress Reports, Staff conducted one additional routine inspection. Staff conducted an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Emergency Response Plan inspection on December 18, 2018 with the New City Superintendent.

#### **4. Fourth Progress Report:**

On March 29, 2019, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items:

- A Standard Records and Field inspection was conducted on February 12, 2019. An inspection summary letter was provided to the City on February 25, 2019 describing 15 APVs and one AC. Staff requested a response from the City within 30 days of the February 25, 2019 letter, indicating any actions that have been taken or will be scheduled as a result of the Staff's comments. The City sent a response dated March 11, 2019 to Staff's inspection summary. At the time of the fourth progress report filing, Staff had not yet completed its review of the City's response.
- An inspection of the City's O&M and Emergency Response program plan was conducted December 18, 2018. Staff provided the City with an inspection summary letter on January 3, 2019, describing the revisions the City needed to make to achieve compliance with the requirements of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(C) and (12)(J). Staff requested a response within 30 days indicating any actions that have been taken or will be scheduled as a result of the inspection and an estimated schedule for completion of scheduled actions. The City sent a response to Staff's inspection summary dated March 11, 2019. The response indicated that the City was working on revisions to the O&M and Emergency Response Plan and would provide a copy of it to Staff when revisions were completed.
- The City had completed some but not all actions identified by Staff's September 11, 2017 PAP and PAPEE inspection to comply with the requirements

of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(K). Staff met with the City on March 11, 2019, to discuss the actions required to satisfy the requirements of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(K). The City stated that it planned to begin taking actions to complete compliance during March 2019, and anticipated completion by the end of April 2019.

- The City had not made any progress towards addressing deficiencies noted in Staff's November 6, 2017 inspection summary for the October 31, 2017 OQ inspection. Staff met with the City on March 11, 2019, to discuss the actions required to satisfy the requirements of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(D). Staff requested that the City provide a written response to its November 6, 2017 letter outlining a plan to address remaining items from the inspection.
- The City had not made any additional progress towards addressing the deficiencies noted in Staff's November 7, 2017 inspection summary for the DIMP inspection conducted on October 30, 2017. Staff met with the City on March 11, 2019, to discuss the actions required to satisfy the requirements of 20 CSR 4240-40.030(17). Staff requested that the City provide a written response to its July 30, 2018, letter outlining a plan to address remaining items from the inspection.

#### **5. Fifth Progress Report:**

On June 28, 2019, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the June 28, 2019 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- The City had one remaining unresolved APV from its February 12, 2019 Standard Records and Field inspection;
- Revisions and updates to the City's O&M and Emergency response plan had not been completed;
- The City had not yet completed the effectiveness evaluation of its public awareness messages to excavators;
- Revisions and updates to the City's OQ plan had not been completed; and
- Revisions and updates to the City's DIMP plan had not been completed.

**6. Sixth Progress Report:**

On September 30, 2019, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the September 30, 2019 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- The City resolved the one remaining APV from the February 12, 2019 Standard Records and Field inspection. Staff completed field work with City Representative on July 22, 2019 and did not find any additional violations. Staff provided the City with a letter dated July 31, 2019 closing this inspection on the condition that the proposed actions were completed as scheduled and the proposed procedures were implemented. Staff requested that the City send monthly updates of the progress of its employee's Operator Qualification status.
- Staff met with the City on June 19, 2019, to discuss revisions to the O&M and Emergency Response Plan. During this meeting, the City stated that it was still working on unresolved items and stated the plan would be completed by September 30, 2019.
- The City has met the requirements of API Recommended Practice 1162, "Public Awareness Programs for Pipeline Operators", a standard incorporated by reference in 20 CSR 4240-40.030(12)(K)1.
- Staff met with the City on June 19, 2019, to discuss the progress on the OQ Program and DIMP Inspections. The City has placed priority on completion of the O&M and Emergency Response Plan. The City stated that it would address the inspection items related to the DIMP and OQ Program following its completion of revisions to the O&M and Emergency Response Plan.

**7. Seventh Progress Report:**

On December 27, 2019, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the December 27, 2019 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- The City resolved the one remaining APV from the February 12, 2019 Standard Records and Field inspection. Staff requested that the City send monthly updates of the progress of its employee's Operator Qualification status.

- Staff reviewed the City's revised O & M Plan dated August 16, 2019. The revisions addressed Staff's comments from the December 18, 2018 inspection. Staff provided the City with a letter dated December 9, 2019 closing this inspection.
- The remaining issues from the September 11, 2017 Public Awareness Effectiveness Evaluation inspection have been resolved. Staff provided the City with a letter dated December 13, 2019 closing this inspection.

**8. Eighth Progress Report:**

On March 31, 2020, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the March 31, 2020 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- Three City employees had made progress towards being qualified to perform covered tasks on the natural gas system. Two City employees had completed approximately 15% of the training required to perform covered tasks on the City's natural gas system, and the City superintendent of utilities had completed just over fifty percent of the training.
- The City had informed Staff that it would be using a new OQ Program Plan. As of the date of March 31, 2020, Staff had not received this plan.
- As of March 31, 2020, the City had not yet addressed the plan deficiencies noted in the October 30, 2017 DIMP inspection. The City's superintendent of utilities stated that he would complete the DIMP reevaluation, and once done, send a copy to Staff to review.

**9. Ninth Progress Report:**

On June 30, 2020, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the June 30, 2020 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- Since Staff's March 31, 2020 progress report, no additional progress was made towards completion of training to perform covered tasks on the City's natural gas system. Two employees had completed approximately fifteen percent of their training, and while the Superintendent of Utilities has just over fifty percent of the training complete.

- The City has informed Staff that the City will be using a new OQ Program Plan. Since the date of the last progress report the City has not yet provided the new OQ Program Plan to Staff.
- Staff has not yet received a response from the City regarding the unresolved items from the October 30, 2017 DIMP inspection. Staff requested an update from the City on its progress to revise the DIMP Plan. The City explained to Staff that due to the COVID-19 social distancing requirements, no progress had been made.

#### **10. Tenth Progress Report:**

On December 15, 2020, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the December 15, 2020 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- Since Staff's December 15, 2020 progress report, no additional progress was made towards completion of training to perform covered tasks on the City's natural gas system. Two employees had completed approximately fifteen percent of their training, and while the Superintendent of Utilities had just over fifty percent of the training complete. On August 13, 2020, Staff performed an OQ Protocol 9 Field Evaluation of the City's Superintendent of Utilities. Staff observed as the Superintendent performed three covered tasks. Based on a review of the City's records, the Superintendent had met all of the computer based training qualification requirements necessary to perform these covered tasks. However, the Superintendent had not completed the required performance evaluations administered by a qualified individual. Staff sent the City a letter on September 27, 2020, noting the above issue, and requesting a response within 30 days. As of this status report, no response has been received.
- The City has informed Staff that the City will be using a new OQ Program Plan. Since the date of the last progress report the City has not yet provided the new OQ Program Plan to Staff.
- Staff has not yet received a response from the City regarding the unresolved items from the October 30, 2017 DIMP inspection. Staff requested an update from the City on its progress to revise the DIMP Plan. The City explained to Staff that due to the COVID-19 social distancing requirements, no progress had been made.

**11. Eleventh Progress Report:**

On June 30, 2021, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the June 30, 2021 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- Staff conducted a Standard Records and Field Inspection on April 19 and 20, 2021. The inspection revealed 9 Areas of Probable Violation (APV) and 4 Areas of Concern (AC). Staff requested a response from the City within 30 days of the summary letter sent on June 2, 2021. The response should indicate any actions that have been taken or will be taken to resolve above APVs and ACs. During the Inspection, Staff was also informed that the City's current Superintendent of Utilities was resigning and a new Superintendent of Utilities would be confirmed during a June 14, 2021 City Council meeting. Staff has subsequently learned that the City has an acting Superintendent, however confirmation was tabled during the June 14, 2021 City Council meeting.
- The City had not made any progress towards training and qualifying City personnel to perform covered tasks on the natural gas system. The City of Hermann was performing all covered tasks on the City of New Florence natural gas system.
- The City had not yet provided the new OQ Program Plan to Staff.
- Staff had not yet received a response from the City regarding the unresolved items from the October 30, 2017 DIMP inspection.

**12. Twelfth Progress Report:**

On December 22, 2021, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the December 22, 2021 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- Staff conducted a Standard Records and Field Inspection on April 19 and 20, 2021. The inspection revealed 9 Areas of Probable Violation (APV) and 4 Areas of Concern (AC). Staff requested a response from the City within 30 days of the summary letter sent on June 2, 2021. Receiving no response, Staff conducted a follow up visit with Superintendent of Utilities to discuss the 9 APVs and 4 ACs and performed a field evaluation of 3 cathodic protection test point checks and 3 distribution valve checks. Staff stressed the importance of responding to the



summary letter from June 2, 2021, and the addressing of the APVs and ACs. The response should indicate any actions that have been taken or will be taken to resolve above APVs and ACs. As of December 22, 2021, no response had been received.

- The City had not made any progress towards training and qualifying City personnel to perform covered tasks on the natural gas system. The City of Hermann was performing all covered tasks on the City of New Florence natural gas system.
- The City had not yet provided the new OQ Program Plan to Staff.
- Staff had not yet received a response from the City regarding the unresolved items from the October 30, 2017 DIMP inspection.
- Staff had not yet received a written Drug and Alcohol Program Plan from the City.

### **13. Thirteenth Progress Report:**

On June 27, 2022, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the June 27, 2022 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- Staff met with the newly appointed City Administrator on May 17, 2022 to discuss the issues identified in the April 19 and 20, 2021 inspection. The City Administrator is currently working toward becoming qualified to perform work on the City's gas system by taking computer based training in preparation for completing performance evaluations administered by a qualified individual.
- The City had not yet provided the new OQ Program Plan to Staff.
- Staff had not yet received a response from the City regarding the unresolved items from the October 30, 2017 DIMP inspection.
- Staff had not yet received a written Drug and Alcohol Program Plan from the City.

### **14. Fourteenth Progress Report:**

On December 19, 2022, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the December 19, 2022 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- Standard Records and Field Inspection: As of the December 19, 2022 filing, there were 9 unresolved Areas of Probable Violation (APV) and 4 Areas of Concern (AC) that the City was working to address.
- Operator Qualification Program: the City provided a copy of the new OQ Program Plan to Staff on November 17, 2022. As of the December 19, 2022 filing Staff stated that it would review the updated plan and work with the City to schedule an Operator Qualification Program Inspection.
- Distribution Integrity Management Program: Staff conducted a DIMP Inspection at the City on August 16-17, 2022. Staff's inspection indicated that the City had taken sufficient actions to address the remaining deficiencies from the October 30, 2017, DIMP inspection. On September 13, 2022, Staff sent an inspection summary letter to the City closing the prior inspection.
- Anti-Drug and Alcohol Programs: The City had not yet provided a copy of its anti-drug and alcohol misuse plan to Staff.
- Public Awareness Program: A Public Awareness Effectiveness Evaluation inspection was conducted on August 15-16, 2022. Staff identified one Required Plan Amendment<sup>15</sup>, and three (3) Areas of Concern (AC) during the inspection. On September 13, 2022 Staff sent an inspection summary letter to the City and requested a response within 30 days. The City replied to Staff's summary letter on October 6, 2022 in a letter detailing actions taken by the City to address the items identified by Staff. Staff found the City's actions to be sufficient, and closed the inspection on November 18, 2022.
- 2020 Pipes Act, Section 114 Inspection: Staff conducted a Section 114 inspection at the City on December 1, 2022, and found the City's procedures that were updated for this purpose are satisfactory. On December 8, 2022, Staff sent an inspection summary letter to the City closing the inspection.

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<sup>15</sup> Staff issues a "Required Plan Amendment" when it is observed that a pipeline operator's plan, program, or procedure does not meet the minimum requirements as required by 20 CSR 4240-40.030.

### **15. Fifteenth Progress Report:**

On June 30, 2023, Staff filed a progress report addressing the City's progress on unresolved inspection items. As of the June 30, 2023 filing, the status of unresolved inspection items was as follows:

- **Standard Records and Field Inspection:** As discussed in the twelfth progress report, Staff conducted a Standard Records and Field Inspection on April 19 and 20, 2021. The inspection revealed nine Areas of Probable Violation (APV) and four Areas of Concern (AC). On June 2, 2021, Staff conducted follow up visits to discuss the issues identified in the inspection with the City on May 17, 2022 and February 8, 2023. On February 21, 2023, the City provided Staff with a response to Staff's June 2, 2021, inspection summary letter. The response documented that the City had resolved eight of the nine outstanding Areas of Probable Violation and the four outstanding Areas of Concern. On June 12, 2023, the City informed Staff by phone call that actions had been scheduled to resolve the one outstanding Area of Probable Violation during the first week of July, 2023. The City stated that it would follow up with Staff when this work has been completed.
- **Operator Qualification Program:** The City provided a copy of the new OQ Program Plan to Staff on November 17, 2022. Staff reviewed the updated plan and performed an Operator Qualification (OQ) Program inspection on May 11, 2023. As a result of this inspection an inspection summary letter was sent to the City on May 25, 2023 which included two Required Plan Amendments and one Staff Comment. At the time of Staff's OQ Program inspection on May 11, 2023, two City employees had completed computer based training for several covered tasks on the pipeline, but had not yet completed any hands on training. On June 14, 2023, the City informed Staff that one City employee has completed the hands on training for some covered tasks.
- **Anti-Drug and Alcohol Programs:** The City of New Florence provided a copy of its January 1, 2023 Anti-Drug and Alcohol Misuse plan to Staff on May 11, 2023. Staff reviewed the City's January 1, 2023 Anti-Drug and Alcohol Misuse plan, and performed an inspection of the City's Anti-Drug and Alcohol Misuse program on

June 14, 2023. Staff completed the Anti-Drug and Alcohol Misuse plan inspection and found three Required Plan Amendments, which are discussed in an inspection summary letter, mailed to the City on June 15, 2023.

*Staff Witness: Kathleen A. McNelis, PE*

**C. Current Progress and Status Report:**

The City's progress and current status with respect to each unresolved inspection since the June 30, 2023 progress report is described below.

**1. Standard Records and Field Inspection:**

As discussed in the twelfth progress report, Staff conducted a Standard Records and Field Inspection on April 19 and 20, 2021. The inspection revealed nine Areas of Probable Violation (APV) and four Areas of Concern (AC). On June 2, 2021, Staff sent an inspection summary letter to the City and requested a response within 30 days. Staff conducted a follow up visit with Superintendent of Utilities to discuss the issues identified in the inspection and again requested a response to the June 2, 2021 inspection summary letter.

Receiving no response, Staff met with the newly appointed City Administrator on May 17, 2022 to discuss the issues identified in the April 19 and 20, 2021 inspection and the City's plans to address compliance with the Commission's pipeline safety rules. Staff reviewed and discussed its Standard Records and Field Inspection checklist with the City Administrator. Staff additionally recommended that the City consider training City employees on some routine operations tasks if it intends to resume independent operation of its system.

In a December 9, 2022, email to Staff, the City stated that it was working toward achieving compliance on previously noted Areas of Probable Violation and Areas of Concern.

On February 8, 2023, Staff met with the New Florence City Administrator, Public Works Director and the City Secretary to discuss resolution of the outstanding Areas of Probable Violation and Areas of Concern from the April 19 and 20, 2021, inspection. During this meeting Staff learned that the City was working towards completing the qualifications for a City employee to perform certain tasks on the gas system. The City had also contracted with a qualified outside service provider to perform routine annual monitoring (such as leak surveys, cathodic protection

readings, and regulator station inspection), and with the City of Hermann to perform any immediate time-sensitive work (such as leak investigation, valve maintenance, and repairs) on the distribution system.

On February 21, 2023, the City provided Staff with a response to Staff's June 2, 2021, inspection summary letter. The response documented that the City had resolved eight of the nine outstanding Areas of Probable Violation and the four outstanding Areas of Concern. Staff responded on April 20, 2023, closing eight of the nine outstanding Areas of Probable Violation and Areas of Concern, and outlining additional steps to be taken to resolve the one remaining Area of Probable Violation.

On November 29, 2023, Staff performed an inspection of the City's Operations and Maintenance Plan and found no Areas of Probable Violation or Required Plan Amendments. During this inspection, Staff discussed the one remaining Area of Probable Violation for the Standard Inspection. Through this discussion and review of the City's records, it was determined that the Area of Probable Violation was resolved on September 12, 2023, by City employees. Staff considers the resolution of this Area of Probable Violation sufficient to close this inspection.

Staff intends to perform a Standard Records and Field inspection to evaluate the City's ongoing compliance with operations and maintenance rules and the City's Operations and Maintenance Plan in early 2024. This inspection will be important to verify that the City is maintaining compliance.

*Staff Witness: Evan P. Neuner*

## **2. Operator Qualification Program Inspection:**

The City has addressed two Required Plan Amendments that Staff identified in its letter dated May 25, 2023.

Additionally, the City has made significant progress in qualifying its employees to perform routine and emergency operations and maintenance tasks on its pipelines. On September 21, 2023, Staff conducted a follow-up inspection of the City's progress towards training and qualify its employees, including a review of records and field observations. Staff found that the City has made the following progress:

- One City employee is fully qualified to monitor cathodic protection, operate valves, join plastic pipe with mechanical fittings and squeeze off plastic pipe to stop the flow of gas.
- City employees are making progress completing the qualifications required to measure odorant intensity of the gas, purge pipelines, locate underground pipeline facilities, and coat and wrap steel pipe.

One of the City's gas employees has completed training and qualifications required to perform:

- Join plastic pipe: using stab fittings, threaded and flanged connections,
- Install plastic mains and services by trenching
- Install service meters and spring loaded service regulators
- Perform inside and outside leak investigations
- Locate underground gas facilities
- Install and maintain pipeline markers
- Patrol pipelines
- Damage prevention efforts that include standing by during third party excavation crossings involving the City's gas pipelines
- Light customer equipment and recognize unsafe customer installations
- Use, calibrate and maintain instrumented gas detection equipment
- Measure pipe-to-soil potentials to monitor cathodic protection
- Squeeze off plastic pipe
- Operate and maintain valves and applying coating to steel pipe

*Staff Witnesses: Gregory A. Williams and Brian J. Buchanan*

### **3. Anti-Drug and Alcohol Misuse Program Inspection:**

The City of New Florence provided a copy of its January 1, 2023 Anti-Drug and Alcohol Misuse plan to Staff on May 11, 2023. Staff reviewed the City's January 1, 2023 Anti-Drug and Alcohol Misuse plan, and performed an inspection of the City's Anti-Drug and Alcohol Misuse program on June 14, 2023. Staff completed the Anti-Drug and Alcohol Misuse plan inspection and found three Required Plan Amendments.

As of November 21, 2023, the City of New Florence has the information needed to address the required plan amendments, and anticipates that final revisions will be made to the plan after

January 1, 2024. Additionally the City has had an employee take the required training to identify signs of drug and alcohol use. Staff has recommended that the City evaluate which level of supervisor would have the authority to require drug or alcohol testing of an employee based on reasonable cause, and ensure that those persons receive the training as well.

*Staff Witness: Brian J. Buchanan*

**D. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The City has made significant progress towards achieving compliance with the Commission's pipeline safety rules, and in qualifying City employees to perform routine and emergency operations and maintenance tasks on its pipelines. The City continues to use qualified outside parties to complete covered tasks that City employees are yet qualified to perform.

Based on the City's current compliance with Commission rules, Staff recommends that the Commission close this investigation case. Staff will continue to monitor the City's ongoing compliance with the Commission's pipeline safety rules as part of routine safety inspections.

*Staff Witness: Kathleen A. McNelis, PE*

<sup>1</sup> Commission rules have been moved to the Department of Commerce and Insurance and are re-numerated 20 CSR 4240-40.030.



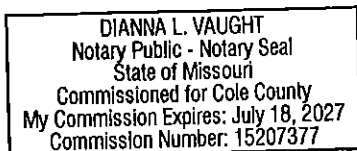
In the Matter of an Investigation into the )  
City of New Florence, Missouri's Compliance ) Case No. GS-2017-0324  
With the Commission's Rules Regarding )  
Natural Gas Safety Found at 4 CSR 240-40.030<sup>1</sup> )

[illegible]

Further the Affiant sayeth not.

Subscribed and sworn before me, a duly constituted and authorized Notary Public, in and for the County of Cole, State of Missouri, at my office in Jefferson City, on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of December 2023.

Dianna L. Vaughn  
Notary Public



<sup>1</sup> Commission rules have been moved to the Department of Commerce and Insurance and are re-numerated 20 CSR 4240-40.030.

<sup>1</sup> Commission rules have been moved to the Department of Commerce and Insurance and are re-numerated 20 CSR 4240-40.030.