COMMISSIONERS

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

FILED
APR 17 2025
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
GPSC



REECE McALISTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MICHELLE THEBERT
FACILITIES PROTECTION UNIT DIRECTOR

Georgia Public Service Commission

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

244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-5701

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

DOCKET# 37019
DOCUMENT#222307

Docket No. 37019

City of Adel Gas Department
P. O. Box 1530
Adel, GA 31620

REF: Comprehensive Inspection # JJ24-057

☐ Certified Mail ☐ Regular Mail ☒ Email

Attention: Mr. Mark Barber

On October 28, 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 JJ24-057 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. 37019 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

COMMISSIONERS

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

REECE McALISTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MICHELLE THEBERT
FACILITIES PROTECTION UNIT DIRECTOR

Georgia Public Service Commission

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

244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-5701

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

REPORT OF NATURAL GAS SAFETY

INSPECTION NO: JJ24-057

OPERATOR: City of Adel Gas Department

INVESTIGATOR: Joe Jones

INSPECTION DATE: October 28, 2024 REPORT MAILED DATE: April 16, 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 a comprehensive inspection of the Operators plans, programs, procedures, pipeline, and pipeline facilities for compliance with the minimum federal safety standards in 49CFR Parts 191 and 192.

2. CONTINUING VIOLATIONS

Violation	Description	Inspection#	Date
Consent Agreement Pending	Operator is negotiating Consent Agreement with the FPU Director	DJ19-063	12/4/2019
Consent Agreement Pending	Operator is negotiating Consent Agreement with the FPU Director	AT23-015	2/16/2023

3. CLEARED VIOLATIONS

4. NEW VIOLATIONS

Violation	Description	Inspection#	Date
192.459	External corrosion control: Examination of buried pipeline when exposed.	JJ24-057	10/28/2024
192.481(c)	If atmospheric corrosion is found during an inspection, the operator must provide protection...	JJ24-057	10/28/2024

5. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS

SEE ATTACHED INSPECTION REPORT

CITY OF ADEL / COMPREHENSIVE INSPECTION
INSPECTION NUMBER JJ24-057 / DOCKET NUMBER 37019

From October 28-30, Staff reported to the City of Adel Gas Department to perform a comprehensive inspection of the Operator's plans, procedures, programs, records and pipeline facilities for compliance with the minimum federal safety standards and conduct Protocol 9 OQ inspections for compliance with the minimum federal safety standards.

During this inspection the Operator was represented by:
Chris Morris – Gas Supervisor
Perter Schultz – Harp & Associates (Consultant)

Commission Staff was represented by:
Joseph Jones – Lead Inspector
Eric Atkins – Pipeline Safety Inspector
Chuck Whitaker – Pipeline Safety Inspector
At the time of this inspection, the City of Adel was under no previously existing probable violation.

During this inspection Staff reviewed the City of Adel written operations and maintenance procedures, records, and gas facilities for compliance with 49 CFR Parts 191 and 192, and the GPSC rules for safe operation of a natural gas distribution system. Staff reviewed the City of Adel's Emergency Manual, the Operations and Maintenance Manual and the records for conducting regular operations on their gas system including the collection of field data required for the Operator's DIMP program. Staff also conducted field inspection of randomly selected pipeline field facilities located within the City of Adel and Cook County including leak repairs, pressure stations and pressure recording devices, right of way conditions, atmospheric corrosion control, odorant testing, and accessibility of critical valves.

NOTICE OF PROBABLE VIOLATION

As a result of this inspection Staff found that the City of Adel was in probable violation of the minimum federal safety standards; specifically:

1) 49CFR §192.459 External Corrosion Control
Whenever an operator has knowledge that any portion of a buried pipeline is exposed, the exposed portion must be examined for evidence of external corrosion if the pipe is bare, or if the coating is deteriorated. If external corrosion requiring remedial action under Secs. 192.483 through 192.489 is found, the operator shall investigate circumferentially and longitudinally beyond the exposed portion (by visual examination, indirect method, or both) to determine whether additional corrosion requiring remedial action exists in the vicinity of the exposed portion.

STAFF COMMENTS: Per Section M. External Corrosion Control: Examination of Buried Pipeline When Exposed per 49CFR §192.459 of the Operator's O&M manual, it states "(a) Whenever City of Adel has knowledge that any portion of a buried pipeline is exposed, the exposed portion will be examined for evidence of external corrosion if the pipe is bare, or if the coating is deteriorated. If external corrosion requiring remedial action under Sections 9Q-9T is found, City of Adel will investigate circumferentially and longitudinally beyond the exposed portion (by visual examination, indirect method, or both) to determine whether additional corrosion requiring remedial action exists in the vicinity of the exposed portion."

While examining the Operator's field work orders, Staff noted that the operator had inadequately completed or failed to complete part of the form to record the condition of the pipeline when it is excavated and exposed.

PROBABLE VIOLATION: The City of Adel Gas Department failed to record the condition of the pipeline when a portion of pipeline was exposed.

2) 49CFR, §192.481 Atmospheric Corrosion Control: Monitoring
(c) If atmospheric corrosion is found during an inspection, the operator must provide protection against the corrosion as required by §192.479.

STAFFS COMMENTS: In the City of Adel Operations and Maintenance Procedures manual it states in Section 9O - Atmospheric Corrosion Control: General [§192.479] (a) City of Adel will clean and coat each pipeline or portion of pipeline that is exposed to the atmosphere.

During this inspection Staff noted that the Operators documentation for their CY2020 through 2023, leak surveys indicated that there were multiple locations which had been identified as having moderate atmospheric corrosion; however, the Operator had no documentation which indicated that any of these deficiencies had been remediated as required by §192.481(c) and their O & M procedures.

PROBABLE VIOLATION: The City of Adel Gas Department failed to demonstrate that they has provided protection against the atmospheric corrosion which was found in their CY2020 through 2023, leak surveys, as required by §192.181(c) and their O&M Procedures.

In addition to the comprehensive inspection Staff conducted four (3) Operator Qualification Protocol 9 field reviews. Staff observed Patrick Stafford Gas Service Technician as he performed Task # 0301: – Manually Opening and Closing Valves, qualifications good through 6/4/2026; Task #1241: Outside Gas Leak Investigation, qualifications good through 7/17/2027; and Task #1291- Inspect Rectifier and obtain Readings, qualified through 9/10/2026.

The Operator provided the current qualification records for the individuals before they performed each of the tasks covered. During the field reviews, Staff verified that Mr. Stafford was able to perform each task by following the company approved procedures and that they were able to identify the abnormal conditions associated with each task and explain a course of action to mitigate the condition.

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.

OPERATOR RESPONSE FORM

Operator Name: City of Adel

Informal Conference Requested: Yes ☐ No ☐

Docket Number: 37019

Responses required within **30 days of electronic mail.** Provide the following information for this report:

Response to Inspection Number:_____

Type of Enforcement Action(s) cited in report:			Informal Conference Requested	
☐ Notice of Probable Violation (NOPV)	☐ New	☐Continuing	☐ Yes	☐ No
☐ Notice of Amendment (NOA)	☐ New	☐Continuing	☐ Yes	☐ No
☐ Warning Letter	☐ New	☐Continuing	☐ Yes	☐ No
☐ Letter of Concern	☐ New	☐Continuing	☐ Yes	☐ No
☐ Observed Issue	☐ New	☐Continuing	☐ Yes	☐ No
☐ Proposed Civil Penalty	$ _____ PCP $ Amount (Total for report)			

Indicate below (A-E) based on the type of Enforcement Actions in this report: (Check all that apply)
Complete a separate copy of Page 2, Operator Response to Enforcement Action, for each cited item.

A. Response for **Notice of Probable Violation** (with and without proposed civil penalty):
   1. ☐ Written statement indicating that corrective measures have achieved Compliance or
   2. ☐ Written plan of action outlining the corrective measures that will be taken to achieve compliance and when compliance is anticipated.

B. Response for **NOA**:
   1. ☐ Contested: Attach written explanation, information, or other material in answer to the allegations in the Notice of Amendment stating your reasons for objecting to the NOA, in whole or in part; or
   2. ☐ Not Contested: Explanation, information, or other material believed to warrant modification of the NOA in whole or in part; or
   3. ☐ Written request for clarification. (Attached)

C. Response for **Continuing** and/or **Existing** violations:
   Current status, updates, expected completion dates, proposed modifications, etc., of the continuing and/or existing violations, even if this information was previously provided. Referencing a previously filed response letter, as status, updates, etc. alone is not sufficient for this response. Failure to provide this information may result in formal interrogatories from the Director through data requests.

