

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Petition of)	
)	DOCKET UG-010405
AVISTA UTILITIES)	
Washington Water Power Division)	
)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION
For a Waiver of WAC 480-93-010 ¹ to)	
install two above ground polyethylene)	
gas mains in steel casings above the)	
Little Spokane River in Spokane)	
Washington.)	
.....)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On February 26, 2001, Avista Utilities, a Washington corporation, filed a petition for a waiver of 49 CFR 192.321(a). Title 49, Part 192 of the Code of Federal Regulations is incorporated into the Washington Administrative Code as WAC 480-93-010. The waiver would allow Avista to install two 6-inch polyethylene (PE) natural gas pipelines inside 10-inch steel casings across the Spokane River and Little Spokane River in Spokane, Washington. Avista intends to install the pipe during the summer of 2001.
- 2 This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled open meeting on May 30, 2001. The Commissioners, having been fully advised in the matter, and having determined that granting the petition is consistent with public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this order.

DISCUSSION

- 3 WAC 480-93-010 and Title 49, Part 192, Section 321(a) of the Code of Federal Regulations prohibits the installation of above-ground PE gas piping. The Commission has previously granted Avista Utilities waivers to install above ground PE gas piping for bridge crossings. The U.S. Department of Transportation, Research and Special Programs Administration, Office of Pipeline Safety is currently in a rulemaking process to develop rules that will allow this type of installation in the future.
- 4 Avista’s request is accompanied by a description of the design of the pipe and installation that meets all applicable stress, thermal and safety limits for the installation of PE pipe. In addition to meeting the applicable stress, thermal, and safety limits, Avista proposes additional safety measures which are listed below. The Commission finds that Avista’s proposal for waiver of 49 CFR 192.321(a), conditioned upon implementing the additional safety measures Avista has proposed, is consistent with the public interest and Avista’s request should be granted.

¹ Title 490 CFR 192.321(a) is incorporated in WAC 480-93-010.

FINDINGS OF FACT

- 5 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington, vested by statute with the authority to regulate rates, rules, regulations, practices, and accounts of public service companies including gas companies.
- 6 (2) Avista Utilities is a Washington corporation and is a public service company as defined in RCW 80.04.010.
- 7 (3) Avista's design and installation of the pipe meets all applicable stress, thermal, and safety limits for the installation of PE pipe.
- 8 (4) Avista proposes the following additional safety measures:
- The Maximum Allowable Operating Pressure of this pipeline will be 60 psig.
 - All above-ground pipe will be encased in a 10-inch steel casing which will terminate below ground level.
 - The 10-inch steel casing will be installed inside the box girder of the bridge away from direct sunlight.
 - A thermal well will be installed on the casing to allow for the monitoring of temperature fluctuations.
 - Avista will conduct temperature readings during the highest and lowest temperatures of the year and after one year will review the information to ensure that the design limitation of the PE pipe is not exceeded. This review must be documented and kept for the life of the pipeline.
 - A boot-type end seal will be used at both ends of the casing.
 - Thinsulators will be placed no more than 5' apart.
 - Continuous coil pipe will be used to eliminate any fusion joints inside the casing.
 - Quarterly leak surveys will be conducted with an approved combustible gas indicator or hydrogen flame ionization unit for two years following completion of the installation.
 - After two years of operation, leak surveys will be conducted during regularly scheduled patrols.

- 9 (5) Commission is authorized to modify or waive a rule in accordance with WAC 480-93-230 when an undue hardship or an unsafe condition may result from the application of any rule in this chapter, application may be made to the Commission to deviate from the rule.
- 10 (6) Title 49, Part 192 of the Code of Federal Regulations is incorporated into the Washington Administrative Code as WAC 480-93-010.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

- 11 The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission has jurisdiction over the subject matter of, and all parties to, these proceedings.
- 12 Avista Utilities is a public service company as defined in RCW 80.04.010.
- 13 Avista filed a petition to request a waiver of 49 CFR 192.321(a) to install two 6-inch polyethylene (PE) natural gas pipelines inside 10-inch steel casings across the Spokane River and Little Spokane River in Spokane, Washington. Because the federal regulation is incorporated in WAC 480-93-010, this is a waiver of the state regulation.
- 14 Avista's proposal for waiver of 49 CFR 192.321(a) is consistent with the public interest.
- 15 The Commission should grant the waiver of 49 CFR 192.321(a) pursuant to WAC 480-93-230.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 16 (1) The request by Avista Utilities for a waiver of Title 49, Part 192.321(a) be granted to allow the installation of two above ground, encased, 6-inch PE bridge crossings in Spokane, Washington.
- 17 (2) As a condition of the grant of the waiver, Avista must implement the additional safety measures proposed in Finding 5 .

DATED at Olympia, Washington and effective this 30th day of May, 2001.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary