

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

USW Local 11-6)	
)	
	Complainant,)
v.)	Case No. GC-2006-0060
)	
Laclede Gas Company,)	
	Respondent.)

TESTIMONY OF STEPHEN HENDRICKS

I, Stephen Hendricks, declare and state:

Q. By whom are you currently employed?

A. Laclede Gas Company.

Q. For how long?

A. Twenty-two years.

Q. In what capacity?

A. I worked in Construction & Maintenance for the first two years. I have worked in the Service department ever since. I am a general fitter, which means that I work on residential, commercial, industrial and institutional piping. I am normally assigned to emergency work, although I sometimes work a pre-assigned route.

Q. Do you have any position with USW 11-6?

A. Yes, I have been a union steward for USW 11-6 and its predecessors for 16 years.

Q. Are you familiar with a procedure known as turn off/turn on inspections or TFTO?

A. Yes, I have performed TFTOs for years and years. When I performed route work, approximately 60-80% of a route was usually TFTO inspections.

Q. What is a TFTO?

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Service Commission

Exhibit No. 2
Case No(s). GC-2006-0060
Date 5-22-06 Rptr XF

A. It is an inspection conducted immediately following the transfer of gas service at a residence to ensure the meter and every gas appliance in the residence are properly connected and not leaking, valves are turned properly, flues are in proper working order and there is no blockage, carbon build-up or odor of gas that could foreshadow carbon monoxide poisoning or danger of fire or explosion.

Q. Are TFTOs only performed when a residence changes ownership?

A. No, TFTOs are also, and frequently, performed when a rental property changes tenants. These are called landlord accounts. Until approximately the first quarter of 2005, we performed TFTOs on landlord accounts whenever the service account changed name, even though we did not actually turn the gas off and then back on.

Q. Have you ceased performing them altogether since first quarter 2005?

A. No, Laclede has substantially limited them since that time and I am not aware of the criteria being used to determine when we conduct them.

Q. You said that landlord accounts are frequent. Approximately what percentage of the TFTOs you have performed have been for landlord accounts?

A. I work primarily in the City and County of St. Louis, where both Washington University and St. Louis University are located. There is a lot of student and faculty turnover of rental property in the spring and fall. On average, probably 40-45% of the TFTOs I have performed have been on landlord accounts.

Q. How long does a TFTO generally take to conduct?

A. They vary, but generally about 25-30 minutes.

Q. Why did you conduct TFTOs?

A. Until about one year ago, Laclede mandated them for safety purposes.

Q. How did Laclede convey to its employees that TFTOs were required for safety purposes?

A. We were told that in training. We are also told that through discipline; specifically, Laclede has informed us that it will issue discipline to any employee who fails to follow a safety protocol, including the performance of a TFTO.

Q. In your experience, are they in fact an important safety measure? Why or why not?

A. Yes. There are many gas hazards and potential hazards that are detected during TFTOs, both on the customer side of the meter and on Laclede's side of the system.

Q. Please provide some examples.

A. 1. *Flex Connectors.* I have frequently discovered uncapped fuel runs going to the stove. Flex connectors are the corrugated pipe that is generally attached to the back of a stove unit to permit a resident to pull the stove forward to clean behind it. The flex connector is supposed to have a shut-off valve on the opposite end from the stove unit. When someone leaving a residence decides to take the stove unit, it is not uncommon for them to unhook the flex connector from the stove, rather than from the shut off valve. The person then may stuff an object into the opening and/or cover the opening with tape, rather than locate and turn off the shut-off valve. When this occurs, gas leaks around the object or out from under the tape and into the kitchen, creating an uncapped fuel run. Flipping a light switch in that circumstance could cause the room to spontaneously ignite.

2. *Vent Piping.* Furnaces each have a vent pipe, which is necessary to expel carbon monoxide from the house. Many things can happen to make a vent pipe ineffective, causing carbon monoxide poisoning, such as erosion creating a hole in the pipe, a seam in the pipe opening up due to age or moisture, or a pipe that was not screwed in falling off.

home. The negative pressure furnace will suck that gas into the house causing a fire or explosion.

Q. In performing TFTOs, how often have you found a hazard similar to those described above?

A. In approximately one of every four.

Q. Why would these hazards not be detected through a house sale inspection?

A. Three primary reasons. First, there is no house sale inspection when a rental house or apartment changes tenants. Even in the event of a property sale, however, the inspection is generally performed before the seller has moved out. Between the time of that inspection and closing, the seller moves out, sometimes disconnecting and removing a washer and dryer, a stove or some other gas appliance. That creates situations in which we might see uncapped fuel running without a shut off. Third, if there is an increase in temperature between the time of the inspection and the time of closing, the new resident may be likely to turn on the attic fan, so the service department employee checks the house with that in mind. The negative pressure created by the attic fan may cause the water heater to spill carbon monoxide back into the house, which is only discovered by the TFTO.

Q. Are you familiar with Laclede's current automatic meter reading program?

A. Yes.

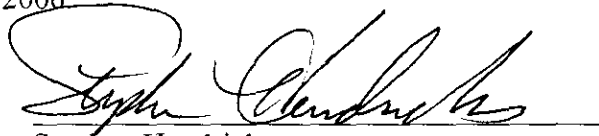
Q. Laclede is taking the position that TFTOs and annual meter reads are not necessary anymore, presumably due to the institution of automatic meter reading. Have you seen any evidence that AMR will make TFTOs and annual meter reads unnecessary?

A. No, quite to the contrary. I have been dispatched to a number of residences to fix a meter that is leaking because of the improper installation of AMR. In one such case, the customer

A. I committed human error. I went to turn the gas on at a residence that had a basement and a fruit cellar. The meter was in the basement, which had no light. The basement was filled with debris from flooding and it was thick with spider webs that further blocked visibility. My flashlight was the only source of light in the basement. As a result, I failed to realize that there was a cellar door behind some belongings the resident had stored in the basement. Also, for some reason that I cannot explain, my combustible gas indicator did not go off when I turned on the gas, which should have occurred since there was a leak.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct and that I have personal knowledge of the facts contained herein and, if called upon to testify, I could and would competently testify thereto.

Executed on the 4th day of May, 2006


Stephen Hendricks