

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Application of)	
)	DOCKET PG-020978
PUGET SOUND ENERGY)	
)	ORDER GRANTING REQUESTED
For Authorization to Operate the)	AUTHORIZATION
Proposed Pipeline Between 251 psig and)	
499 psig Within 100 feet of a Proscribed)	
Area WAC 480-93-030.)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On July 18, 2002, Puget Sound Energy (PSE) filed a petition seeking authorization to operate 5,600 feet of 16-inch diameter natural gas pipeline at pressures exceeding 251 pounds per square inch gauge (psig) and less than 500 psig, pursuant to WAC 480-93-030, Proscribed Areas. The proposed pipeline is located at Union Hill Road in Redmond, Washington.
- 2 The request was brought before the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) at its regularly scheduled open public meeting on August 28, 2002. The Commissioners, having determined the following to be consistent with public interest have directed the Secretary to enter the following order and related provisions.

DISCUSSION

- 3 PSE currently operates 20,000 feet of 8-inch natural gas main between the Redmond Gate Station at 227 NE Avenue and Union Hill Road to the Redmond Limit Station (#2387) located at Avondale Way and Union Hill Road. Additional capacity is needed to serve the cities of Bellevue, Kirkland and Redmond.
- 4 PSE's petition before the Commission is for authority to build 5,600 feet of 16-inch main to coincide with roadwork to be done in the area. The proposed route will run five to fifteen feet adjacent to the existing 8-inch main at Union Hill Road.
- 5 The Commission has adopted the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 49, Part 192 and has the authority to enforce Chapter 480-93 of the Washington Administrative Code as minimum standards for natural gas pipeline construction. The most restrictive 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 percent of the specified minimum yield strength of the pipe. PSE will construct the proposed pipeline to provide a higher margin of safety, a hoop stress of approximately 11.5 percent of the specified minimum

yield strength of the pipe. This section of pipe is located in a class three area, which would require a hoop stress of no more than 50 percent of the specified minimum yield strength of the pipe.

- 6 In addition, PSE has agreed to radiograph 100 percent (90 percent if no less than 100 percent is impractical) of all girth welds associated with this project. Other safety measures that exceed regulatory requirements include operating at low pipe stress level, one-mile valve spacing, 100 percent coating inspection, additional cover on the pipe, additional leak surveys and remote 24-hour pressure monitoring by PSE's control room personnel.
- 7 PSE has agreed to design and construct the new 16-inch pipeline in accordance with the requirement of Title 49, Part 192 and Chapter 480-93 of the Washington Administrative Code. The Commission believes that PSE's commitment to providing additional design strength, additional inspections, and monitoring offset any concerns of pipeline safety caused by construction in a populated area. The installation of the proposed pipeline should not have a significant impact on public safety.

FINDING OF FACT

- 8 The Commission has authority to enforce safety regulations concerning the construction, maintenance and operation of pipelines transporting natural gas in the state of Washington (RCW 80.28.210). The Commission has adopted the Code of Federal Regulations Title 49, Part 192 and Chapter 480-93 of the Washington Administrative Code as the minimum standard for natural gas pipeline construction.
- 9 PSE is a company having one of its principle purposes be the construction, maintenance, and operation of a pipeline used for transporting natural gas in this state.
- 10 PSE proposes to construct a 5,600 feet segment of 16-inch diameter natural gas pipeline, passing in part through populated areas of the City of Redmond, Washington.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

- 11 The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter and all parties to this proceeding.
- 12 The Commission retains jurisdiction over this matter to effectuate the provisions of this Order and is authorized to modify or waive a rule in accordance with WAC 480-93-030.
- 13 PSE has agreed to exceed minimum regulatory requirements by increasing the design strength of the pipe, providing additional inspections, and installing remote monitoring.
- 14 It is consistent with the public interest that the Commission grant PSE's request for authorization to operate the proposed pipeline at pressures not exceeding 300 psig, conditioned upon PSE's meeting the commitments it has made regarding structural strength of the pipeline and the conduct of inspections and monitoring.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 15 Effective on the date of this Order and conditioned upon the commitments imposed in Appendix A, attached hereto, the Commission authorizes Puget Sound Energy to operate the proposed 5,600 feet of 16-inch diameter pipeline between the Redmond Gate Station (#1342) and the Redmond Limit Station (#2387) at pressures not exceeding 300 pounds per square inch gauge within 100 feet of buildings and areas intended for human occupancy within a proscribed area in accordance with WAC 480-93-030.
- 16 Puget Sound Energy must comply, as specified, with the safeguards contained in Appendix A.

Dated at Olympia, Washington and effective this day the 28th of August 2002.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary