

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

In the Matter of Laclede Gas Company       )  
Concerning a Natural Gas Incident at       ) **Case No. GS-2011-0245**  
3810 Council Grove Avenue, Pine Lawn,    )  
Missouri.   )

**STAFF'S INITIAL REPORT**

**COMES NOW** the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission (Staff) and in response to the Commission's February 9, 2011, *Order Opening File and Directing Filing* by the Staff of its initial report not later than June 6, 2011, files this Initial Report.

The Staff has been actively investigating this incident, which occurred at about noon on January 8, 2011, at 3810 Council Grove Avenue in Pine Lawn, Missouri. The incident was the result of a natural gas explosion that caused structural damage to the residence at this address.

Laclede Gas Company (Laclede) reported the incident to the Staff at 1:42 p.m. on January 8, 2011. Three Staff members arrived at the incident site to find numerous Laclede personnel and emergency response personnel conducting activities to make the area safe. The Staff spent two days on its initial investigation observing Laclede actions and inspecting the site.

**Status of the Investigation**

At this time, the Staff has determined that the incident occurred when natural gas emanating from a steel main fracture accumulated in the basement area of 3810 Council Grove Avenue and was ignited by an unknown source. The occupants of the house were on the first floor and reported minor injuries that did not involve hospitalization.

The Staff has visited the site and talked to Laclede personnel numerous times in the course of its investigation, collecting substantial amounts of information for the Incident Report. In addition, the Staff has sent information requests and has received extensive information and documentation from Laclede concerning, among other things, the type of pipe that was installed, when it was installed, and other information relevant to the investigation. Laclede's response to the last information request was received on May 20, 2011, and responses to some follow-up questions regarding the information requests are still pending. The Staff is in the process of reviewing this information.

In addition to the fracture in the natural gas main, information provided to the Staff indicates several corrosion leaks have occurred in the natural gas main serving the 3800 and 3900 blocks of Council Grove Avenue and there were issues with the cathodic protection of this coated steel main. The Staff is taking additional steps in the investigation to determine if corrosion contributed to the fracture in the natural gas main by contracting with an independent third party to inspect and test the damaged portion of the main. The Staff is reviewing all of this information to determine what type of recommendations should be made and what actions should be taken.

The Staff is in the process of reviewing, compiling, and analyzing all of the information and will soon begin preparing its final report. The Final Report or a Status Report concerning this incident will be filed no later than August 6, 2011.

**WHEREFORE**, the Staff requests that the Commission accept this Initial Report concerning its investigation of the natural gas explosion at 3810 Council Grove Avenue in Pine Lawn, Missouri, with the understanding that the Staff will file its Final Report or a Status Report no later than August 6, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

s/ Kevin A. Thompson

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Public Service Commission.

### **Certificate of Service**

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been mailed, hand-delivered, or transmitted by facsimile or electronic mail to all counsel of record this **6<sup>th</sup> day of June 2011**.

s/ Kevin A. Thompson