D. Response for ☐ **Letter of Concern** / ☐ **Warning Letter**
   I acknowledge receipt of the Letter of Concern/Warning Letter:_____
   SIGNATURE / TITLE

   Additional Comments: (Optional)_____

E. Response for **Observed Issue** and **No Violation**: (Optional Response)
   Staff requests that the Operator acknowledge receipt of the Observed Issue/No Violation in writing, or by submitting an email to the FPU Director

Operator Response to Enforcement Action

Enforcement Action for:_____ ☐ New Violation ☐ Continuing Violation
Enter Code / Commission Rule (Complete a separate attachment for each enforcement action)

Enforcement Action(s) cited in report:	Conference Requested:
☐ Notice of Probable Violation (NOPV)	☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ Notice of Amendment (NOA)	☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ Warning Letter	☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ Letter of Concern	☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ Observed Issue	☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ Proposed Civil Penalty	☐ Yes ☐ No

$_____
Proposed Penalty for this violation

OPERATORS RESPONSE: _____

Response Provided by: _____ Date:_____
Name / Title

Internal use only:

Lead Inspector: _____ Date Response Reviewed:_____

Actions Acceptable: ☐ Yes ☐No Re-inspection Needed:☐ Yes ☐ No Clear Violation:☐ Yes ☐ No

Supervisor Review by:_____ Date Reviewed:_____

Additional Enforcement Recommended: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Director Review

Approved: ☐ Yes ☐No Schedule Special Follow-up Inspection: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Cleared Violation: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Comments:_____

Filings:
For all written responses or any other official correspondence, the Operator shall file the response at the following address:

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

The Operator must file **five (5)** copies of any response and/or official correspondence, as well as a CD with an electronic version of the response in Microsoft Word and/or a PDF, if applicable.

Informal Conference:
Any Operator who chooses to request an informal conference shall request such a conference through emailing the Director (michellet@psc.state.ga.us), calling the Director (404-463-2765), or selecting the "Request Conference" choice.

Civil Penalty Payments:
Certified check for the full amount of the recommended civil penalty or consent agreement amount made payable to the Georgia Public Service Commission. The Operator's name, applicable Docket No., and Inspection Report No. must be included on the certified check. Mail payment to:

Ms. Michelle Thebert, Director, Facilities Protection Unit
Georgia Public Service Commission
244 Washington Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Hearing Requests:
The Operator has the right to request a hearing before the full Commission to contest the alleged probable violations, recommended civil penalties, and all other proposed actions of enforcement. A request for a hearing must be submitted in writing and in accordance with Commission Rule 515-2-1-.04. The Operator must include a statement of the issues that you intend to raise at the hearing. The issues may relate to the allegations, new information, proposed compliance order, proposed civil penalty, or any other recommendation for enforcement action. Please refer to Commission Rule 515-9-3-.11 and O.C.G.A. § 46-2-91 for assessment considerations upon which civil penalties are based. An operator's failure to specify an issue may result in a waiver of the right to raise that issue at hearing. The request must also indicate whether or not the Operator will be represented by counsel at the hearing.

Open Records and Trade Secret Filings:
The Operator is advised that any material provided to the Commission, and all materials prepared by the Commission, including the Notice of Probable Violations and any Orders issued in this case, may be considered public information and subject to disclosure under the Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 et seq.). If you believe that any portion of your response material is security sensitive, privileged, confidential or may cause your company competitive disadvantages and would qualify for protection under the Commission's "Trade Secret Rule" (Commission Rule 515-3-1-.11), you must, along with the complete original document clearly marked "TRADE SECRET" on each page, provide a second copy of the document with the portions you believe qualify for trade secret treatment redacted, and an explanation of why you believe the redacted information qualifies for such trade secret treatment. Should the Commission receive a request for disclosure of any "TRADE SECRET" material, you will be notified, if after review, the materials and your provided justification are deemed not to meet any exemptions provided in the Georgia Open Records Act. You may appeal the Commission's decision to release material at that time. Your appeal will stay the release of those materials until a final decision is made.

BEFORE THE GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF GEORGIA

IN THE MATTER OF:	)	
	)	
City of Adel Gas Department	)	**DOCKET NO. 37019**
	)	
	)	
	)	

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

*Mark Barber, City Manager
City of Adel Gas Department
PO Box 1530
Adel, GA 31620

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

Respectfully Submitted this 22nd day of April 2025

Cathy Nesbitt

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