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REECE McALISTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MICHELLE THEBERT
FACILITIES PROTECTION UNIT DIRECTOR

Georgia Public Service Commission

(404) 463-6526
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244 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-5701

FAX: (404) 463-6532
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Docket No. 37038

DOCKET# 37038
DOCUMENT# 226398

City of Commerce Gas System
P. O. Box 348 27 Sycamore Street
Commerce, GA 30529
DELIVERED VIA E-MAIL

RE: Inspection Report DJ25-004

Dear Mr. Matthew Hailey -

Based on review of City of Commerce Gas System's response, discussions with Pipeline Safety Staff and/or Operator, and/or any additional information provided for Inspection Reports DJ23-003 and/or JS24 -019, I have cleared the following Enforcement Actions:

Violation	Description	Inspection#
Under Consent Agreement	Operator is under a Consent Agreement.	DJ23-003
192.615	Emergency plans.	JS24-019
192.616	Public education.	JS24-019

Any new or continuing Enforcement Action(s) not listed above will be addressed during the Operator's future inspection. No action is required by City of Commerce Gas System at this time.

Please let me know if there are any questions or concerns regarding this correspondence at (404) 985-4271 or mthebert@psc.ga.gov. Thank you for your continuing contribution toward increased pipeline safety.

Sincerely,

Michelle Thebert
Director, Office of Pipeline/Facilities Safety

COMMISSIONERS

JASON SHAW, Chairman
LAUREN "BUBBA" McDONALD, Vice-Chairman
PETER HUBBARD
DR. ALICIA M. JOHNSON
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REPORT OF NATURAL GAS SAFETY

INSPECTION NO: DJ25-004

OPERATOR: City of Commerce Gas System

INVESTIGATOR: Daphne Jones

INSPECTION DATE: February 10, 2025 REPORT MAILED DATE: April 22, 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 Operators previously existing probable violations.

2. CONTINUING VIOLATIONS

3. CLEARED VIOLATIONS

Cleared on 2/10/2025

Violation	Description	Inspection#	Date
Under Consent Agreement	Operator is under a Consent Agreement.	DJ23-003	1/25/2023
Consent Agreement Pending	Operator is negotiating Consent Agreement with the FPU Director	JS24-018	5/21/2024
192.615	Emergency plans.	JS24-019	5/21/2024
192.616	Public education.	JS24-019	5/21/2024

4. NEW VIOLATIONS

5. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS

SEE ATTACHED INSPECTION REPORT

CITY OF COMMERCE GAS SYSTEM / FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION
INSPECTION NUMBER DJ25-004 / DOCKET NUMBER 37038

On February 10-11, 2025, Staff reported to the City of Commerce Gas System to perform a follow-up inspection of the Operators previously existing probable violations and Consent Agreement items. The exit meeting was held on February 11, 2025.

During this investigation, the Operator was represented by:
Lonnie Robinson – Deputy City Manager
Andrew Hart – Gas Superintendent
Bruce Bagnasco - MGAG/SRCS (Consultant)

Commission Staff were represented by:
Daphne Jones – Lead Inspector
Daniel Clemmons – Pipeline Safety Inspector

At the time of this inspection the City of Commerce Gas System was under two (2) previously existing probable violations. This report also addresses one Consent Agreement items from Inspection Number JB19-011 which is being cleared in this inspection. The City of Commerce still has an outstanding proposed penalty from a violation of §192.805(b) which was cited in inspection number JS23-034, and which was cleared in inspection number JS24-018.

PROBABLE VIOLATION CLEARED

1. In regard to the Probable Violation of 49CFR, §192.615(c) which was cited in Inspection Number JS24-019; in that inspection Staff stated: "The City of Commerce Gas System failed to provide records that show they established and maintained liaison with appropriate Emergency and Public Officials as required."

   OPERATOR RESPONSE: In their response letter to Inspection Number JS24-019, dated October 25, 2024, the City of Commerce stated, "The City of Commerce will ensure that Sheriff, Police and EMA/911 agencies in the counties which they operate receive the required Public Awareness messages by December 31, 2024."

   REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: Commerce will have to demonstrate liaison with Public Officials (within three of the four counties: Madison Co., Clarke Co. & Jackson Co.) since they were missed in 2022. In addition, Commerce will have to demonstrate liaison with the sheriff, police and EMA/911 in all four counties their distribution system is in since it appears 2023 was missed.
   Since Commerce is saying it will be done by end of 2024, this violation will be continuing.

