FILED
MAR 24 2023
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
G.P.S.C.

DOCKET# 43079
DOCUMENT# 193755

COMMISSIONERS:
TRICIA PRIDEMORE, Chairman
TIM G. ECHOLS, Vice-Chairman
FITZ JOHNSON
LAUREN "BUBBA" McDONALD
JASON SHAW

REECE McALISTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SALLIE TANNER
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Georgia Public Service Commission

(404) 656-4501
(800) 282-5813

244 WASHINGTON STREET, SW
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334-5701

FAX: (404) 656-2341
psc.ga.gov

IN THE MATTER OF:

Case No. 21-17058
Morris Plumbing and Sewer

DOCKET NO. 43079

FINAL ORDER

MAILED
3.30.2023

APPEARANCES:

Georgia Public Service Commission Staff: Janey Chauvet

Morris Plumbing and Sewer: No appearance

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On January 17, 2020, while working at 3285 Goldenchain Drive, Lithonia, **Morris Plumbing and Sewer** ("Respondent") caused damage to a utility facility while using mechanized equipment. Following its investigation of this incident, Commission Staff determined that the Respondent was in violation of O.C.G.A. §§ 25-9-8(a) and 25-9-8(b) (the "Violations") and recommended, through Consent Agreement, that Respondent be assessed a $5,000 civil penalty with the ability to mitigate $4,000 by completing a Commission approved damage prevention training program.

On May 17, 2022, the Commission issued a Notice of Hearing and Procedural and Scheduling Order. Respondent was advised that a hearing would be held for the purpose of hearing evidence regarding the Violations and that, if proven, such Violations may result in the imposition of a civil penalty as provided by law.

On August 17, 2022, a hearing was conducted in this Docket, at which time the Commission's Hearing Officer heard testimony from Staff witnesses. Staff entered two exhibits into evidence. Exhibit 1 was a chart that detailed information regarding: the incident date and location, violation cited, terms of Consent Agreement, date of service for both Consent Agreement

and Notice of Hearing, and status of certified mail return receipt for Notice of Hearing. Exhibit 2 included copies of: The Notice of Probable Violation, Incident Investigation Report, Consent Agreement, Notice of Hearing and Procedural and Scheduling Order, Certified Mail Return Receipt and other supporting documentation. At the hearing, several issues were presented for determination, including whether Respondent committed the Violations and whether the Respondent should be penalized pursuant to O.C.G.A § 25-9-13(h)(7) in an amount of up to $10,000.00 for each violation. While Respondent initially responded to attempts to settle, they failed to appear for the hearing.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Staff witnesses Yolanda Clay and Marilyn Morris-Simmons testified at the proceeding. Ms. Clay is a Commission GUFPA investigator and is generally responsible for investigating notices of probable violation of the Act. Ms. Morris-Simmons is the assistant to the GUFPA Program and Assistant Program Managers, and is generally responsible for the delivery of consent agreements, Notice of Hearings, and Final Orders to probable violators of GUFPA and O.C.G.A. § 46-2-91. Ms. Clay submitted a detailed copy of his report of the investigation. Based on the probable violation damage reports filed by the utility and upon further investigation into the matter, Mr. Clay determined that:

1. Respondent struck, injured, or loosened any utility facility which had been staked or marked in violation of O.C.G.A. § 25-9-8(a); and failed to exercise reasonable care when excavating or blasting is to take place within the tolerance zone in violation of O.C.G.A. § 25-9-8(b).

Based upon the facts and circumstances presented in this case, the Commission finds that Respondent committed the Violations.

PENALTIES

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 25-9-13(h)(7), the Commission has the authority to impose a civil penalty not exceeding $10,000.00 for each violation of the Act, if it is proven that any person violated any provision of the Act as a result of a failure to exercise reasonable care.

WHEREFORE IT IS ORDERED, that pursuant to O.C.G.A § 25-9-13(h)(7), a civil penalty in the amount of **$6,000** be imposed against Respondent for failure to exercise reasonable care when excavating with mechanized equipment in violation of O.C.G.A. §§ 25-9-8(a) and 25-9-8(b). Respondent shall pay such civil penalty to the Commission, in certified funds, within thirty (30) days from the date of this Order.

ORDERED FURTHER, that Respondent may mitigate $4,000 of the civil penalty ordered in this case by a minimum of five (5) employees completing a Commission-approved damage prevention training course within forty-five (45) days from the date of this Order.

ORDERED FURTHER, that all findings, conclusions and decisions contained within the preceding sections of this Order are hereby adopted as findings of fact, conclusions of law, and decisions of regulatory policy of this Commission.

ORDERED FURTHER, that any motion for reconsideration, rehearing or oral argument or any other motion shall not stay the effective date of this Order, unless otherwise ordered by this Commission.

ORDERED FURTHER, that jurisdiction over this matter is expressly retained for the purpose of entering such further Order or Orders as this Commission may deem just and proper.

The above by action of the Commission in Administrative Session on the 20th day of December 2022.

Sallie Tanner
Sallie Tanner
Executive Secretary

3-23-23
Date

Tricia Pridemore
Chairman

3~24-23
Date

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF GEORGIA

DOCKET NO. 43079 **Morris Plumbing and Sewer;** **Case Nos. 21-17058**

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing **Final Order** was filed with the Executive Secretary of the Georgia Public Service Commission, and a copy of same was served upon all parties listed below via hand or electronic delivery as indicated, or by depositing same in the United States mail with sufficient postage thereon to insure delivery and addressed as follows:

Sallie Tanner, Executive Secretary Georgia Public Service Commission 244 Washington Street, SW Atlanta, GA 30334 (BY HAND)	**Morris Plumbing and Sewer** Attn: Rick Morris 1694 Laurel Creek Circle Lithonia, GA 30058
Janey Chauvet Georgia Public Service Commission 244 Washington Street, SW Atlanta, GA 30334 (BY ELECTRONICALLY)	Attn: Rick Morris registered agent c/o Morris Plumbing and Sewer 6806 Banyesfield Hill Decatur, GA 30032

This 30th day of March, 2023.

Maritza Rivera
Clerk
Georgia Public Service Commission
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

FILED
FEB 13 2023
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
G.P.S.C.

COMMISSIONERS:

TRICIA PRIDEMORE, Chairman
TIM G. ECHOLS, Vice-Chairman
FITZ JOHNSON
LAUREN "BUBBA" McDONALD
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IN THE MATTER OF:

Case No. 21-17058 **DOCKET NO. 43079**
Morris Plumbing and Sewer

RECOMMENDED FINAL ORDER

DOCKET# 43079
DOCUMENT# 193262

APPEARANCES:

Georgia Public Service Commission Staff: Janey Chauvet

Morris Plumbing and Sewer: No appearance

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On January 17, 2020, while working at 3285 Goldenchain Drive, Lithonia, **Morris Plumbing and Sewer** ("Respondent") caused damage to a utility facility while using mechanized equipment. Following its investigation of this incident, Commission Staff determined that the Respondent was in violation of O.C.G.A. §§ 25-9-8(a) and 25-9-8(b) (the "Violations") and recommended, through Consent Agreement, that Respondent be assessed a $5,000 civil penalty with the ability to mitigate $4,000 by completing a Commission approved damage prevention training program.

On May 17, 2022, the Commission issued a Notice of Hearing and Procedural and Scheduling Order. Respondent was advised that a hearing would be held for the purpose of hearing evidence regarding the Violations and that, if proven, such Violations may result in the imposition of a civil penalty as provided by law.

On August 17, 2022, a hearing was conducted in this Docket, at which time the Commission's Hearing Officer heard testimony from Staff witnesses. Staff entered two exhibits into evidence. Exhibit 1 was a chart that detailed information regarding: the incident date and location, violation cited, terms of Consent Agreement, date of service for both Consent Agreement and Notice of Hearing, and status of certified mail return receipt for Notice of Hearing. Exhibit 2

included copies of: The Notice of Probable Violation, Incident Investigation Report, Consent Agreement, Notice of Hearing and Procedural and Scheduling Order, Certified Mail Return Receipt and other supporting documentation. At the hearing, several issues were presented for determination, including whether Respondent committed the Violations and whether the Respondent should be penalized pursuant to O.C.G.A § 25-9-13(h)(7) in an amount of up to $10,000.00 for each violation. While Respondent initially responded to attempts to settle, they failed to appear for the hearing.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Staff witnesses Yolanda Clay and Marilyn Morris-Simmons testified at the proceeding. Ms. Clay is a Commission GUFPA investigator and is generally responsible for investigating notices of probable violation of the Act. Ms. Morris-Simmons is the assistant to the GUFPA Program and Assistant Program Managers, and is generally responsible for the delivery of consent agreements, Notice of Hearings, and Final Orders to probable violators of GUFPA and O.C.G.A. § 46-2-91. Ms. Clay submitted a detailed copy of his report of the investigation. Based on the probable violation damage reports filed by the utility and upon further investigation into the matter, Mr. Clay determined that:

1. Respondent struck, injured, or loosened any utility facility which had been staked or marked in violation of O.C.G.A. § 25-9-8(a); and failed to exercise reasonable care when excavating or blasting is to take place within the tolerance zone in violation of O.C.G.A. § 25-9-8(b).

Based upon the facts and circumstances presented in this case, the Commission finds that Respondent committed the Violations.

PENALTIES

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 25-9-13(h)(7), the Commission has the authority to impose a civil penalty not exceeding $10,000.00 for each violation of the Act, if it is proven that any person violated any provision of the Act as a result of a failure to exercise reasonable care.

WHEREFORE IT IS ORDERED, that pursuant to O.C.G.A § 25-9-13(h)(7), a civil penalty in the amount of **$6,000** be imposed against Respondent for failure to exercise reasonable care when excavating with mechanized equipment in violation of O.C.G.A. §§ 25-9-8(a) and 25-9-8(b). Respondent shall pay such civil penalty to the Commission, in certified funds, within thirty (30) days from the date of this Order.

ORDERED FURTHER, that Respondent may mitigate $4,000 of the civil penalty ordered in this case by a minimum of five (5) employees completing a Commission-approved damage prevention training course within forty-five (45) days from the date of this Order.

ORDERED FURTHER, that all findings, conclusions and decisions contained within the preceding sections of this Order are hereby adopted as findings of fact, conclusions of law, and decisions of regulatory policy of this Commission.

ORDERED FURTHER, that any motion for reconsideration, rehearing or oral argument or any other motion shall not stay the effective date of this Order, unless otherwise ordered by this Commission.

ORDERED FURTHER, that jurisdiction over this matter is expressly retained for the purpose of entering such further Order or Orders as this Commission may deem just and proper.

The above by action of the Commission in Administrative Session on the __ day of _____ 2022.

Sallie Tanner **Executive Secretary**	**Tricia Pridemore** **Chairman**
Date	Date

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF GEORGIA

DOCKET NO. 43079 **Morris Plumbing and Sewer;** **Case Nos. 21-17058**

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing **Recommended Order** was filed with the Executive Secretary of the Georgia Public Service Commission, and a copy of same was served upon all parties listed below via hand or electronic delivery as indicated, or by depositing same in the United States mail with sufficient postage thereon to insure delivery and addressed as follows:

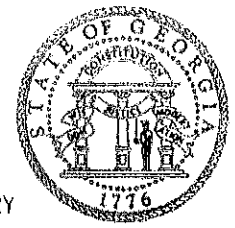
Sallie Tanner, Executive Secretary Georgia Public Service Commission 244 Washington Street, SW Atlanta, GA 30334 (BY HAND)	**Morris Plumbing and Sewer** Attn: Rick Morris 1694 Laurel Creek Circle Lithonia, GA 30058
Janey Chauvet Georgia Public Service Commission 244 Washington Street, SW Atlanta, GA 30334 (BY ELECTRONICALLY)	Attn: Rick Morris registered agent c/o Morris Plumbing and Sewer 6806 Banyesfield Hill Decatur, GA 30032

This ___ day of _____, 2022..

_____
Nancy Gibson
Hearing Officer
Georgia Public Service Commission
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

COMMISSIONERS:
TRICIA PRIDEMORE, CHAIRMAN
TIM G. ECHOLS, VICE-CHAIRMAN
FITZ JOHNSON
LAUREN "BUBBA" McDONALD
JASON SHAW

FILED
JUN 16 2022
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
G.P.S.C.



REECE McALISTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SALLIE TANNER
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

EXHIBIT 2

Georgia Public Service Commission

(404) 656-4501
(800) 282-5813

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334-5701

FAX: (404) 656-2341
www.psc.state.ga.us

BEFORE THE GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF GEORGIA

DOCKET# 43079
DOCUMENT# 190463

IN THE MATTER OF:

GUFPA CASE NO. PSC 20-17058

DOCKET NO. 43079

Morris Plumbing and Sewer,
Respondent

MAILED
6.22.2022

NOTICE OF HEARING
AND PROCEDURAL AND SCHEDULING ORDER

To: **Morris Plumbing and Sewer**
Attn: Rick Morris
1694 Laurel Creek Circle
Lithonia, GA 30058

You are hereby notified that the Georgia Public Service Commission ("Commission") will hold a hearing in the Hearing Room of the Commission, located at 244 Washington Street, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5701, commencing at **10:00 o'clock a.m. on August 17, 2022** and continuing on such further days as the Commission deems necessary until completed, for the purpose of hearing evidence regarding alleged violations of O.C.G.A. T. 25, Ch. 9, as set forth herein under the heading titled "Matters Asserted" that, if proven, may result in the imposition of a penalty against Morris Plumbing and Sewer (also referred to herein as "Respondents") in an amount not to exceed $10,000.00 per violation. Notification of the following matters is hereby given:

LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR HEARING

This hearing will be held under the authority and jurisdiction conferred upon the Commission by O.C.G.A. §25-9-13 and §46-2-91; and in accordance with the Georgia Administrative Procedure Act, O.C.G.A. §50-13, and the Rules and Regulations of the Commission.

EXHIBIT 2

PROCEDURES

The following are the procedures to which any party to this hearing should adhere with respect to this docket:

1. **Intervention:**

   (a) Any person or party upon whom a statute does not confer an unconditional right to intervene must file an application to intervene within thirty (30) days following the first published notice of the proceedings.

   (b) Applications must clearly specify the docket in which the applicant seeks to intervene. In addition to the requirements prescribed in O.C.G.A. §46-2-59 for applications for leave to intervene, the applicant must: (1) identify other intervening parties or intervening party applicants whose interest is similar to that of the applicant along with an explanation of why the identified intervening parties or intervening party applicant will not adequately represent the applicant's interest: and (2) state the applicant's present intention to submit direct testimony and by whom and on what subject. The requirements identified herein shall constitute a continuing obligation of the applicant or intervening party. Any objections to applications must be filed in accordance with O.C.G.A §46-2-59(d).

   (c) Any application for leave to intervene that is filed late must state the reason why such application was not filed within thirty (30) days of the first published notice. Objections to later intervention application must be filed in conformity with the requirements of O.C.G.A. §46-2-59(d).

   (d) The Commission will take up and rule on applications for leave to intervene at the first hearing date scheduled in this docket.

2. **Service:**

   In addition to filing an original and eight (8) copies of documents, with a 3.5" disk containing the electronic version of the document in either Microsoft Word for text documents or Microsoft Excel format for spreadsheets, with the Commission's Executive Secretary, copies of all pleadings, filings, correspondence, and any other documents related to, and submitted in, the course of this docketed matter should be served upon all other interveners recognized by the Commission in this docket.

3. **Hearing Exhibits:**

   It shall be the responsibility of the party sponsoring any hearing exhibits to see that the court reporter and all parties of record, in addition to the individual Commissioners or hearing officer, receive copies of all exhibits at the time of their introduction at the hearing.

EXHIBIT 2

RIGHTS OF RESPONDENT

Respondent have the following rights in connection with this hearing:

(1) To respond to the matters asserted in this document and to present evidence on any relevant issue;

(2) To be represented by counsel at its expense;

(3) To subpoena witnesses and documentary evidence through the Commission by filing requests with the Executive Secretary of the Commission; and

(4) Such other rights as are conferred by law and the rules and regulations of the Commission.

MATTERS ASSERTED

1.

The Commission has the power and authority to enforce the provisions of O.C.G.A. T, 25, Ch 9.

2.

The Commission Staff received reports of multiple probable violation of GUFPA alleging that on or about January 17, 2020, Respondent violated O.C.G.A. T. 25, Ch. 9. A copy of this report is attached hereto as Attachment A. The allegations contained in the report constitute violations of O.C.G.A. T. 25, Ch. 9.

STATUTES INVOLVED

25-9-8(a) Striking, damaging, injuring or loosening any utility facility which has been staked or marked.

25-9-8(b) Failure to exercise reasonable care when excavating or blasting is to take place within the tolerance zone.

WHEREFORE, THE COMMISSION ORDERS that:

A. This Notice of Hearing and Procedural and Scheduling Order shall be served upon the Respondent by certified mail and shall constitute notice to the Respondent of the matters asserted pursuant to O.C.G.A. §50-13-13(a). A copy of this Order shall be served upon the Consumers' Utility Counsel pursuant to Commission Rule 515-2-1-.09; and public notice of this investigation and hearing shall be given by the Commission.

EXHIBIT 2

B. The Commission hereby adopts the schedule, procedures, and statements regarding the issues and matters asserted set forth within this Order.

C. A motion for reconsideration, rehearing, oral argument, or any other motion shall not stay the effective date of this Order, unless otherwise ordered by the Commission.

D. Jurisdiction over these matters is expressly retained for the purpose of entering such further Order or Orders as this Commission may deem just and proper.

E. The Commission hereby assigns this matter for hearing before its hearing officer, Nancy Gibson.

NOTICE: If Commission Staff determines to its satisfaction that the Respondent has satisfied the obligations of the prior Consent Order, Staff shall be authorized to *nolle prosequi* the Rule Nisi. No continuance or postponement of the above-scheduled hearing will be granted, except upon 72 hours' written notice and except for good cause shown. All requests for continuance should be addressed to Mr. Will Culbreath at Georgia Public Service Commission, 244 Washington Street, SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5701 [facsimile # 404-463-6532] or via e-mail to wculbreath@psc.state.ga.us. Please include documentation in support of your request for continuance. If your presence is required in court or before a government agency on the hearing date scheduled in this Notice, you must provide a copy of the court or agency calendar or subpoena showing the date and time of the conflicting hearing. Only upon receipt of written response from the Commission excusing your appearance are you excused from your duty to appear at the hearing noticed hereby.

The above by action of the Commission in Administrative Session on May 17, 2022.

Sallie Tanner
Executive Secretary

6-16-22
Date

Tricia Pridemore
Chairman

6-16-22
Date

COMMISSIONERS:
TRICIA PRIDEMORE, CHAIRMAN
TIM G. ECHOLS, VICE-CHAIRMAN
FITZ JOHNSON
LAUREN "BUBBA" McDONALD
JASON SHAW

REECE McALISTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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EXHIBIT 2

Georgia Public Service Commission

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334-5701

FAX: (404) 656-2341
www.psc.state.ga.us

BEFORE THE GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:	)	
	)	
Morris Plumbing and Sewer,	)	DOCKET NO. 43079
RESPONDENTS	)	(PSC Case No. 20-17058)
	)	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that this Notice of Hearing was filed with the Commission's Executive Secretary and a copy of same was served upon all parties and persons listed below via hand delivery as indicated by an asterisk, or by depositing same in the United States mail.

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

Morris Plumbing and Sewer
Attn: Rick Morris
1694 Laurel Creek Circle
Lithonia, GA 30058

, registered agent c/o
Morris Plumbing and Sewer
6806 Banyesfield Hill
Decatur, GA 30032

Respectfully Submitted this 22nd day of June, 2022:

Morgan Mitchell, Admin Assistant
Facilities Protection Unit
Georgia Public Service Commission
244 Washington St. Ste. 112
Atlanta, GA 30334

COMMISSIONERS:
CHUCK EATON, CHAIRMAN
TIM G. ECHOLS, VICE-CHAIRMAN
LAUREN "BUBBA" McDONALD
TRICIA PRIDEMORE
JASON SHAW

DEBORAH K. FLANNAGAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MICHELLE THEBERT
FACILITIES PROTECTION
UNIT DIRECTOR

EXHIBIT 2

Georgia Public Service Commission

(404) 463-6526
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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334-5701

FAX: (404) 463-6532
www.psc.state.ga.us

7/8/2020

Morris Plumbing and Sewer
Attn: Rick Morris
1694 Laurel Creek Circle
Lithonia, GA 30058

Date of Incident: 1/17/2020
Docket #: 43079
Case #: PSC 20-17058
Incident Location: 3285 Goldenchain Drive, Lithonia

To Whom It May Concern:

A Notice of Probable Violation(s) ("NOPV") of the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act ("GUFPA" or the "Act") has been filed with the Georgia Public Service Commission Pipeline/Facilities Safety Office ("Staff") naming you as the probable violator ("Respondent"). A copy of the Act can be found at www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/gacode (Title 25, Chapter 9). The probable violations alleged are as follows:

O.C.G.A. Violations

25-9-8(a) Striking, damaging, injuring or loosening any utility facility which has been staked or marked.

25-9-8(b) Failure to exercise reasonable care when excavating or blasting is to take place within the tolerance zone.

Violations of the Act are punishable by civil penalties of up to $10,000.00 (ten thousand dollars) *per violation*. **Staff recommends a civil penalty of $5,000.00. Respondent may choose from one of several options regarding the alleged probable violations. Staff recommends mitigation of $4,000.00 of the above-recommended civil penalty by attendance of five or more employees at a Commission approved damage prevention class. The respondent will be responsible for completing the training class and submitting the remaining $1,000.00 penalty in certified funds or cashier's check to the Georgia Public Service Commission.**

Specific information about the above probable violation(s) is provided in this packet so please read all documentation **completely** and **carefully**. In this packet, you will find the **Response Options**, **NOPV/Incident Report**, **Consent Agreement**, **GUFPA Questionnaire**, additional information on **Requests for GUFPAAC**, and a list of **Commission Approved Damage Prevention Trainers**.

YOUR AFFIRMATIVE WRITTEN RESPONSE IS REQUIRED WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE DATE OF THIS NOPV (See "Response Options" page for more information). Failure to respond either by executing the consent agreement or requesting a hearing before the Advisory Committee will result in the issuance of a Rule NISI to be heard before the Georgia Public Service Commission.

If you have any questions, please call me at (404) 463-6526.

Sincerely,

Onterio Johnson
ojohnson@psc.state.ga.us
GPSC GUFPA Investigator

RESPONSE OPTIONS

(Please check only one)

EXHIBIT 2

Respondent: Morris Plumbing and Sewer
Docket #: 43079
Case #: PSC 20-17058

Respondent may choose from **ONE** of the following **OPTIONS** to dispose of this case:

☐ **OPTION 1 – I Disagree and want to attend GUFPAAC**: If you *disagree* with the probable violation(s) alleged you may request to appear and have your case heard before the Georgia Utility Facility Act Advisory Committee ("GUFPAAC"), a committee of industry stakeholders and peers. Please dispute same by submitting a detailed written response and return it along with all supporting evidence (pictures, diagrams, maps, witness statements and any other documentation to be used in support of your position) and sign/return the below statement within **thirty (30) days** of this NOPV:

I hereby request the opportunity to present my case to the GUFPAAC and I certify under the penalty of perjury that the response(s) and information provided regarding the afore-mentioned probable violation(s) are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

_____ _____

Authorized Representative of Respondent Date

*****Upon receipt of your signature above, your detailed written response and all supporting evidence, your case will be scheduled to be heard by the GUFPAAC and you will be notified by mail of the date of this GUFPAAC meeting.**

☐ **OPTION 2 – I Disagree and want a Hearing before the Hearing Officer:** If you disagree with the probable violation(s) alleged, please dispute by submitting a detailed, written response along with all supporting evidence (pictures, diagrams, maps, witness statements and any other documentation) to be used in support of your position **within 30 days of receipt of this letter.** If you need more time to gather your information, **you must contact the GUFPA staff to request additional time. Note: The information you provide will not close the case, it will assist the investigator in his/her investigation to arrive at a more informed conclusion. If at the point you still disagree with the findings of the investigator, your case will be heard by a Commission hearing officer.**

** **Sign below only if you are choosing Option 2** **

I certify under the penalty of perjury that the response(s) and information provided regarding the afore-mentioned probable violation(s) are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

_____ _____

Authorized Representative of Respondent Date

☐ **OPTION 3 – I Agree and Wish to Pay the Mitigated Civil Penalty and attend Training:** If you agree with the alleged probable violation(s) please complete, sign and return the **Consent Agreement** provided for in this package. A **minimum of five (5) employees** of your company shall attend Commission approved damage prevention training. You must pay the recommended **mitigated** civil penalty of **$1,000.00**. Staff must receive the **signed Consent Agreement** and **this "Response" page** indicating your decision, and the mitigated penalty amount by certified check or money order within 30 days of receipt of this letter.

PLEASE NOTE: Georgia Law requires that ALL information requested in OPTION 1 and OPTION 2 be provided upon Staff's request. (O.C.G.A. §§ 24-10-26, 46-2-20 and 25-9-1 *et. seq.*). Failure to respond and/or comply with these requests for information in the 30 days provided for shall result in the loss of one or more of the **OPTIONS** presented.

☐ **OPTION 4 – I Agree and Wish to Pay the Full Civil Penalty**: If you agree with the alleged probable violation(s) please complete, sign and return the **Consent Agreement** provided for in this package and pay the full recommended civil penalty of **$5,000.00**. Staff must receive the **signed Consent Agreement** within **thirty (30) days** of this NOPV. THIS OPTION DOES NOT REQUIRE TRAINING.

COMMISSIONERS:
CHUCK EATON, CHAIRMAN
TIM G. ECHOLS, VICE-CHAIRMAN
LAUREN "BUBBA" McDONALD
TRICIA PRIDEMORE
JASON SHAW

DEBORAH K. FLANNAGAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MICHELLE THEBERT
FACILITIES PROTECTION
UNIT DIRECTOR

EXHIBIT 2

Georgia Public Service Commission

(404) 463-6526
(800) 282-5813

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334-5701

FAX: (404) 463-6532
www.psc.state.ga.us

DAMAGE REPORT (PROBABLE VIOLATION) – PSC 20-17058

INCIDENT INFORMATION

INCIDENT DATE:	1/17/2020	MATERIAL TYPE:	Plastic
FACILITY TYPE:	Gas	SIZE:	1/2 inch
INCIDENT ADDRESS:	3285 Goldenchain Drive, Lithonia		
UTILITY LINE FUNCTION:	Service		
MECHANZIED EQPT.:	Backhoe/Trackhoe		

LOCATE INFORMATION

LOCATE COMPANY NAME:	USIC Locating
LOCATE NUMBER:	01160-245-023
WAS FACILITY LOCATED?	Yes
LOCATE MARKS WITHIN 24 INCHES?	Yes

REPORTING INFORMATION

REPORTING COMPANY:	Atlanta Gas Light
CONTACT NAME:	Christy Rainwater
CONTACT NUMBER:	404-584-3135
MAILING ADDRESS:	Ten Peachtree Place N.E.
CITY, STATE, ZIP:	Atlanta, GA 30309
CUSTOMERS AFFECTED:	1
REPAIR COST:	$846.00

PROBABLE VIOLATOR INFORMATION

VIOLATOR COMPANY NAME:	Morris Plumbing and Sewer
CONTACT NAME:	Rick Morris
CONTACT NUMBER:	404-380-7641
MAILING ADDRESS:	Attn: Rick Morris 1694 Laurel Creek Circle
CITY, STATE, ZIP:	Lithonia, GA 30058

FACILITY OWNER INFORMATION

FACILITY OWNER:	Atlanta Gas Light
CONTACT NUMBER:	404-584-3135

PROBABLE VIOLATION(s)

O.C.G.A Violations

25-9-8(a) Striking, damaging, injuring or loosening any utility facility which has been staked or marked.

25-9-8(b) Failure to exercise reasonable care when excavating or blasting is to take place within the tolerance zone.

DESCRIPTION OF DAMAGES:

While excavating with mechanized equipment, Morris Plumbing damaged a 1/2-inch plastic service gas line.

GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
GEORGIA UTILITY FACILITY PROTECTION ACT

EXHIBIT 2

NOPV / INCIDENT REPORT – PSC 20-17058

Mail, Fax or e-mail to:	Georgia Public Service Commission Facilities Protection Unit 244 Washington Street, SW Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Investigator:	Onterio Johnson
Work Number:	(404) 463-6526
Website:	www.psc.state.ga.us
Docket Number:	43079
Case Number:	PSC 20-17058
Report Date:	1/23/2020
Incident Date:	1/17/2020
Facility Owner:	Atlanta Gas Light
Facility Owner Phone:	404-584-3135
Locator:	USIC Locating
Locator Phone:	317-810-8077
Excavator:	Morris Plumbing
Excavator Phone:	404-380-7641
Violator:	Morris Plumbing and Sewer
Contact:	Rick Morris
Address:	Attn: Rick Morris 1694 Laurel Creek Circle
City, State, Zip	Lithonia, GA 30058
Incident Location:	3285 Goldenchain Drive
Incident City:	Lithonia
Incident County:	DeKalb
Jurisdiction:	NOT REPORTED

UTILITY LINE IMPACT

Facility Type:	Gas
Material Type:	Plastic
Size (Diameter/Voltage/Pairs/etc.):	1/2 inch
Pressure (PSIG/Inches):	medium pressure
Utility Line Function:	Service
Number of Customers Affected:	1
Repair Cost:	$846.00

INCIDENT IMPACT

Injury (# of outpatient care):	0
Injury (# of inpatient care):	0
Fatalities:	0
Fire Department Response:	Unknown
Police Department Response:	Unknown

EXCAVATION ACTIVITIES

Utility Ticket Number(s):	01160-245-023
Equipment Involved:	Backhoe/Trackhoe
Nature of Excavation:	Sewer (Sanitary/Storm)
Direction of Excavation Relative to Damaged Utility Line:	

EXHIBIT 2

SYNOPSIS

According to a submitted report of probable violation, Morris Plumbing and Sewer was excavating at 3285 Goldenchain Drive, Lithonia, Georgia on January 17, 2020. Atlanta Gas Light reported this incident because Morris Plumbing and Sewer struck and damaged a marked gas service facility and failed to exercise reasonable care while excavating within tolerance zone.

INVESTIGATION:

Staff from the Facilities Protection Unit of the Georgia Public Service Commission received a notification of probable violation from Atlanta Gas Light regarding the damage that occurred at 3285 Goldenchain Drive, Lithonia, Georgia on January 17, 2020. The submitted Atlanta Gas Light damage report indicates Morris Plumbing and Sewer, caused damage to a ½" plastic gas service line. According to the report, the contractor was repairing a sewer main and while excavating with a backhoe, the contractor struck and damaged a marked buried gas service facility. This incident was reported as a violation of OCGA 25-9-8(a) Striking, damaging, injuring or loosening any utility facility which has been staked or marked. OCGA 25-9-8(b) Failure to exercise reasonable care when excavating or blasting is to take place within the tolerance zone.

Staff conducted a search of the Georgia (811) locate request database and was able to find a valid emergency locate request present. According to the (811) positive response database, the gas service was marked prior to the incident. Staff was able to find a valid damage ticket covering incident date and address. Damage at incident location coincides with the damage report submitted by Atlanta Gas Light. Thus far, based on this initial information submitted by Atlanta Gas Light; GUFPA staff finds Morris Plumbing and Sewer, in violation.

CONCLUSION:

The Pipeline/Facilities Safety Staff found **Morris Plumbing and Sewer** in violation of:

O.C.G.A. Violations

25-9-8(a) Striking, damaging, injuring or loosening any utility facility which has been staked or marked.

25-9-8(b) Failure to exercise reasonable care when excavating or blasting is to take place within the tolerance zone.

This investigation is pending the excavator's (your) response. If no response is submitted, staff will proceed to hearing based solely on the information submitted by the facility owner.

Note: The information you provide will not close the case, it will assist the investigator in his/her investigation to arrive at a more informed conclusion.

COMMISSIONERS:
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TIM G. ECHOLS, VICE-CHAIRMAN
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TRICIA PRIDEMORE
JASON SHAW

DEBORAH K. FLANNAGAN
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MICHELLE THEBERT
FACILITIES PROTECTION
UNIT DIRECTOR

EXHIBIT 2

Georgia Public Service Commission

(404) 463-6526
(800) 282-5813

244 WASHINGTON STREET, SW
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334-5701

FAX: (404) 463-6532
www.psc.state.ga.us

BEFORE THE GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF GEORGIA

IN THE MATTER OF:

Morris Plumbing and Sewer,
RESPONDENTS

CASE NUMBER: PSC 20-17058

CONSENT AGREEMENT

Morris Plumbing and Sewer, ("Respondent(s)"), hereby agrees to presentation of the following proposed disposition of the above named matter to the Georgia Public Service Commission ("Commission"):

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

1.

The Commission has the power and authority to enforce the provisions of the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act, ("Act"), O.C.G.A. T. 25, Ch. 9.

2.

The Commission received a Notice of Probable Violation ("NOPV"), alleging that on 1/17/2020, Respondent(s) violated O.C.G.A. T. 25, Ch. 9. The Staff has recommended to the Commission that the NOPV be resolved pursuant to the terms set forth in this Consent Agreement.

AGREEMENT

By signing below, Respondent(s) hereby agree that this matter should be resolved as follows:

1.

This Consent Agreement, if approved by the Commission, shall constitute a final resolution of this proceeding. Respondent(s) agree that each will abide by the terms of this Consent Agreement.

2.

Respondent(s) agree that each will comply with all applicable provisions of the Act.

3.

EXHIBIT 2

Respondent(s) agree to pay to the Commission a penalty of $5,000.00 within thirty (30) days after the date of an Order issued by the Commission approving of this Consent Agreement. Payment must be forwarded to:

Georgia Public Service Commission
Facilities Protection Unit
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334-5701

All payment of penalties must be remitted in certified funds: money order, cashier's check, or official check.

Personal/Company checks will not be accepted.

4.

If Respondent(s) choose training in lieu of paying $4,000.00 of the penalty described above, Respondent(s) agree to promptly complete a training program acceptable to the Commission, ***minimum of five (5) employees required to attend training***. **The respondent will be responsible for completing the training class and submitting the remaining $1,000.00 penalty in certified funds or cashier's check to the Georgia Public Service Commission.**

5.

Respondent(s) understands that failure to comply with the terms of this Consent Agreement could subject each to additional penalties.

6.

This Consent Agreement shall not become effective until and unless approved by the Commission. Respondent(s) enter into this Consent Agreement without admission of fault or liability.

7.

The undersigned authorized representative of the Respondent(s) acknowledges that he/she has read this Consent Agreement and understands its contents. The undersigned representative acknowledges that the undersigned party freely, knowingly and voluntarily enters into this agreement. The undersigned representative hereby consents to the resolution of this proceeding as provided herein.

This _____ day of _____, 20__.

Consented to:
(Sign, date, and mail, email, or fax)

_____

On behalf of: Morris Plumbing and Sewer

PSC 20-17058

EXHIBIT 2

"GUFPA" Questionnaire

PSC 20-17058, Docket No. 43079

Please answer all questions in a written statement and include your case number on each page.

1. Name of entity (company, corporation, municipality, etc.) submitting this information?

2. Name of person submitting this information and title or position in the company or corporation?

3. Is this business incorporated? If incorporated, how so (corporation or limited liability)? In what state? Name and full address of the corporation's Registered Agent? If not incorporated, how is the business organized (i.e. partnership, sole proprietor, "D/B/A" or other)? Name and full address of the businesses highest ranking official (i.e. president or chief executive officer)?

4. Was a locate request made with **Georgia 811/Utilities Protection Center** prior to beginning excavation? If so, when and by whom? Provide the ticket number and the name of the company/party requesting the locate? Legal date of ticket? Expiration date of ticket? Provide name of party performing the excavation if different from ticket holder? Please provide a copy of all locate tickets associated with this excavation.

5. Was any other contractor (i.e. primary or subcontractor) involved? If subcontractor involved, is there a signed contractor agreement of responsibility? If subcontractor involved, is there a signed contract allowing one party to work under the locate ticket of another? Please provide a copy all contracts associated with this excavation.

6. Were you working under an emergency locate request? If so, please ***describe in detail*** what qualifies this as an emergency situation and describe what actions you took to perform your excavation with reasonable care in order to prevent damage to the underground facilities.

   Please note: An emergency as defined by the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act means there is an *immediate danger* to life or property or the loss of utility service requiring *immediate action*. Even in an emergency situation, the excavator is held responsible for exercising reasonable care in carrying out its excavation activities and is held responsible for any damage such activities might cause. Furthermore, there is no required show-up time for an emergency locate. The only timeframe required for performing locates by the facility owner/operator is 48 hours beginning the next business day as contained in 25-9-7 of the dig law.

7. Did you physically white-line **OR** "describe with sufficient particularity" (verbal white-lining), the area of excavation, prior to the utility owner/operator marking their facilities? Please provide proof thereof? If not, explain.

"GUFPA" Questionnaire

PSC 20-17058, Docket No. 43079

EXHIBIT 2

8. Did your company utilize the Positive Response Information System through **Georgia 811/Utilities Protection Center** to verify that all utility owner/operators had responded prior to your beginning excavation? Please provide a copy of the Positive Response information for each locate ticket associated with this excavation? If not, explain.

9. Was locate marking done within the allotted time frame? If not, was a second request made to **Georgia 811/Utilities Protection Center**?

10. Were any/all utilities marked? If not, explain.

11. Please provide evidence (signed witness statements which must include name, address and contact number for each witness, pictures, maps, diagrams and any other written documentation) that supports each of the above responses.

12. Were the utilities marked accurately (within 18" of either side of the facility)? Were pictures taken of the utility markings prior to excavation? If so, please provide copies and any other supporting documentation.

13. Were the utilities "potholed" prior to excavation to get a visual of the utilities and exposed with non-mechanized means to prevent damage (i.e. shovel, hand tools, etc.)?

14. What type of work was being performed when the incident occurred (i.e. installing CATV, landscaping, grading, installing irrigation, etc.)?

15. What type of equipment or machinery was being used when the incident occurred (i.e. backhoe, mechanical auger, directional drill, etc.)?

"GUFPA" Questionnaire

EXHIBIT 2

PSC 20-17058, Docket No. 43079

16. Was the direction of excavation parallel or perpendicular to the damaged utility?

17. Did excavation cease after the damage occurred?

18. Was Georgia 811/Utilities Protection Center contacted after the incident occurred? If yes, provide the damage ticket number and a copy of each damage ticket associated with this excavation.

19. Was 911 called for all damages to natural gas facilities?

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www.psc.state.ga.us

REQUESTS FOR CASES TO COME BEFORE "GUFPAAC"

THE GEORGIA UTILITY FACILTY PROTECTION ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

All requests for cases to come before the Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act Advisory Committee (GUFPAAC) shall be submitted in writing and shall be accompanied by each respondent's written response to each and every allegation listed in the notice of probable violation (NOPV) to which this notice is attached.

To better assist the Advisory Committee's preparation to review your case, the assigned investigator has requested from both the Excavator and Utility any pertinent documentation such as pictures, maps, and/or any other documentation.

Receipt of this documentation is being requested prior to the GUFPAAC meeting in order to insure the investigator and Advisory Committee both have the appropriate time in which to review all details related to your case. The admittance of additional information on the day of this meeting will be at the discretion of the Advisory Committee.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

EXHIBIT 2

MICHELLE THEBERT
FACILITIES PROTECTION
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GUFPA Training

If your company has been assessed a civil penalty for a violation of the ACT with the offer to attend a Commission approved training class in lieu of paying the penalty, you may choose to have your employees attend damage prevention classes presented in English, Spanish or both.

For classes in English, contact one of the following:

Ms. Vicki Temple, Georgia Utility Contractors Association ("GUCA")
(404) 362-9995

Ms. Becky Kinsey, Georgia 811
(404) 375-6209 or email: bkinsey@georgia811.com

Mr. Ryan Boling, HB NEXT
(770) 619-1669 or (877) 442-4282 (Toll Free)

Mr. Diego Alvarado, daBaires Group
(678) 643-8278, 678-237-8192, or email: dsalvador678@gmail.com

Mr. Jimmy Davis, The Georgia Utility Training Academy ("GUTA")
(678) 635-8980 or email: guta@monroega.gov

For classes in Spanish, contact one of the following:

Mr. Diego Alvarado, daBaires Group
(678) 643-8278, 678-237-8192, or dsalvador678@gmail.com

Mr. Ryan Boling, HB NEXT
(770) 619-1669 or (877) 442-4282 (Toll Free)

Ms. Becky Kinsey, Georgia 811
(404) 375-6209 or email: bkinsey@georgia811.com

Ms. Vicki Temple, Georgia Utility Contractors Association ("GUCA")
(404) 362-9995

If you have questions or need additional information, please call (404) 463-6526.

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BEFORE THE GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:	)	
	)	
Morris Plumbing and Sewer,	)	DOCKET NO. 43079
RESPONDENTS	)	(PSC Case No. 20-17058)
	)	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that this Consent Agreement was served upon all parties and persons listed below by depositing same in the United States mail.

