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**STATE OF MISSOURI  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

At a Session of the Public Service  
Commission held at its office  
in Jefferson City on the 11th  
day of February, 1998.

In the Matter of Missouri Gas Energy, )  
a Division of Southern Union Company, )  
Regarding an Incident on the West Side )  
of Lee's Summit Road, Independence, )  
Missouri. )

Case No. GS-98-72

**ORDER CLOSING CASE**

The Commission issued an Order Establishing Docket on August 25, 1997, for the purpose of receiving an incident report from the Staff of the Commission (Staff) and the response of Missouri Gas Energy, a division of Southern Union Company (MGE Company), pertaining to a flash fire apparently resulting from the ignition of natural gas which occurred on July 25 within a Southwestern Bell Telephone Company (SWBT) manhole at the west side of Lee's Summit Road, South of Interstate 70, in Independence, Missouri.

On December 23 the Staff filed a Gas Incident Report in the official case file which indicated that no buildings were damaged as a result of the flash fire; however, two subcontractors for SWBT were injured. One individual received third degree burns over approximately 26 percent of his body, and another individual received flash burns to his right arm, right ear and head. The report stated that both injured persons were treated by a physician. The report stated that a third subcontractor claimed a hearing loss from the incident.

The report concluded that the probable cause of the incident was the ignition of natural gas which leaked from a section of eight-inch

diameter steel feeder line located along the east side of Lee's Summit Road and which migrated to the SWBT manhole. The report indicated that the feeder line was adequately protected against corrosion and that the exact cause and location of the leak was not determined due to the extreme pipe burial depths. The report stated, "The exact source of ignition was not determined, but it is likely that a cigarette lighter within the SWBT Manhole #1 would have been a potential ignition source." (Gas Incident Report, p. 26). According to the report, the Company abandoned the leaking section of the feeder line and voluntarily replaced it on August 9 with 1100 feet of new feeder line.

Staff stated its investigation did not reveal any violations of Missouri Public Service Commission regulations by MGE, and Staff made no recommendations to MGE as a result of its incident investigation. Staff recommended that the Commission keep the case open for at least 30 days to receive comments and that if no comments are filed then to issue an order closing the case.

The Commission issued a notice on December 30 which provided that any response to the Gas Incident Report was due no later than January 28, 1998. No responses to the report were filed.

The Commission has reviewed the Gas Incident Report filed by Staff. The Commission finds that no further action by the Commission is warranted in this docket. Therefore, the Commission finds that this case should be closed.

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:**

1. That this case may be closed after February 25, 1998.
2. That this order shall become effective on February 24, 1998.

**BY THE COMMISSION**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dale Hardy Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Dale Hardy Roberts**  
**Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge**

(S E A L)

Lumpe, Ch., Crumpton, Murray,  
and Drainer, CC., concur.

G. George, Regulatory Law Judge