



October 23, 2009

Steven C. Reed
Missouri Public Service Commission
Governor Office Building
200 Madison Street
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0360

Dear Secretary Reed,

On behalf of the over 850 member systems of the Missouri Rural Water Association (MRWA) we thank you for the opportunity to participate in the round table discussions in regard to the Missouri Public Service Commission's (PSC) proposed changes to Missouri State Statutes in regard to Underground Damage Prevention and the desire of the PSC to become the lead entity in regard to regulation and enforcement of underground damage provisions within the state of Missouri.

Our representative at the round table indicated that the PSC was seeking preliminary comments by November 2, 2009, in regard to ideas information presented at the round table exercise held on October 21, 2009, in your offices. Based on the VERY LIMITED time we have had to review the proposals, we offer the following brief comments.

- We fail to understand the rationale behind the assumption that the present system by which the Missouri Attorney General's office handles enforcement is flawed and inadequate. Our membership does not indicate concern or problems with the present system. Based on those two factors, the Missouri Rural Water Association opposes any effort by the PSC to take a lead role in enforcement activities.
- It appears that the proposed changes to Chapter 319 creates more "government" i.e. in increased reporting requirements, new commissions, new staff, and then ultimately fees and revenue from penalties to sustain those same new personnel and activities. Again, without substantial evidence the present system is "broken" we are hard pressed to support any changes.
- Proposed changes include mandatory installation of trace wire. This seems to preclude other methods of pipe location and seems a bit restrictive. We realize this is a preliminary draft proposal and appreciate that further refinement of ideas is needed.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment and participate in this effort. We are certainly open to future discussion and conversation on the topic but would be hard pressed to support the present proposal.

Sincerely,

John Hoagland
Executive Director
Missouri Rural Water Association