Morris Plumbing and Sewer
Attn: Rick Morris
1694 Laurel Creek Circle
Lithonia, GA 30058

, registered agent c/o
Morris Plumbing and Sewer
6806 Banyesfield Hill
Decatur, GA 30032

Respectfully Submitted this 8th day of July, 2020:

Marilyn K. Morris-Simmons, Admin. Assistant
Facilities Protection Unit
Georgia Public Service Commission
244 Washington St. Ste. 112
Atlanta, GA 30334

GEORGIA DIG LAW
NOTICE OF PROBABLE VIOLATION

EXHIBIT 2

Why you are receiving this letter?

You are receiving the attached information because our office (The Georgia Public Service Commission/ Facilities Protection Division) has been notified by a utility owner or operator that you have damaged their facility and have been submitted as having possibly violated one or more parts of the GA Dig Law.

What is the GA Dig Law (also known as The Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act (GUFPA))?

The Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act (GUFPA), enacted by the General Assembly in July 2000, provides for the protection of the buried utility facility infrastructure within the State of Georgia. Excavators using mechanized equipment are required to call for a utility facility locate prior to excavating with mechanized equipment or blasting. Upon receipt of a locate request, each affected facility owner/operator must locate their respective utility facilities. Violations of the GUFPA are subject to a civil penalty of up to $10,000 each violations. For the full version of the Act please visit our website at www.psc.state.ga.us.

What is the GA Public Service Commission Facilities Protection Division?

We are responsible for the enforcement of the GUFPA Act.

I have paid for the damages to the utility company, why am I getting something from the PSC?

Damages paid for repairs to utility facilities are separate from the civil penalties assessed for violation(s) of GA's Dig Law. Although you may have paid for the damaged utility facility, you are now being assessed a civil penalty for probable violation(s) of the GA Dig Law.

How has an investigation been completed and I was not contacted before now?"

Utility owner/operators are mandated by Commission Rule to report ALL damages to their facilities. Utility owner/operators are to conduct an investigation of the damage and any resulting probable violation(s) prior to submitting the probable violation to the PSC. PSC Staff Investigators will assign each case a number and send out a Notice of Probable Violation ("NOPV") to the Respondent in order to 1) notify the Respondent of the alleged probable violation(s) and 2) request a written response and supporting documents that show a Respondent's side of the story.

I do NOT agree with the probable violation alleged how do I tell my side?

Once you have reviewed the information included in this package you have 30 days from the date listed on the letter to respond in writing, to each alleged probable violation and to provide all evidence you wish to submit in support thereof.

What are my response options?

There are several ways you can respond to the probable violation:

- Send in a written statement by mail, fax, or email of the events as you recall them. Send in any pictures or other documentation you may have along with witness statements if available. Use the questionnaire attached to the NOPV packet as a guide for your written statement.
- If you agree with the investigation please sign and date the attached consent agreement and mail or fax it back to our office.
- Contact our office and speak with your investigator (you must still submit your statement in writing).

What happens after I submit my response?

Your investigator will review your information along with the information that was submitted by the utility owner/operator and will determine/complete their investigation based upon their findings and will contact you either by mail, email, or phone call of their conclusion.

What happens if the investigator still finds me in violation after I have submitted my response and I still do NOT agree?

You may request to appear before the GUFPAAC (Georgia Utility Facility Protection Act Advisory Committee). The GUFPAAC is comprised of approx 13 members of industry stakeholders and your peers who will hear and make a recommendation on your case.

What happens if I do NOT respond at all?

After the 30 day response time has expired your case will be set for a *Rule NISI* hearing on the Title 25 probable violations of the Dig Law. Your case will be heard by a hearing officer who will issue a recommended order on the merits of your case. If the hearing officer finds that the probable violation(s) is(are) supported by the evidence, an additional one-thousand dollars will be added to the civil penalty initially recommended by Staff. For Title 25 *Rule Nisis*, the civil penalties cannot exceed $10,000.00 per violation.

How do I contact The Georgia Public Service Commission?

Our mailing address:
244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334
Phone: 404-463-6526
Fax: 404-463-6532

EXHIBIT 2

7012 1640 0000 4250 1827

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For d

Georgia Public Service Commission
GUPFA Department
244 Washington Street
Atlanta, GA 30334

Postage	$
Certified Fee	
Return Receipt Fee (Endorsement Required)	JUN 24 2022 Postmark Here
Restricted Delivery Fee (Endorsement Required)	
Total Postage & Fees	$

Sent To: Morris Plumbing and Sewer
Street, Apt. No.; or PO Box No.: Attn: Rick Morris
1694 Laurel Creek Circle
City, State, ZIP+4: Lithonia, GA 30058
Rule NISI NOH 20-17058

PS Form 3800, A

SENDER: *COMPLETE THIS SECTION*

- Complete items 1, 2, and 3. Also complete item 4 if Restricted Delivery is desired.
- Print your name and address on the reverse so that we can return the card to you.
- Attach this card to the back of the mailpiece, or on the front if space permits.

1. Article Addressed to:

Morris Plumbing and Sewer
Attn: Rick Morris
1694 Laurel Creek Circle
Lithonia, GA 30058
Rule NISI NOH 20-17058 5/17/2022

COMPLETE THIS SECTION ON DELIVERY

A. Signature
X DC ☐ Agent ☐ Addressee

B. Received by (Printed Name) DC C-19 C. Date of Delivery 6/27/2022

D. Is delivery address different from item 1? ☐ Yes
If YES, enter delivery address below: ☐ No

RECEIVED
JUN 29 2022

3. Service Type GUPFA UNIT GPSC
☐ Certified Mail ☐ Express Mail
☐ Registered ☐ Return Receipt for Merchandise
☐ Insured Mail ☐ C.O.D.

4. Restricted Delivery? *(Extra Fee)* ☐ Yes

2. Article Number *(Transfer from service label)* 7012 1640 0000 4250 1827

PS Form 3811, February 2004 Domestic Return Receipt 102595-02-M-1540