   Staff determined that this violation, §192.615(c) could not be cleared at this time.

   OPERATOR RESPONSE: On January 9, 2025, Commerce Deputy City Manager sent an e-mail that stated: In regard to the May 21, 2024, Public Awareness Program Inspection JS24-019, PSC Staff noted a new "Notice of Probable Violation" and an "Observed issue" in their inspection report but failed to provide any details. Because of the City of Commerce notation that we would educate each county's Sheriff/ Police Department, the Gas Department set up appointments and visited on December 12th and 13th, 2024. Attached you will see the cover letter and the sign in sheet for each entity. Also, you will have our PUBLIC AWARENESS TRAINING slides of what was shared with each entity. Please let me know if anything else is needed to verify that we are alerting all Emergency Responders of Natural Gas 101, Operators in the Area, Identifying Pipelines, and Natural Gas Safety?

   The attached 'PAP Cover Letter and Sign-In Sheet 2024' was:

- a document sign-off by Commerce Gas Crew Leader Sammy Bachman acknowledging that on December 12 & 13, 2024, he visited Sheriffs/Police departments within their territory to discuss and deliver public awareness program material/messaging. The following emergency officials were reached at this time: Athens-Clarke County Police Department, Banks County Sheriff Office, Jackson County Sheriff Office, Madison County Sheriff Office and the Commerce Police Department.

The attached 'PAP Emergency Responder Slides 2024'
- A copy of the public awareness program material /messaging that was provided to the five entities mentioned.

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: On January 14, 2025, Staff began reviewing the response Commerce submitted on 1/09/2025. According to §192.615(c), liaison is to be established and maintained with public safety answering points (9-1-1 emergency call center) when one is available as well as fire, police and other public officials. Commerce has not demonstrated EMA/911 agencies have received the materials/messaging as they stated in their 10/25/2024 response. This would mean Banks County EMA/E-911; Jackson County E-911; Athens-Clarke County Central Communications Division receiving materials/messages. Staff excluded Madison County Public Safety Communications/911 Call Center because it appears to fall under the sheriff's department (according to http://www.madisoncountysheriffga.org/contact.html).

Staff determined that this deficiency could not be cleared at this time.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: On the afternoon of February 4, 2025, Commerce Deputy City Manager sent an e-mail that stated: "I attempted to find previous emails to Public Officials and Emergency Responders, but we have changed email addresses and for security reasons, I no longer can access our old (.org) emails. As we were getting settled into PAP in Commerce 2019, we had success with our Liaison Meeting and then came COVID of 2020. As you look over our attachments, through the years, you will see how we attempted to shift awareness, trying to reach all of our service territory Public Officials and Emergency Responders. I regret that I cannot access emails from the years 2020—2022. We will continue to approach the AWARENESS in our communities, share information about what Natural Gas is, how to recognize markers and stations, and how to recognize the SMELL of Natural Gas."
Commerce provided twelve (eleven – 1 was duplicate) attachments (between two separate e-mails).

- e-mailed invitations, dated between May 22-28, 2019, to multiple recipients for an annual Public Officials and Emergency Responders Liaison meeting on June 20, 2019, at 6:30pm.

- Agenda Notes regarding a Public Officials & Emergency Responders Liaison meeting in Commerce on June 20, 2019 (Not Sure Who Attended?)

- Agenda Notes regarding a corporative venture with the Nicholson Area Fire Rescues, Brian Aleen - Jackson County Training Officer to educate fire department personnel on February 12, 2021.

- Agenda Notes regarding being at the Commerce city council meeting on March 21, 2022. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Natural Gas Worker's Day, PSC rules, etc.

- Agenda Notes regarding being at the Nicholson city council meeting on October 05, 2023. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

- Agenda Note regarding being at a Banks County Board of Commissions meeting in Homer, GA on October 10, 2023. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

- Agenda Notes regarding being at the city of Commerce regular meeting agenda on March 18, 2024. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

- Agenda Notes regarding being at the Commerce city council meeting on 8/05/2024. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

- Agenda Notes regarding visits to Sheriffs and Police departments that in inside the Commerce Gas System territory on December 12 & 13, 2024. They delivered their Public Awareness PowerPoint presentation and updated contact information for: Athens-Clarke County Police, Banks County Sheriff's Office, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Madison County Sheriff's Office and the Commerce Police Department.

