

Agenda Date: February 12, 2015
Item Number: A2

Docket: PG-150120
Company Name: Cascade Natural Gas Corporation

Staff: Joe Subsits, Chief Engineer, Pipeline Safety
Dennis Ritter, Pipeline Safety Engineer

Recommendation

Issue an order to enter into a Stipulated Agreement (Agreement) between Cascade Natural Gas Corporation (Cascade or company) and Staff of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission Staff) (collectively, the Parties) for the purpose of resolving issues resulting from natural gas inspections conducted on the company's high pressure pipelines located in the following areas: Longview District, Bellingham District and Kennewick District.

Discussion

Cascade owns and operates a natural gas distribution system in Washington State. Commission Staff conducted a series of Standard Natural Gas Pipeline Inspections of Cascade's pipeline facilities in the Longview District, Bellingham District and Kennewick District. The inspections took place between the months of March through October 2013.

During three independent inspections conducted on March 28, 2013, May 16, 2013, and October 18, 2013, staff requested from Cascade additional documentation on four randomly selected high pressure pipelines. Staff requested this documentation in order to confirm the selected pipelines' maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP). In all four cases, the documentation provided Staff was missing some form of essential data necessary for Staff to judge whether the MAOP of the pipelines could be validated.

Given the above information, Staff then requested from Cascade a list of all high pressure pipelines in its Washington service territory where some form of essential data necessary to confirm the pipeline's MAOP was missing. Cascade provided such a list on September 27, 2013. After review, Staff believed that further information would be necessary to clarify the material provided.

As such, Staff and Cascade have entered into an Agreement contained as Attachment 1 in which the Company has agreed to a systematic process designed to provide Staff certain detailed information regarding Cascade's high pressure pipeline system. Cascade will submit to Staff a written plan that Cascade intends to implement for the purpose of determining the MAOP of all its high pressure pipelines in Washington in which there is insufficient documentation to confirm the current MAOP. This plan shall be submitted to the Commission within six months from the approval of this Agreement. Additionally, Cascade will adhere to Items 2-8 of the Agreement in both preparing the plan and operating its high pressure gas facilities.

Conclusion

After reviewing the information provided by Cascade in response to several 2013 Natural Gas Standard Inspections on their facilities, Staff recommends entering into a Stipulated Agreement between Cascade Natural Gas Corporation (Company) and Staff of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission for the purpose of resolving issues resulting from natural gas inspections conducted on the Company's high pressure pipelines located in the following areas: Longview District, Bellingham District and Kennewick District.

Attachment - 1