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FACILITIES PROTECTION UNIT DIRECTOR

Georgia Public Service Commission

(404) 463-6526
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244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-5701

FAX: (404) 463-6532
psc.ga.gov

DOCKET# 37064
DOCUMENT# 192925

Docket No. 37064

Liberty Utilities - Columbus Area
2300 Victory Drive
Columbus, GA 31901-3455

REF: OQ Protocol 9 Inspection # JH22-022

☐ Certified Mail ☐ Regular Mail ☒ Email

Attention: Ms. Carolyn Bermudez

On July 12, 2022, a representative of the Georgia Public Service Commission Pipeline/Facilities Safety Office conducted an inspection of your gas system. The enclosed inspection report numbered JH22-022 is provided for your information and file.

In conjunction with this inspection report, Staff has recommended the following enforcement(s):

Enforcement Action:

- ☐ Notice of Probable Violation
- ☐ Notice of Probable Violation with Proposed Civil Penalty
- ☐ Notice of Amendment

Enforcement Letter:

- ☐ Warning Letter
- ☐ Letter of Concern

Enforcement Notification:

- ☐ Observed Issue
- ☒ No Violation

Please review and respond to this report in accordance with the attached Instructions for Responding to Enforcement Actions, Enforcement Letters, and Notifications Issued by the Georgia Public Service Commission. Please refer to Docket No. 37064 in your response.

Please let me know if there are any questions concerning this report at (404) 985-4271 or mthebert@psc.ga.gov. Thank you for your continuing contribution toward increased pipeline safety.

Sincerely,

Michelle Thebert
Michelle L. Thebert
Director, Office of Pipeline Safety/Facilities Protection

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REPORT OF NATURAL GAS SAFETY

INSPECTION NO: JH22-022

OPERATOR: Liberty Utilities - Columbus Area

INVESTIGATOR: Jack Hewitt

INSPECTION DATE: July 12, 2022 REPORT MAILED DATE: January 25, 2023

Any questions concerning this report may be directed to the above address or by telephoning (404) 463-6526.

1. PURPOSE OF INSPECTION

To perform an operator qualification personnel evaluation (Protocol 9) of the Operator's employee(s) for compliance with the minimum federal standards in 49CFR §192, SubPart N.

2. CONTINUING VIOLATIONS

Violation	Description	Inspection#	Date
192.16	Customer notification.	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.705	Transmission lines: Patrolling.	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.709	Transmission lines: Record keeping.	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.605(a)	Each operator shall prepare and follow for each pipeline, a manual of written procedures for...	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.747(a)	Each valve, the use of which may be necessary for the safe operation of a distribution system, m...	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.605(b)	Maintenance and normal operations. The manual required by paragraph (a) of this section must...	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.615(c)	Each operator shall establish and maintain liaison with appropriate fire, police, and other...	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.619(a)	No person may operate a segment of steel or plastic pipeline at a pressure that exceeds a maximum...	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.465(a)	Each pipeline that is under cathodic protection must be tested at least once each calendar year...	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.745(b)	Each operator must take prompt remedial action to correct any valve found inoperable, unless...	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.467(d)	Inspection and electrical tests must be made to assure that electrical isolation is adequate.	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.481(a)	Each operator must inspect each pipeline or portion of pipeline that is exposed to the atmosphere...	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.199(e)	Have discharge stacks, vents, or outlet ports designed to prevent accumulation of water, ice, or...	DL21-002	1/6/2021
192.709(c)	A record of each patrol, survey, inspection, and test required by subparts L and M of this...	DL21-002	1/6/2021

3. CLEARED VIOLATIONS

4. NEW VIOLATIONS

5. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS

On July 12-13, 2022, Staff reported to Columbus, GA to conduct a construction inspection on Liberty Utilities. Staff talked to Utility Director Harold Woods who said they did not have any construction projects to inspect. Staff discovered a crew at Crystal Valley Mobile Home Park killing mains and services, which involved performing OQ, covered tasks. Staff performed an operator qualification personnel evaluation (Protocol 9) of the Operator's employees for compliance with the minimum federal standards in 49CFR §192, SubPart N.

During this inspection, the Operator was represented by:
Harold Woods – Liberty Utilities Director of Operations
Melvin Hardge– Liberty Utilities Crew Lead
Johnny Hart– Liberty Utilities Operator

Commission Staff was represented by:
Jack Hewitt – Lead Inspector
Daniel Clemmons – Inspector

At the time of this inspection, the Liberty Utilities had fourteen pre-existing probable violations. These items were not reviewed during this inspection.

NO VIOLATIONS FOUND

During this inspection Staff reviewed the Liberty Utilities plan to cut and cap inactive services in the Crystal Valley Mobile Home Park. The purpose of this project was to eliminate steel services that were inactive and the mobile homes no longer there.

During the field evaluations, Staff observed Melvin Hardge, Liberty Utilities Crew Leader perform covered task "Locating Underground Utilities". Mr. Hardge is qualified for this task thru May 18, 2023. Johnny Hart, Liberty Utilities Operator was observed performing covered tasks "Inspecting for Atmospheric Corrosion" and "Operating an inline Valve". Mr. Hart is qualified for "Inspecting for Atmospheric Corrosion" thru May 18, 2023, and "Opening and Closing an Inline Valve" thru June 18, 2023. Staff used Liberty Utilities Operator Qualification electronic record system to verify Mr. Hardge and Mr. Hart operator qualifications.

As a result of this inspection Staff noted no probable violations of the minimum federal safety standards.

Please review and respond to this report in accordance with the attached Instructions for Responding to Enforcement Letters Issued by the Georgia Public Service Commission.

BEFORE THE GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF GEORGIA

IN THE MATTER OF:	)	
	)	
No Violation Report	)	**DOCKET NO. 37064**
Liberty Utilities	)	
Inspection JH22-022 on July 12, 2022	)	
	)	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I have caused to be served a copy of the foregoing, and a copy of same was served upon all parties and persons listed below via electronic mail as indicated by an asterisk I further certify that the *Liberty Utilities* was served a hard copy of the above-stated document by U.S. Mail, certified/return receipt requested.

*Sallie Tanner, Executive Secretary
Georgia Public Service Commission
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

*Carolyn Bermudez, President
Liberty Utilities
2300 Victory Drive
Columbus, GA 31901-3455
Carolyn.Bermudez@libertyutilities.com

*Michelle Thebert, Facilities Protection Unit Director
Georgia Public Service Commission
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

Respectfully Submitted this 24th day of January 2023:

Cathy Nesbitt, Administrative Assistant
Georgia Public Service Commission
Facilities Protection Unit
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334