- Appendix C-1 'Emergency Responders, Public Officials, and Local New Media Contact List' from their Emergency Manual.

- Appendix C-2 'Government Organization Resources – Reference §192.615(c)(1)'

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: Staff reviewed the attachments that were provided by the Operator on February 4, 2025. The documentation the City of Commerce supplied does not indicate liaisons have been established and maintained with all appropriate public safety answering points (9-1-1 emergency call centers) fire, police, other public officials specifically:
Banks County EMA/E-911; Jackson County E-911; Athens-Clarke County Central Communications Division; Madison County Public Safety Communications/911 Call Center appears to fall under the sheriff's department (according to http://www.madisoncountysheriffga.org/contact.html); and other public officials.

Staff determined this violation, §192.615(c) could not be cleared at this time.

FOLLOWUP INSPECTION #1: During this inspection (DJ25-004), Staff has reviewed the Operators response and the documents provided by the Operator and found that it adequately addresses this violation.

Staff determined that this violation could be cleared at this time.

2. In regard to the Probable Violation of 49CFR, §192.616 which was cited in Inspection Number JS24-019; in that inspection Staff stated: "Based on the deficiencies identified under Questions Number 3, 5, and 10 of the PHMSA Public Awareness Program Effectiveness Inspection form, the City of Commerce has failed to conduct a Public Awareness Program as required by 49CFR §192.616."

OBSERVED DEFICIENCIES

(a) PHMSA PAP inspection form question #3 states - Does the program clearly identify the specific pipeline systems and facilities to be included in the program, along with the unique attributes and characteristics of each?

STAFFS COMMENTS: In Section IV.2 'Unique Attributes' of their public awareness plan Commerce identified their regulator station as locations that would fall under this category. Eight reg. stations were listed in the PAP. Staff questioned if this list contained all of Commerce Gas System's regulator stations. The Operator informed Staff that two of their reg. stations were missing from the list; the Diana Way station (installed in 2018) and the Joe Bolton station (installed in 2023). Since these two locations were not listed, Staff questioned if material/messages giving a brief overview of the reg. stations had been provided to the audience member that is located on or immediately adjacent to these stations. The Operator informed Staff the unique attribute location material/messages were not distributed at these two locations.

OBSERVED DEFICIENCY: The City of Commerce Gas System's public awareness plan failed to address all locations in their distribution system that contain unique attributes as required under Section IV.2 of their plan.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: In a response letter dated October 25, 2024, the Operator stated: The City of Commerce will add the two missing regulator stations in its Public Awareness Plan for unique attributes and ensure that the appropriate message is delivered by November 30, 2024 (PAP inspection form question #3).

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: Commerce must demonstrate material/messaging is being delivered to those adjacent to the Diana Way and Joe Bolton reg. stations.
Since Commerce says this will be done by the end of November 2024, this deficiency will be continuing.

Staff determined that this observed deficiency could not be cleared at this time.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: On January 9, 2025, the Commerce Deputy City Manager sent an e-mail, but it did not address this deficiency.

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: On January 14, 2025, Staff determined that Commerce must demonstrate material/messaging is being delivered to those adjacent to the Diana Way and Joe Bolton regulator stations.

Staff determined that this observed deficiency could not be cleared at this time.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: On the afternoon of February 4, 2025, Commerce Deputy City Manager sent an e-mail, but it did not address the deficiency from PHMSA PAP inspection form question #3 (Does the program clearly identify the specific pipeline systems and facilities to be included in the program, along with the unique attributes and characteristics of each?)

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: The City of Commerce will have to make sure their Unique Attributes list is accurate (contains the Diana Way and Joe Bolton reg. stations) and be able to demonstrate material/messaging is being delivered to those adjacent to the Diana Way and Joe Bolton regulator stations.

Staff determined that this observed deficiency could not be cleared at this time.

FOLLOWUP INSPECTION #1: During this inspection (DJ25-004), Staff has reviewed the Operators Section IV.2 'Unique Attributes' of their public awareness plan and verified that the Diana Way station (installed in 2018) and the Joe Bolton station (installed in 2023) are now listed. Staff find that this adequately addresses this violation.

Staff determined that this violation could be cleared at this time.

(b) PHMSA PAP inspection form question #10 states - Did the delivery of materials and messages meet or exceed the baseline delivery frequencies specified in API RP 1162, Table 2-1 through Table 2.3?

