

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

In the Matter of the Petition of	)	DOCKET NO. PG-051569
	)	
Avista Corporation,	)	ORDER NO. 01
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	
Seeking Authorization to Operate a	)	
Facility with a Maximum Allowable	)	
Operating Pressure Greater Than	)	
Two Hundred Fifty psig Pursuant to	)	
WAC 480-93-020.	)	ORDER GRANTING REQUEST
.....	)	

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On September 26, 2005, Avista Corporation (Avista), filed with the Commission a petition requesting Commission approval to operate above 250 psig (pounds per square inch gauge) in accordance with WAC 480-93-020.
  
- 2 WAC 480-93-020 requires gas companies to petition the Commission for a waiver before operating a pipeline above 250 psig.
  
- 3 Avista proposes to raise the operating pressure of the South Hill and Mica Feeders. The South Hill Feeder consists of 11 miles of 6.625-inch gas main. The Mica Feeder consists of 6 miles of 6.625-inch gas main. The pressure increase will help meet growing gas demand in South Spokane.

**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) Avista, is a public service company subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission under the provisions of RCW 80.04.010, RCW 80.28.210 and Chapter 480-93 WAC.
- 6 (3) Avista has prepared and sent a notification to property owners along the affected pipeline routes, detailing Avista's proposal, and where and when comments can be made.
- 7 (4) Avista has provided a copy of uprate and hydrotest records to the Commission's Pipeline Safety Division Staff (Staff) for review. Staff has determined that the records Avista supplied appear to be in compliance with applicable state and federal pipeline safety codes and requirements.
- 8 (5) Avista has performed preliminary work to ensure that regulators, overpressure protection and other components are compatible with the proposed pressure increase.
- 9 (6) Pipelines are designed to withstand higher pressure than the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP), which limits the normal operating pressure. Natural gas pipeline safety rules specify that pipelines located in a highly populated area may be operated at pressures producing a hoop stress no greater than 40% of the specified minimum yield strength of the pipe. The MAOP proposed by Avista will create a hoop stress of approximately 18% of the pipe's specified minimum yield strength, providing a higher margin of safety. Accordingly, the relief sought by Avista in its petition should be granted.

- 10 (7) This grant is conditioned upon:
- (i) The operating pressure of the South Hill Feeder not exceeding 500 psig and the Mica Feeder not exceeding 350 psig, without further Commission approval;
  - (ii) Avista completing all preliminary field work prior to beginning the pressure increase;
  - (iii) Avista will complete a leak survey within 24 hours of the time the pressure is increased. Avista shall immediately repair any leaks detected. If snow conditions prevent meaningful leak test results, testing will be conducted as soon as practical. Avista shall document any delays, and such documentation shall be available for inspection by the Commission.
- 11 (8) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission has jurisdiction over the subject matter of, and all parties to these proceedings.
- 12 (9) 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 Avista's request to operate above 250 psig, subject to the conditions stated in this order.

## ORDER

### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 13 (1) The petition of Avista for authorization to operate the South Hill and Mica Feeders above 250 psig is hereby granted, in accordance with WAC 480-93-030.

- 14 (2) As a condition of the grant of the waiver, Avista must implement the additional safety measures listed in paragraph 10.
- 15 (3) The Commission retains jurisdiction over this matter and Avista Corporation 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 14<sup>th</sup> day of December 14, 2005.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary