

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of	)	DOCKET NO. PG-031828
	)	
PUGET SOUND ENERGY,	)	ORDER NO. 02
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	
Seeking Authorization to Operate a	)	
Facility with a Maximum Allowable	)	
Operating Pressure Greater Than	)	
Two Hundred Fifty pounds per	)	
square inch gauge Pursuant to	)	
WAC 480-93-030	)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION
.....	)	

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On October 23, 2003, Puget Sound Energy (PSE), filed with the Commission a petition requesting Commission approval to operate above 250 pounds per square inch gauge (psig) in accordance with WAC 480-93-030.
  
- 2 WAC 480-93-183 (2) requires gas companies to petition the Commission for a waiver of WAC 480-93-030 if applicable, before operating a pipeline above 250 psig. Consistent with WAC 480-93-230 the Commission considered the petition at its regular open meeting on December 31, 2003.

**DISCUSSION**

- 3 PSE proposes to uprate the Maximum Allowable Operating Pressure (MAOP) of the 3.9 mile, 6 inch diameter North Chehalis Limited Supply (NCLS) system from the current 100 psig to a new MAOP of 280 psig. The pressure increase is necessary to provide needed capacity to serve the cities of Centralia and Chehalis, and eliminate cold weather station by-passing. Currently, the downstream load on the intermediate pressure (IP) distribution system fed by

the NCLS reduces the high pressure system such that manual by-pass of the NCLS and curtailment of large customers has been required during cold weather. Completion of this uprate will increase system supply pressure, increase capacity of the district regulators feeding downstream IP distribution systems, eliminate the need for manual by-passes, and avoid further customer interruptions.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate public service companies, including every person or corporation transporting natural gas by pipeline, or having for one or more of its principal purposes the construction, maintenance or operation of pipelines for transporting natural gas. *RCW 80.28.210.*
- 5 (2) PSE is a public service company subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under the provisions of RCW 80.28.210 and Chapter 480-93 WAC.
- 6 (3) PSE has prepared and sent a notification letter to property owners detailing PSE's proposal, and where and when comments can be made.
- 7 (4) PSE has provided a copy of its uprate procedure to the Commission's Pipeline Safety Division Staff (Staff) for review. Staff reports that the proposed uprate procedure meets all applicable state and federal pipeline safety codes and requirements.
- 8 (5) PSE is performing preliminary field work to ensure that system regulators, overpressure protection and other components are compatible with the proposed system uprate.

- 9 (6) Pipelines are designed to withstand higher pressure than the MAOP, which limits the operating pressure. Natural gas pipeline safety rules specify that pipelines in a highly populated area be operated at pressures producing a hoop stress of no greater than 40% of specified minimum yield strength of the pipe. The proposed MAOP will create a hoop stress of approximately 14.1% of the pipe's specified minimum yield strength, providing a higher margin of safety.
- 10 (7) This approval is conditioned on:
- (a) The operating pressure of the pipeline not exceeding 280 psig without Commission approval;
  - (b) PSE completing all preliminary field work prior to beginning the uprate procedure;
  - (c) PSE will conduct a leak survey within 30 day's of completing the uprate procedure; and
  - (d) PSE will conduct a leak survey at intervals not exceeding 15 months, but at least once each calendar year.
- 11 (8) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission has jurisdiction over the subject matter of, and all parties to these proceedings.
- 12 (9) PSE is a public service company as defined in RCW 80.04.010.
- 13 (10) After examination of the petition and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission finds it is consistent with the public interest to grant PSE's request to operate above 250 psig, subject to condition(s).

**ORDER**

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 14 (1) After the effective date of this Order, the petition of Puget Sound Energy for authorization to operate above 250 psig is granted, in accordance with WAC 480-93-030.
- 15 (2) As a condition of the grant of the waiver, Puget Sound Energy must implement the additional safety measures listed in Paragraph 10 (7).
- 16 (3) The Commission retains jurisdiction over the subject matter and Puget Sound Energy to effectuate the provisions of this Order.

The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 31st day of December, 2003.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary