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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 No. 37035

DOCKET# 37035
DOCUMENT# 226317

City of Claxton Gas Department
P. O. Box 829
204 West Railroad Street
Claxton, GA 30417

REF: Follow Up Inspection # JS25-032

☐ Certified Mail ☐ Regular Mail ☒ Email

Attention: Terry Branch

On September 8, 2025, a representative of the Georgia Public Service Commission Pipeline Safety/Facilities Protection Office conducted an on-site inspection of your gas system and found that previously identified probable violation(s) of the Pipeline Safety Regulations have either been cleared or are continuing, as identified below.

- ☒ Previously existing probable violation(s) has/have been cleared.
- ☐ Previously existing probable violation(s) still exist.
- ☐ Additional Enforcement
  - ☐ Notice of Proposed Violation
  - ☐ Notice of Proposed Violation with Proposed Civil Penalty
  - ☐ Warning Letter
  - ☐ Letter of Concern
  - ☐ Observed Issue
- ☐ Consent Agreement Pending

The enclosed inspection report numbered JS25-032 is provided for your information and file.

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. 37035 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
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REPORT OF NATURAL GAS SAFETY

INSPECTION NO: JS25-032

OPERATOR: City of Claxton Gas Department

INVESTIGATOR: Jason Smith

INSPECTION DATE: September 8, 2025 REPORT MAILED DATE: April 20, 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 follow-up inspection of the Operator's previously existing probable violations.

2. CONTINUING VIOLATIONS

Violation	Description	Inspection#	Date
Consent Agreement Pending	Operator is negotiating Consent Agreement with the FPU Director	DL24-017	6/1/2024
192.1007(a)(5)	Provide for the capture and retention of data on any new pipeline installed.	JS25-033	9/2/2025
192.1007(d)	Identify and implement measures to address risks.	JS25-033	9/2/2025

3. CLEARED VIOLATIONS

Cleared on 9/8/2025

Violation	Description	Inspection#	Date
192.1007(d)	Identify and implement measures to address risks.	AT22-009	2/21/2022
192.1011	What records must an operator keep?	AT22-009	2/21/2022
192.473(a)	Each operator whose pipeline system is subjected to stray currents shall have in effect a...	JH23-009	6/20/2023

4. NEW VIOLATIONS

5. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS

SEE ATTACHED INSPECTION REPORT

On September 8, 2025, Staff reported to the City of Claxton Gas Department to perform a follow-up inspection on the Operator's previously existing probable violations.

During this inspection the Operator was represented by:
Danny Hughes - Gas Superintendent
Chris Cawley - MGAG/SRCS (consultant)

Commission Pipeline Safety Staff was represented by:
Jason Smith - Lead Inspector
Glen Murphy - Pipeline Safety Inspector
Brian Withrow - Pipeline Safety Inspector

At the time of this inspection the City of Claxton Gas Department had three (3) previously existing probable violations. Staff reviewed these violations with the Operator and determined that:

PROBABLE VIOLATION CLEARED

1. In regard to the probable violation of §192.1007(d) which was cited under inspection #AT22-009, in that inspection Staff stated:

   "COMMENTS: A review of the Operators 2017 DIMP plan indicated 3rd party damage as number 1 risk and the risk generated thru SHRIMP was rated as a low risk with no actions recommended to be taken to reduce. Operator has only had one 3rd party damage in last 10 years. In 2019 the Operator plan listed External Corrosion as number 1 risk and the risk generated thru SHRIMP was rated as a low risk with no actions recommended to be taken to reduce. Operator has reported 20 external corrosion leaks in last 10 years. The operator erroneously determined that no actions were necessary, when risk reduction measures should have been taken. The Operator stated during this inspection they are beginning the process in revising their plan this year to include measures to reduce their top 2 risks which are #1-External Corrosion and #2 Excavator damage.

   PROBABLE VIOLATION: Operator failed to implement risk reduction measures as required under Part 192.1007(d)."

   FIRST OPERATOR RESPONSE: In their response letter to Inspection Number AT22-009, dated June 7, 2022, the Operator stated that:

   "The City of Claxton ("Claxton") has determined that most of the 20 leaks referenced in this Report were not caused by corrosion but instead were caused by the failure of a type of Dresser coupling that was used on steel service lines with a certain type coating. The remedial measure in these cases has been replacement of the service line. Claxton has determined there are approximately 200 service lines in a limited area of its system with this type fitting. These fittings will be added to Claxton's DIMP as a threat and the associated risk will be evaluated. To address this threat, Claxton will replace at least twenty of these service lines annually and will perform an annual leakage survey of the affected area."

FIRST FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION: On June 12, 2023, Staff reported to the City of Claxton to conduct a follow-up inspection of the Operators previously existing probable violations. (Ref. Inspection Number JH23-008) In that inspection Staff stated:

> "During this inspection, Staff examined twenty service orders dating from January 2022 to February 2022 that the City of Claxton either repaired or replaced these service lines. Staff also examined the leak survey from January – February 2022. The City of Claxton is on track for the service line repair but will not conduct their reevaluation plan for the DIMP Implementation until July 2023.
>
> Staff determined that this probable violation cannot be cleared at this time."

SECOND OPERATOR RESPONSE: In their response letter to Inspection Number JH23-008, dated April 29, 2024, the Operator stated that:

> "The City of Claxton ("Claxton") has determined that most of the 20 leaks referenced in the Report on Inspection AT22-009 were not caused by corrosion but instead were caused by the failure of a type of Dresser coupling that was used on steel service lines with a certain type coating. The remedial measure in these cases has been replacement of the service line. Claxton has determined there are approximately 200 service lines in a limited area of its system with this type fitting. These fittings will be added to Claxton's DIMP as a threat and the associated risk will be evaluated. To address this threat, Claxton will replace at least twenty of these service lines annually and will perform an annual leakage survey of the affected area."

SECOND FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION: From June 17 to June 20, 2024 Staff reported to the City of Claxton to conduct a follow-up inspection of the Operators previously existing probable violations. (Ref. Inspection Number DL24-017) This probable violation, §192.1007(d) was not addressed during that follow-up inspection.

THIRD OPERATOR RESPONSE: In their response letter to Inspection Number DL24-017 that was filed with the Commission on March 20, 2025, the Operator stated that:

> "The City of Claxton ("Claxton") has determined that most of the 20 leaks referenced in the Report on Inspection AT22-009 were not caused by corrosion but rather by the failure of a specific type of Dresser coupling used on steel service lines with a particular coating. As a corrective measure. Claxton has replaced the affected service lines.
>
> An evaluation of the system identified approximately 200 service lines in a limited area containing these fittings. To mitigate this risk, Claxton will add these fittings as a threat in its Distribution Integrity Management Program (DIMP) and assess the associated risk. As part of the mitigation strategy, Claxton will replace at least 20 of these service lines annually and conduct an annual leakage survey of the affected area. To date, Claxton has replaced or retired 20 services in 2022, 25 in 2023, and 18 in 2024. Leak surveys conducted on this pipeline segment in 2023 and 2024 have identified no leaks. Claxton is currently reassessing its DIMP plan to determine if additional actions are necessary"

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: On March 27, 2025, Staff reviewed the response the Claxton Gas Department submitted for §192.1007(d). (Ref. Inspection Number JS25-007) In that review Staff noted:

"On March 27, 2025, Staff reviewed the response the Claxton Gas Department submitted for §192.1007(9) under #JS25-007; and considered the following: Claxton Gas Department initially identified approximately 200 of their service lines with a particular coating and a specific type of dresser coupling that needs to be addressed in their system. According to the response, replacement or retirement of services in the last few years leaves approximately 137 of these services remaining in the system.

To address this violation, Staff will need to see Claxton's updated DIMP that addresses these service lines and the implemented risk reduction measures.

Staff determined that this violation could not be cleared at this time. Staff will perform a follow-up inspection of this violation at a later date."

THIRD FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION: On September 8, 2025, Staff reported to the Claxton Gas Department to perform a follow-up on the Operator's previously existing probable violations. During this inspection (Inspection Number JS25-032) the Operator informed Staff that they were currently working under DIMP version 8.1 (dated 2025-08-28) which replaced version 7.1 (2022-03-23). Under this current DIMP ver. 8.1, the risk ranking is

#1 - Material, Weld or Joint Failure (Manufacturing Defects)
#2 - Cathodic Protected Coated Steel
#3 - Third Party Excavation Damage
#4 - Other Threats
#5 Internal Corrosion
#6 - Atmospheric Corrosion
#7 - Other Outside Forces.

The Manufacturing Defects risk states: Claxton identified approximately 100 services believed to contain the particular dresser coupling type fitting. These services will either be retired or replaced with poly pipe. When this fitting is discovered in the system it will be removed.

Since Claxton Gas Department's current DIMP does identify and implement measures to address risk associated with the Material, Weld, or Joint Failure (Manufacturing Defects) risk, Staff contends the issue noted from Inspection Number AT22-009 has been addressed.

Staff determined that this probable violation §192.1007(d) can be cleared at this time.

2. In regard to the probable violation of §192.1011 which was cited under Inspection Number AT22-009 in that inspection Staff stated:

"COMMENTS: During this inspection the Operator was unable to provide Staff with patrolling records beyond calendar year 2018 that are an essential part of documentation needed when identifying information needed for compliance with Part 192.1007.

PROBABLE VIOLATION: Operator failed to maintain records demonstrating compliance with the requirements of Subpart P of 49 CFR Part 192."

FIRST OPERATOR RESPONSE: In their response letter to Inspection Number AT22-009, dated June 7, 2022, the Operator stated that:

"Claxton has located documentation of patrolling performed in 2019 and 2020. These records are available for Staff's review."

FIRST FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION: On June 12, 2023, Staff reported to the City of Claxton to conduct a follow-up inspection of the Operators previously existing probable violations. (Ref. Inspection Number JH23-008) In that inspection Staff stated:

"During this inspection Staff examined documentation of the 2019- 2022 patrolling records for Bellville, Hagan, Claxton, Pembroke, and Ellabell. Staff identified that in 2022, The City of Claxton did not complete their fourth quarter patrolling nor have they completed any patrolling at the time of this follow up inspection for the year 2023.

Staff determined that this probable violation cannot be cleared at this time."

SECOND OPERATOR RESPONSE: In their response letter to Inspection Number JH23-008, dated April 29, 2024, the Operator stated that:

"The City of Claxton has confirmed that its list of Patrolling locations is complete and new Gas Department personnel now ensure that all Patrolling is being performed as required."

SECOND FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION: From June 17 to June 20, 2024 Staff reported to the City of Claxton to conduct a follow-up inspection of the Operators previously existing probable violations. (Ref. Inspection Number DL24-017) This probable violation, § 192.1011, was not addressed during that follow-up inspection.

THIRD OPERATOR RESPONSE: In their response letter to Inspection Number DL24-017 that was filed with the Commission on March 20, 2025, the Operator stated that:

"The City of Claxton has verified that its list of patrolling locations is complete. and newly assigned Gas Department personnel are ensuring that all patrolling is conducted in accordance with regulatory requirements."

Claxton also requested an informal conference with the Director on this matter

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: On March 27, 2025, Staff reviewed the response the Claxton Gas Department submitted for §192.1007(d). (Ref. Inspection Number JS25-007) In that review Staff noted:

"On March 27, 2025, Staff reviewed the response the Claxton Gas Department submitted for §192.1011 under #JS25-007; and determined that a follow-up will be necessary to verify patrolling records are complete (and done according to §192.721- Distribution systems: Patrolling) since the violation was initially cited during the February 2022 inspection.

Staff determined that this violation could not be cleared at this time. Staff will perform a follow-up inspection of this violation at a later date."

THIRD FOLLOW-UP: On September 8, 2025, Pipeline Safety Staff reported to the Claxton Gas Department to perform a follow-up on the Operator's previously existing probable violations. During

this inspection (Ref. Inspection Number JS25-032) in order to address the §192.1011 probable violation, the Operator provided: their Operations & Maintenance manual Appendix V-4 'Distribution Mains Identified for Patrolling' list and their patrolling records since follow-up inspection #JH23-008 took place in June 2023.

W James Street @ Gilmore	business district
Bryan County Industrial Park	business district
Hwy 280 Evan County Line to Canoochee River crossing	non-business district
Strictland Street to North & South R/R Crossing	business district
Hwy 292 @ Hwy 169 to R/R crossing	business district
Buckl Lane @ West Railroad Street to Railroad crossing	business district
Hwy 80 Byran County Line to Oqeechee River crossing	business district
Hwy 280 Mill Creek Rectifier to Drainage Ditch	non-business district
Harvey Towne Road & Black Bird Lane	non-business district

2023 Claxton patrolling records for (all 9 sections identified for patrolling) for 1/04/2023, 6/26/2023, 8/12/2023 and various dates (11/08/24, 11/13/24, 12/4/23, 12/13/2023).

2024 Claxton patrolling records for (all 9 sections identified for patrolling) for 1/06/2024, 4/11/2024, 8/28/2024 and 12/17/2024.

2025 Claxton patrolling records for (all 9 sections identified for patrolling) 4/15/2025 and 8/07/2025 (as of 9/8/2025)

Based off reviewing records since the June 2023 follow-up inspection (Inspection Number JH23-008) Claxton Gas Department appears to be maintaining their patrolling records.

Staff determined that this probable violation §192.1011 can be cleared at this time.

3. In regard to the probable violation of §192.473(a) which was cited in Inspection Number JH23-009; in that inspection Staff stated that:

> "COMMENTS: During this inspection (Inspection # JH23-009) Staff determined that the Operator did not have test wires at a foreign line crossing (Blue Jay Road) to determine if their pipe was being adversely affected by the foreign line rectifier system they crossed.
>
> PROBABLE VIOLATION: The City of Claxton failed to ensure that they have a way to determine if they are affected by stray current as required under 192.467(c)."

FIRST OPERATOR RESPONSE: In their response letter to Inspection Number JH23-009 dated April 29, 2023 the City of Claxton stated that:

> "The City of Claxton and Southern Natural Pipeline are scheduled to address this issue in August 2024."

FIRST FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION: From June 17 to June 20, 2024 Staff reported to the City of Claxton to conduct a follow-up inspection of the Operators previously existing probable violations. (Ref. Inspection Number DL24-017) In that inspection Staff stated:

"During this inspection (DL24-017) Staff found that the City of Claxton is working on this issue to be completed in August 2024. Test wire is scheduled to be installed August 2024.

Staff determined that this probable violation cannot be cleared at this time."

SECOND OPERATOR RESPONSE: In their response letter to follow-up inspection #DL24-017 that was filed with the Commission on March 20, 2025, the Operator stated that:

"The City of Claxton had scheduled an onsite meeting with Southern Natural to install the bonding cable. However, due to recent flooding in the area, the meeting had to be rescheduled multiple times. The installation is now planned for early June, weather permitting."

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: On March 27, 2025, Staff reviewed the response the Claxton Gas Department submitted for §192.1007(d). (Ref. Inspection Number JS25-007) In that review Staff noted:

"On March 27, 2025, Staff reviewed the response the Claxton Gas Department submitted for §192.473(a) under #JS25-007; and determined that until the corrective action to address the stray current is done, this violation could not be cleared. Staff will need to perform a follow-up inspection of this violation at a later time."

SECOND FOLLOW-UP: On September 8, 2025, Staff reported to the Claxton Gas Department to perform a follow-up on the Operator's previously existing probable violations. During this inspection #JS25-032, the Operator provided documentation showing their cathodic protection contractor, Ideal Gas Measurement installed test stations at the Southern Natural Gas (Kinder Morgan) crossing on April 25, 2025, for the purpose of testing for interference with Southern Natural Gas CP system.

Staff consulted with the inspector who initially wrote the violation and came to the decision that Claxton Gas Department has addressed the probable violation.

Staff determined that this probable violation §192.473(a) can be cleared at this time.

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 Claxton

Informal Conference Requested: Yes ☐ No ☐

Docket Number: 37035

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 Claxton Gas Department	)	**DOCKET NO. 37035**
	)	
	)	
	)	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

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

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

*The Honorable Terry Branch, Mayor
City of Claxton Gas Department
P.O. Box 829
204 West Railroad Street
Claxton, GA 30417
mayor@cityofclaxton.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