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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 No. 37023

DOCKET# 37023
DOCUMENT# 226291

City of Ashburn Gas Department
P. O. Box 766
Ashburn, GA 31714

REF: Comprehensive Inspection # JJ25-039

☐ Certified Mail ☐ Regular Mail ☒ Email

Attention: Mr. Daryl Hall

On June 9, 2025, a representative of the Georgia Public Service Commission Pipeline/Facilities Safety Office conducted an inspection of your gas system. The enclosed inspection report numbered JJ25-039 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. 37023 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: JJ25-039

OPERATOR: City of Ashburn Gas Department

INVESTIGATOR: Joe Jones

INSPECTION DATE: June 9, 2025 REPORT MAILED DATE: April 16, 2026

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
192.616(e)	The program must include activities to advise affected municipalities, school districts,...	DL24-031	8/28/2024

3. CLEARED VIOLATIONS

Cleared on 6/9/2025

Violation	Description	Inspection#	Date
192.615(c)	Each operator shall establish and maintain liaison with appropriate fire, police, and other...	DL24-031	8/28/2024
192.616(c)	The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental...	DL24-031	8/28/2024

4. NEW VIOLATIONS

5. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS

SEE ATTACHED INSPECTION REPORT

CITY OF ASHBURN / COMPREHENSIVE INSPECTION
INSPECTION NUMBER JJ25-039 / DOCKET NUMBER 37023

From June 9th – 18th, Staff reported to the City of Ashburn's 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. An exit interview was conducted on June 18th.

During this inspection the Operator was represented by:
Amanda Hill – City Manager
Adam Lavender – Gas Superintendent
Wade Sharpe – Consultant SRCS
Mike Hudson – Consultant SRCS

Commission Staff were represented by:
Joseph Jones – Lead Inspector
Chuck Whitaker – Pipeline Safety Inspector

At the time of this inspection, the City of Ashburn had three (3) previously existing probable violations. These Violations were addressed during Follow Up Inspection # JJ25-038.

NO VIOLATION FOUND

During this inspection Staff reviewed the City of Ashburn's 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 City of Ashburn'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 Ashburn and Turner County including leak repairs, pressure station and pressure recording devices, right of way conditions, atmospheric corrosion control, cathodic protection readings, odorant testing, and accessibility of critical valves.

LETTER OF CONCERN

Under the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administrations (PHMSA) Guidelines for States Participating in the Pipeline Safety Program, Staff are tasked with reviewing and evaluating operators procedures and actions to address recommendations from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and PHMSA advisory bulletins. During this inspection Staff found that the City of Ashburn had neither a procedure in place, nor any records to demonstrate that that they had reviewed any of these items.

STAFFS CONCERN: Staff are concerned that in the event of an accident or incident the Operator will not be able to demonstrate that they performed a review of the relevant NTSB and/or PHMSA notices, or what actions they decided to take, or not to take, in regard to the notices. Staff recommends that the Operator develop a procedure to review these bulletins and then document what actions they took in regard to the notices.

During this inspection, Staff conducted four (4) Operator Qualification 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 present at the job site, and that the individuals performing the observed covered task(s) were adhering to the operator-approved procedures as written.

Adam Lavender – City of Ashburn Employee Performed:
Open and close Service Valves - Task #0301, Qualified Through 2/18/2028
Measure Structure to Electrolyte – Task #0001, Qualified Through 5/10/2028
Gas Outside Leak Investigation – Task #1241. Qualified Through 5/10/2026
Install and Maintain Pipeline Markers – Task #1301 Qualified Through 3/28/2030

The Operator provided the current qualification records for the individual before he performed each of the tasks covered. During the field reviews, Staff verified that he was able to identify the abnormal operating conditions associated with each task and explain a course of action to mitigate the condition.

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.

OPERATOR RESPONSE FORM

Informal Conference Requested: Yes ☐ No ☐

Operator Name: City of Ashburn

Docket Number: 37023

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	$_____ Proposed Penalty for this violation
☐ Notice of Amendment (NOA)	☐ Yes ☐ No	
☐ Warning Letter	☐ Yes ☐ No	
☐ Letter of Concern	☐ Yes ☐ No	
☐ Observed Issue	☐ Yes ☐ No	
☐ Proposed Civil Penalty	☐ Yes ☐ No	

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 Ashburn Gas Department	)	**DOCKET NO. 37023**
	)	
	)	
	)	

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

*Daryl Hall, City Manager
City of Ashburn Gas Department
P.O. Box 766
Ashburn, GA 31714
dhall@cityofashburn.net

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

Respectfully Submitted this 23rd day of April 2026:

Cathy Nesbitt

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