STAFFS COMMENTS: During this inspection, Staff asked for various documentation that would illustrate the delivery of public awareness material/messages to all stakeholder audience members. In 2019, the Operator e-mailed a large number of Emergency Officials and Public Officials to a liaison meeting event Commerce Gas System was sponsoring. Since the baseline frequency for material/messages delivery for Public Officials is every three years, Staff asked to see proof of the next time Commerce Gas System reached out. The Operator was not able to provide documentation showing any sort of delivery in three years' time, which would be 2022.

In addition, the Operator was not able to provide documentation showing delivery of public awareness material/messages to all Emergency Officials (fire, sheriff, police, EMA/911) annually.

OBSERVED DEFICIENCY: Commerce Gas System failed to ensure delivery of public awareness material/messages meet or exceed the baseline frequencies specified in API RP 1162 for Emergency and Public Officials.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: In a response letter dated October 25, 2024, the Operator stated: The City of Commerce will ensure that the required messages will be delivered to its applicable Public Officials by December 31, 2024 (PAP inspection form question #10).

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: Commerce will have to demonstrate material/messages were delivered to Public Officials (Madison Co., Clarke Co. & Jackson Co. – Banks Co. also) since they were missed in 2022. In addition, Commerce will have to demonstrate material/messages were delivered to the sheriff dept, police and EMA/911 in all four counties Commerce distribution system is in since it appears 2023 was missed. Since Commerce is saying it will be done by the end of 2024, this deficiency will be continuing.

Staff determined that this observed deficiency could not be cleared at this time.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: On January 9, 2025, Commerce Deputy City Manager sent an e-mail that stated: In regard to the May 21, 2024, Public Awareness Program Inspection JS24-019, PSC Staff noted a new "Notice of Probable Violation" and an "Observed issue" in their inspection report but failed to provide any details. Because of City of Commerce notation that we would educate each county's Sheriff/ Police Department, the Gas Department set up appointments and visited on December 12th and 13th , 2024. Attached you will see the cover letter and the sign in sheet for each entity. Also, you will have our PUBLIC AWARENESS TRAINING slides of what was shared with each entity. Please let me know if anything else is needed to verify that we are alerting all Emergency Responders of Natural Gas 101, Operators in the Area, Identifying Pipelines, and Natural Gas Safety?

The attached 'PAP Cover Letter and Sign-In Sheet 2024' contained:
- a document sign-off by Commerce Gas Crew Leader Sammy Bachman acknowledging that on December 12 & 13, 2024, he visited Sheriffs/Police departments within their territory to discuss and deliver public awareness program material/messaging. The following emergency

officials were reached at this time: Athens-Clarke County Police Department, Banks County Sheriff Office, Jackson County Sheriff Office, Madison County Sheriff Office and the Commerce Police Department.

The attached 'PAP Emergency Responder Slides 2024' contained:
- A copy of the public awareness program material /messaging that was provided to the five entities.

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: On January 14, 2025, Staff began reviewing the response Commerce submitted on 1/09/2025.

The City of Commerce will have to demonstrate material/messages have been delivered to Public Officials within the Madison County, Clarke County, Jackson County and Banks County since they were missed in 2022. Their 10/25/2024 response letter states this would be done by December 31, 2024.

In addition, there was no documentation showing public awareness material/messages were delivered to emergency management agencies (EMA) within their distribution service area.

Staff determined that this deficiency could not be cleared at this time.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: On the afternoon of February 4, 2025, the City of Commerce Deputy City Manager sent an e-mail stating: "I attempted to find previous emails to Public Officials and Emergency Responders, but we have changed email addresses and for security reasons, I no longer can access our old (.org) emails. As we were getting settled into PAP in Commerce 2019, we had success with our Liaison Meeting, and then came COVID of 2020. As you look over our attachments, through the years, you will see how we attempted to shift in awareness, trying to reach all of our service territory Public Officials and Emergency Responders. I regret that I cannot access emails from the years 2020—2022. We will continue to approach the AWARENESS in our communities, share information about what Natural Gas is, how to recognize markers and stations, and how to recognize the SMELL of Natural Gas."
Commerce provided twelve (eleven – 1 was a duplicate) attachments (between two separate e-mails)

- e-mailed invitations, dated between May 22-28, 2019, to multiple recipients for an annual Public Officials and Emergency Responders Liaison meeting on June 20, 2019, at 6:30pm.

- Agenda Notes regarding a Public Officials & Emergency Responders Liaison meeting in Commerce on June 20, 2019 (Not Sure Who Attended?)

- Agenda Notes regarding a corporative venture with the Nicholson Area Fire Rescues, Brian Aleen
- Jackson County Training Officer to educate fire department personnel on February 12, 2021.

- Agenda Notes regarding being at the Commerce city council meeting on March 21, 2022. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Natural Gas Worker's Day, PSC rules, etc.

- Agenda Notes regarding being at the Nicholson city council meeting on October 05, 2023. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

- Agenda Note regarding being at a Banks County Board of Commissions meeting in Homer, GA on October 10, 2023. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

- Agenda Notes regarding being at the city of Commerce regular meeting agenda on March 18, 2024. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

- Agenda Notes regarding being at the Commerce city council meeting on 8/05/2024. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

- Agenda Notes regarding visits to Sheriffs and Police departments that in inside the Commerce Gas System territory on December 12 & 13, 2024. They delivered their Public Awareness PowerPoint presentation and updated contact information for: Athens-Clarke County Police, Banks County Sheriff's Office, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Madison County Sheriff's Office and the Commerce Police Department.

- Appendix C-1 'Emergency Responders, Public Officials, and Local New Media Contact List' from their Emergency Manual.

- Appendix C-2 'Government Organization Resources – Reference §192.615(c)(1)'

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: Staff reviewed the attachments that were provided by the Operator on February 4, 2025.

The City of Commerce has not supplied documentation which demonstrates delivery of materials & messages meet or exceed the baseline delivery frequencies for Public Officials (every 3-years) and emergency officials; specifically, county (EMA) emergency management agencies (ex. Banks County EMA/E-911, Jackson County EMA, Athens-Clarke County Emergency Management Office and Madison County EMS/EMA).

Staff determined that this observed deficiency could not be cleared at this time.

FOLLOWUP INSPECTION #1: During this inspection (DJ25-004), Staff has reviewed the Operators response and the documents provided by the Operator and found that the City of Commerce has supplied documentation which demonstrates delivery of materials & messages (CY2022, CY2023, CY2024) meet or exceed the baseline delivery frequencies for Public Officials (every 3-years). Operator is a member of GPERI.

Staff determined that this violation could be cleared at this time.

(c) PHMSA PAP inspection form question #5 states - Do records identify the individual stakeholders in the four affected stakeholder audience groups: Affected Public, Emergency Officials, Local Public Officials, and Excavators, as well as affected municipalities, school districts, businesses, and residents to which it sends public awareness materials and messages?

STAFFS COMMENTS: Staff determined that the Commerce Gas System left two unique attribute locations off their listing in section IV.2 of their PAP. The Operator has ten regulator stations in their distribution system, but only eight were on the list of locations with unique attributes. The list was missing the Diana Way station and the Joe Bolton station.

Since these two locations were not listed, Staff questioned if material/messages giving a brief overview of the reg. stations were provided to the Affected Public that may be located on or immediately adjacent to these regulator stations. The Operator informed Staff the unique attribute location material/messages were not distributed to the Affected Public at these two locations.

In addition, the Commerce Gas System was not able to provide documentation demonstrating all Emergency Officials (specifically sheriffs, police & EMA/911) operating within their distribution system have received public awareness material/messages annually.

OBSERVED DEFICIENCY: The City of Commerce Gas System failed to ensure public awareness program material/messages are being provided to various stakeholder groups as required.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: In a response letter dated October 25, 2024, the Operator stated: The City of Commerce will ensure that Sheriff, Police and EMA/911 agencies in the counties which they operate receive the required Public Awareness messages by December 31, 2024 (PAP inspection form question #5).

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: Commerce will have to demonstrate their records identify the individual stakeholders in all four groups that they send PAP materials and messages to. Their plan is to have the required messages out by the end of November 2024 for the 2 reg. station locations and by the end of the year for the remaining sheriffs, police & EMA/911 in Madison, Clarke, Banks and Jackson counties.

Staff determined that this observed deficiency could not be cleared at this time.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: On January 9, 2025, Commerce Deputy City Manager sent an e-mail that stated: In regard to the May 21, 2024, Public Awareness Program Inspection JS24-019, PSC Staff noted a new "Notice of Probable Violation" and an "Observed issue" in their inspection report but failed to provide any details. Because of City of Commerce notation that we would educate each county's Sheriff/ Police Department, the Gas Department set up appointments and visited on December 12th and 13th , 2024. Attached you will see the cover letter and the sign in sheet for each entity. Also, you will have our PUBLIC AWARENESS TRAINING slides of what was shared with each entity. Please let me know if anything else is needed to verify that we are alerting all Emergency Responders of Natural Gas 101, Operators in the Area, Identifying Pipelines, and Natural Gas Safety?

The attached 'PAP Cover Letter and Sign-In Sheet 2024' contained:

- a document sign-off by Commerce Gas Crew Leader Sammy Bachman acknowledging that on December 12 & 13, 2024, he visited Sheriffs/Police departments within their territory to discuss and deliver public awareness program material/messaging. The following emergency officials were reached at this time: Athens-Clarke County Police Department, Banks County Sheriff Office, Jackson County Sheriff Office, Madison County Sheriff Office and the Commerce Police Department.

The attached 'PAP Emergency Responder Slides 2024' contained:

- a copy of the public awareness program material /messaging that was provided to the five entities.

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: On January 14, 2025, Staff began reviewing the response Commerce submitted on 1/09/2025. The documentation Commerce supplied to Staff for review does not address this specific deficiency; records that would identify the individual stakeholders.

Commerce Gas System will have to demonstrate their unique attribute list now contains the Diana Way & the Joe Bolton regulator stations.

Commerce Gas System will also have to demonstrate their emergency officials listing is complete (and includes the 5 entities they met with in December 2024). A complete listing should include fire, police, sheriff, Emergency Management Agencies (EMA) within their service area.

OPERATOR RESPONSE: On the afternoon of February 4, 2025, the City of Commerce Deputy City Manager sent an e-mail stating: "I attempted to find previous emails to Public Officials and Emergency Responders, but we have changed email addresses and for security reasons, I no longer can access our old (.org) emails. As we were getting settled into PAP in Commerce 2019, we had success with our Liaison Meeting, and then came COVID of 2020. As you look over our attachments, through the years, you will see how we attempted to shift in awareness, trying to reach all of our service territory Public Officials and Emergency Responders. I regret that I cannot access emails from the years 2020—2022. We will continue to approach the AWARENESS in our communities, share information about what Natural Gas is, how to recognize markers and stations, and how to recognize the SMELL of Natural Gas."

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- Agenda Note regarding being at a Banks County Board of Commissions meeting in Homer, GA on October 10, 2023. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

- Agenda Notes regarding being at the city of Commerce regular meeting agenda on March 18, 2024. They distributed GA811 material and gave presentations about Public Awareness Safety.

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- Agenda Notes regarding visits to Sheriffs and Police departments that in inside the Commerce Gas System territory on December 12 & 13, 2024. They delivered their Public Awareness PowerPoint presentation and updated contact information for: Athens-Clarke County Police,

Banks County Sheriff's Office, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Madison County Sheriff's Office and the Commerce Police Department.

- Appendix C-1 'Emergency Responders, Public Officials, and Local New Media Contact List' from their Emergency Manual.

- Appendix C-2 'Government Organization Resources – Reference §192.615(c)(1)'

REVIEW OF OPERATOR RESPONSE: Staff reviewed the attachments that were provided by the Operator on February 4, 2025. Staff looked to see if records identify the individual stakeholders to which public awareness material and messages are sent.
Commerce Gas System did not provide an updated unique attribute locations list (section IV.2. of the PAP) containing the Diana Way and Joe Bolton regulator stations.

Staff reviewed Appendix C-1 'Emergency Responders, Public Officials, and Local New Media Contact List' and believe the following maybe missing: Jackson County Emergency Services (E-911), City of Ila Volunteer Fire, and Nicholson Fire Department.

Staff reviewed Appendix C-2 'Government Organization Resources – Reference §192.615(c)(1)' and believe the following maybe missing: Jackson County Sheriff, Jackson County Fire, Madison County Fire, Madison County EMA, and Athens-Clarke County Emergency Management Office.

Staff determined that this observed deficiency could not be cleared at this time.

FOLLOWUP INSPECTION #1: During this inspection (DJ25-004), Staff has reviewed the Operators response and the documents provided by the Operator and found that Commerce Gas System did provide (CY2024) an updated unique attribute locations list (section IV.2. of the PAP) containing the Diana Way and Joe Bolton regulator stations. It adequately addresses this violation.

Staff determined that this violation could be cleared at this time.

CONSENT AGREEMENT ITEM CLEARED

On August 16, 2021, Staff and Respondent accepted and adopted the Consent Agreement executed between the parties to resolve Respondent's alleged probable violations and proposed civil penalties which were cited in Inspection Numbers JB19-011.

On January 7, 2022, the City of Commerce enters into a signed Consent Agreement with the Facilities Protection Unit in resolution of Inspection Report Numbers JB19-011. The Respondent shall abide by all the terms of the Joint Consent Agreement.

FOLLOWUP INSPECTION #1: During this inspection (DJ23-003), dated February 20, 2023, the Operator provided documentation which demonstrated that ten (10) out of eleven (11) of the agreed upon items of the Consent Agreement have been met. CA Item #5 is not fully completed. The Operator's completion of all eleven remedial actions must be satisfied to mitigate the proposed civil penalty under the operator's Consent Agreement.

Staff reviewed each of the items from the Consent Agreement and determined the following:

a) **Consent Item 5)** - In order to minimize reoccurrence of this type of incident, no fewer than four (4) of Commerce's gas department employees shall attend/participate in the following training courses. Leak Patrol, Leak Detection (Inside & Outside), Customer Leak Investigation, Investigating and Pinpointing Underground Leaks, and Properties of Natural Gas. These training courses can be completed at a training facility that is listed in the City of Commerce OQ Program. In addition, four (4) of Commerce's gas department employees shall attend/participate in the following training courses at Leak City in Athens, Alabama: Excavating and Backfilling, Prevention of Accidental Ignition, First Response, Fire Training (Main & Service Fires, Ground Fires, Regulator Fires), Emergency Conditions, and Accidental Release of Gas. The target date for training to be complete is June 30, 2022. In no event shall Commerce's gas supervisor/superintendent be excused from these requirements. In the event that the above classes are not offered, or scheduling prohibits training to be completed by the target date, Commerce shall notify the Pipeline Safety Director as soon as possible. The intent of this provision is to have consistent progress in completing the training outlined above.

STAFFS FINDINGS: During this inspection (DJ23-003), the City of Commerce provided documentation for scheduling conflicts as well as training for two employees who attended Leak City, Athens, Alabama.

- March 10, 2020 – Commerce tries to send two gas employees to Leak City for required training but was postpone. Email sent from Athens Utilities Gas Department to City of Commerce stating scheduling conflicts with APSC. APSC postponing Natural Gas Fire Training from 03/18/2020 to 04/22/2020.
- September 13, 2021 – Email to Director of Facilities Protection Unit from Commerce Gas Utility Director, stating that Commerce has begun sending two of their employees to Leak City, Athens, Alabama for required training. Commerce sent Sammy Bachman and Richard Elrod for training.
- April 4-7, 2022 – Commerce Gas Utility Director stated he notified Director of Facilities Protection Unit in person at the Pipeline Safety Seminar that APSC was again postponing Natural Gas Fire Training for August 2022.
- April 2022 - Email sent from Athens Utilities Gas Department to City of Commerce stating scheduling conflicts again with APSC. APSC postponing Natural Gas Fire Training from August 2022 – September 2022.
- As of this inspection (DJ23-003), Commerce still has two gas employees that need to attend Leak City, Athens, and Alabama for required training. Lonnie Robinson and Jody Saxon will be attending Leak City, Athens, Alabama in September 2023.

Staff determined that this item has not been completely addressed.

FOLLOWUP INSPECTION #2: During this inspection (DJ25-004), Staff has reviewed the Operators response and the documents provided by the Operator and found that it adequately addresses this violation. CA Item #5 is now fully completed. The Operator's completion of all eleven remedial actions is now satisfied to mitigate the proposed civil penalty under the operator's Consent Agreement.

Staff determined that this item has been completely addressed.

Staff determined that this violation could 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

Informal Conference Requested: Yes ☐ No ☐

Operator Name: City of Commerce

Docket Number: 37038

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 Commerce Gas System	)	**DOCKET NO. 37038**
	)	
	)	
	)	

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

*Matthew Hailey, City Manager
City of Commerce Gas System
P.O. Box 348
27 Sycamore Street
Commerce, GA 30529

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

Respectfully Submitted this 5th day of May 2026:

Cathy Nesbitt

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