



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue, 9th Floor
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350
www.nj.gov/bpu/

RELIABILITY & SECURITY

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF PUBLIC)
SERVICE ELECTRIC AND GAS COMPANY FOR) ORDER
AUTHORIZATION TO INCREASE THE OPERATING)
PRESSURE ON THE 8 INCH PIPELINE SUPPLYING)
NATURAL GAS TO THE RUTGERS UNIVERSITY)
BUSCH CAMPUS COGENERATION FACILITY)
FROM 245 PSIG TO 350 PSIG) DOCKET NO. GO19080883

Party of Record:

Danielle Lopez, Esq., Public Service Electric and Gas Company

BY THE BOARD:

On August 30, 2019 Public Service Electric and Gas Company ("PSE&G" or "Petitioner") filed a Petition with the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities ("Board" or "BPU") requesting authorization to increase the operating pressure on an existing 8-inch pipeline supplying natural gas service to the Rutgers University ("Rutgers") Cogeneration energy facility ("energy facility") located on Busch Campus in Piscataway New Jersey. PSE&G's petition was filed pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:7-1.4, which requires the owner or operator of a pipeline to seek Board approval prior to increasing the operating pressure in excess of 250 pounds per square inch gauge ("psig") on a pipeline within 100 feet of any building intended for human occupancy. In its Petition, PSE&G is requesting approval to increase the operating pressure on the 8-inch pipeline from 245 psig to 350 psig.

BACKGROUND

PSE&G constructed the 8-inch pipeline in 1995 at the request of Rutgers for the purpose of supplying natural gas service to the Rutgers Busch Campus energy facility. The pipeline serves no other customers and extends 3.2 miles from PSE&G's Meter and Regulating ("M&R") station on Stelton Road in South Plainfield to the Busch Campus energy facility on Davidson Road in Piscataway. According to PSE&G, the pipeline was installed at a minimum depth of five (5) feet and traverses both residential and commercial streets, passing a total of sixty-nine (69) structures that are within one hundred (100) feet of the pipeline. Of the sixty-nine (69) structures, sixty-one (61) are residential properties intended for human occupancy.

PSE&G's Petition for approval to increase the operating pressure to 350 psig represents the second pressure increase since the pipeline was originally constructed in 1995. At the time it was placed into service, the pipeline operated at a pressure rating of 120 psig. In 1997, at the request of Rutgers, the pressure was increased from 120 psig to 245 psig.¹ Rutgers requested the pressure increase to eliminate the need for a compressor station located on-site at the energy facility. PSE&G is now proposing to increase the pressure on the pipeline to 350 psig which requires Board approval pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:7-1.4. According to PSE&G's petition, the new pressure increase is needed to supply the required natural gas flowrate requested by Rutgers as part of an upgrade to the Busch Campus energy facility. By letter dated January 9, 2019 Rutgers advised PSE&G of a planned upgrade to the energy facility which includes the installation of three new Combustion Turbine Generators ("CTGs") requiring a higher flowrate delivered to the customer connection.

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The regulatory requirements that govern the construction, operation and maintenance of transmission and distribution pipelines for the transportation of natural gas by intrastate natural gas pipeline operators are set forth in N.J.A.C. 14:7. Pipeline operators are also responsible for complying with all applicable requirements of local agencies having jurisdiction, in addition to the requirements set forth in the New Jersey Administrative Code. A gas pipeline operator is also required to ensure that each pipeline is constructed, operated and maintained in compliance with Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R) Part 192, and any other standard as the Board may prescribe.

Board Staff reviewed the petition and its supporting documents including the maintenance records, pressure test results, and history of the pipeline. The Board's Pipeline Safety Staff also performed a visual inspection of the 3.2 mile pipeline route. A review of the documents indicates that the pipeline was designed for a Maximum Allowable Operating Pressure ("MAOP") of 685 psig and hydrostatically pressure tested at over 1,000 psig before being placed into service. The documents also provide that on two separate occasions, sections of the pipeline were relocated as a result of road construction projects along the pipeline route. The first relocation project which required moving 3,200 feet of pipe took place in 2003 along Metlars Lane and Davidson road in Piscataway. The second relocation project took place in 2013 which required moving 730 feet of pipe on Metlars Lane. Before being placed back into service, each section of pipe was also pressure tested to over 1,000 psig and leak tested.

Under the current proposal, Petitioner seeks Board approval to increase operating pressure on the 8-inch pipeline to 350 psig which is still significantly below its MAOP of 685 psig. Prior to the increase, PSE&G will perform a hydrostatic pressure test pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:7-1.14, as well as leak surveys of the pipeline after each incremental step increase of the hydrostatic test. Although not required by regulation, PSE&G will also perform an Inline Inspection ("ILI")² of the pipeline before increasing pressure to 350 psig. PSE&G also states that although the pipeline is not classified as a "transmission line" and operates at less than half the stress level for a transmission pipeline, it is overseen by the PSE&G transmission group and is operated and maintained in accordance with the transmission safety standards in C.F.R. Part 192 and N.J.A.C. 14:7.

¹ Because the pressure increase to 245 psig was below the 250 psig threshold in N.J.A.C. 14:7-1.4, BPU approval was not required during to the 1997 pressure increase.

² Inline inspection (ILI) tools travel through the pipe and measure and record irregularities that may represent corrosion, cracks, laminations, deformations (dents, gouges, etc.), or other defects in the pipeline.

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENTS

As part of the petition review, on November 4, 2019 PSE&G held a public hearing at the Rutgers Busch Campus Student Center in Piscataway to inform the public about the proposed pressure increase and allow the public and interested parties to comment on the PSE&G proposal. Notice of the public hearing was published in a newspaper having broad circulation in the PSE&G service territory. All properties within 100 feet of the pipeline were also notified of the place and time of the public hearing via certified mail. The public hearing took place between 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. and was attended by PSE&G officials, Board Staff and members of the public.

At the public hearing, Mr. Sergey Wortman-Vayn presented testimony on behalf of PSE&G. Mr. Wortman-Vayn introduced several exhibits detailing the 3.2 mile pipeline route. Mr. Wortman-Vayn also described the testing procedures used when increasing pipeline pressure. A representative from the BPU's the Division of Reliability and Security, also appeared and commented on behalf of the Staff of the Board. Several members of the public also attended the public hearing and two individuals who reside near the pipeline route asked questions about the pipeline. The questions were focused on the pipeline route and its proximity to residential homes and the safety procedures that PSE&G would use during the pressure increase. Mr. Wortman-Vayn provided responses to all the questions to the satisfaction of the two individuals. There were no comments in opposition to the proposed pressure increase presented during the hearing.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

After consideration of all pertinent materials submitted in this matter, and review by Board Staff, the Board **HEREBY FINDS** that Petitioner's request to increase pressure on the 8-inch pipeline supplying natural gas service to the Rutgers energy facility from 245 psig to 350 psig is reasonable and in compliance with all relevant Federal and State requirements.

Therefore, pursuant to the provisions of N.J.A.C. 14:7-1.4, the Board **HEREBY APPROVES** Petitioner's request to increase pressure on the 8-inch pipeline supplying natural gas service to the Rutgers energy facility from 245 psig to 350 psig subject to the following:

1. PSE&G shall perform a pressure test pursuant to the testing requirements in N.J.A.C. 14:7-1.14(a) through N.J.A.C. 14:7-1.14(e).
2. Within one month after the completion date of the pressure test PSE&G shall submit a report to the Board pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:7-1.14(f).
3. PSE&G shall perform a reassessment of the pipeline using ILI devices at fifteen (15) year intervals from the date of the initial ILI assessment and submit a report to the Board within one week from the date the test results are available following the completion of the ILI reassessment.

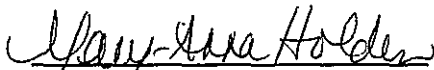
The effective date of this Order is February 1, 2020.

DATED: 1/22/20

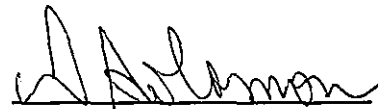
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ATTEST: 

AIDA CAMACHO-WELCH
SECRETARY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the within
document is a true copy of the original
in the files of the Board of Public Utilities.

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