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Georgia Public Service Commission

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DOCKET# 37093
DOCUMENT# 221704

Docket No. 37093

Tri-County Natural Gas Authority
P. O. Box 247
Union Point, GA 30669

REF: Construction Inspection # RS24-016

☐ Certified Mail ☐ Regular Mail ☒ Email

Attention: Mr. Lanier Rhodes

On March 11, 2024, a representative of the Georgia Public Service Commission Pipeline/Facilities Safety Office conducted an inspection of your gas system. The enclosed inspection report numbered RS24-016 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. 37093 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: RS24-016

OPERATOR: Tri-County Natural Gas Authority

INVESTIGATOR: Brant Sweat

INSPECTION DATE: March 11, 2024 REPORT MAILED DATE: February 26, 2025

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

1. PURPOSE OF INSPECTION

To conduct an inspection of the Operators construction project for compliance with the minimum federal standards in 49CFR Part 192.

2. CONTINUING VIOLATIONS

Violation	Description	Inspection#	Date
192.619(a)	No person may operate a segment of steel or plastic pipeline at a pressure that exceeds a maximum...	JS18-042	12/17/2018
192.181(a)	Each high-pressure distribution system must have valves spaced so as to reduce the time to...	JB22-001	3/7/2022

3. CLEARED VIOLATIONS

4. NEW VIOLATIONS

5. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS

From March 11th to July 18th, 2024, Staff reported to Tri County Natural Gas in the Greensboro Area to perform a Construction Inspection of the Operators construction project for compliance with the minimum federal standards in 49CFR Part 192.

During this inspection the Operator was represented by:
Wendal Matthews – Tri County Gas Superintendent
Crew Members – Southern Natural Gas

Commission Staff was represented by:
Brant Sweat – Lead Inspector
Eric Atkins – Pipeline Inspector
Daphne Jones – Pipeline Inspector
Dainiel Clemmons - Pipeline Inspector

At the time of this inspection Tri County Natural Gas was under Twelve (12) previously existing probable violations. Staff did not review these because it was addressed in an earlier inspection and this inspection was spent out in the field.

NO VIOLATIONS FOUND:

During this inspection Staff reviewed Tri County Natural Gas construction project specifications for the 6" inch PE service installation project on Walker Church Rd, Meadow Crest Rd and Martin Luther Kind Dr. This project consisted of installing 28000ft of 6-inch PE plastic pipe to enhance pressure and to extend to approximately 5 residential houses, also Southern Gas made bores under the road to get to destination. Staff reviewed the materials being used, excavation for the pipe, damage prevention procedures, and qualification records along with an operator qualification field inspection on personnel performing construction tasks.

During this inspection, Staff conducted OQ Protocol 9 field verification inspections to ensure that covered task(s) were being performed in accordance with appropriate Operator-approved procedures, that the procedures were available at the job site, and that the individuals performing the observed covered task(s) were adhering to the operator-approved procedures as written.

During the field evaluations, staff observed Southern Gas workers to conduct OQ Protocol 9 field Task. Staff verified that covered task(s) were being performed in accordance with appropriate Operator-approved procedures, that the procedures were available at the job site, and that the individuals performing the observed covered task(s) were adhering to the operator-approved procedures as written. During the field evaluations, Staff observed Justin Bishop performing the Task of Backfilling on 6" plastic, qualification verified current until 07/07/26. Staff also watched Mr. Bishop perform Installation of Plastic Pipe in a ditch, Qualification verified current until 07/07/26. Staff also observed Justin Cordoza performing the Task of 4" Butt Fusion and Inspection of plastic pipe, Qualification current until 08/03/2024.Staff also watched Mr. Cordoza perform welding of steel pipe, qualification verified current until 03/21/25. Staff verified that the individual was able to perform the covered tasks according to the procedure and was able to identify generic and task specific abnormal conditions and define the applicable actions.

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:	)	
	)	
Tri – County Natural Gas Authority	)	**DOCKET NO. 37093**
	)	
	)	
	)	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, hereby certify that I have this day served a copy of the within and foregoing document on the following persons via email and/or United States Mail as follows:

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

*The Honorable Lanier Rhodes, Mayor
Tri-County Natural Gas
P.O. Box 247
Union Point, GA 30669
mayorlrhodes@gmail.com

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

Respectfully Submitted this 5th day of March 2025:

Cathy Nesbitt

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