

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

In the Matter of Missouri Gas Energy, a	)	
Division of Southern Union Company,	)	
Concerning a Natural Gas Incident at the	)	<b><u>Case No. GS-2011-0248</u></b>
Intersection of 107 <sup>th</sup> Street and Blue	)	
Ridge Boulevard in Kansas City, 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 9, 2011, files this Initial Report.

The Staff has been actively investigating this incident, which occurred at about 1:52 PM on February 2, 2011 at the intersection of 107<sup>th</sup> Street and Blue Ridge Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri. The incident was the result of a release of natural gas from a fractured 16-inch diameter steel natural gas transmission pipeline. The fractured pipeline is owned and operated by Missouri Gas Energy (MGE), a division of Southern Union Company. There was no ignition of the natural gas, no injuries and no known damage to property other than property owned by MGE. Upon responding to the notification, MGE began closing valves to reduce the pressure of natural gas in the pipeline from the operating pressure of approximately 222 psig at the time of the incident to about 35 psig. MGE then excavated approximately 108-inches of soil cover from above the fracture, installed a full circle band clamp then welded a repair sleeve onto the pipe to contain the fractured surface. Since the repair, MGE has been operating at a reduced pressure (approximately 160-170 psig).

MGE reported the incident to the Staff at 3:37 p.m. on February 2, 2011. Three Staff members arrived at the incident site the following day, February 3, 2011 to observe the repair before the area was backfilled.

### **Status of the Investigation**

The Staff has visited the site, and sent an information request to MGE to collect data regarding pipeline material and installation, previous operating history, previous leaks, and previous investigations of pipeline integrity. The response to some follow-up questions from the information request is still pending at this time. The Staff is in the process of reviewing this information. At this time, the cause of the fracture is still undetermined. The Staff is reviewing the cost and logistics of removing the fractured pipe from service for laboratory testing (e.g. keeping customers supplied with gas during the removal, transporting the removed section to the testing laboratory and payment for the removal and testing services).

**WHEREFORE**, the Staff requests that the Commission accept this initial report concerning its investigation of the natural gas release in Kansas City, Missouri, with the understanding that the Staff will file an interim status report no later than August 9, 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