

In the Matter of the Amendment of Ohio)
Administrative Code Chapter 4901:1-16) Case No. 16-1712-GA-ORD
regarding gas pipeline safety.)
)

OGA members engage daily in public education, excavator communication, system inspections and interaction with State of Ohio regulators all for the purposes of keeping Ohio's thousands of miles of natural gas pipelines as safe as possible. It is with this intent that the OGA now respectfully submits these comments for consideration to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio ("Commission" or "PUCO"). The OGA urges the Commission to adopt the

recommendations below as it seeks to effectuate the one-call emergency notification system and more expeditious reporting under that system.

II. Comments

The revisions adopted by the Commission on an emergency basis would reduce the time period for reporting incidents and service failures from two hours down to 30 minutes. *See* Ohio Adm. Code 4901:1-16-05(A)(1) & (2).

A. The 30 minute standard may have unintended over reporting and stretch resources:

The OGA is concerned that there may be many instances in which it is unlikely or even impossible to identify a reportable incident in 30 minutes. This may be particularly true in rural areas in which it may take longer to drive to a site or in which there may be unreliable or non-existent cellular phone service. Most incidents in which natural gas is released are not reportable instances under today's standards. Applying the 30 minute standard could result in the reporting of every incident, whether they ultimately end up being deemed reportable. As such, dramatic over reporting could occur. While the OGA certainly agrees with the principle behind the proposed 30 minute standard, there is concern that being too aggressive could inadvertently create situations that cause operators and state agencies responsible for responding to reported incidents valuable time and resources.

B. The Commission should consider clarification of the point of "discovery":

The OGA urges the Commission to consider language that clarifies certain undefined terms in the proposed rule. It would be of great benefit to clarify when the point of "discovery" occurs. This would make it clear when the 30 minute clock starts and potentially help reduce

over-reporting and the corresponding unnecessary use of time and resources. One possible solution would be to adopt the term “confirmed discovery” as contained in Section 9 of the Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011.

C. There will likely be situations where notice of an incident in 30 minutes is impracticable;

The OGA urges the Commission to retain the provision of the emergency rule that acknowledges possible exceptions to the 30 minute standard when “notification...is impracticable under the circumstances.” This provision accurately predicts that there simply will be circumstances in which the 30 minute standard cannot be achieved even with a tighter clarification of the term “discovery” as suggested in the previous comment.

III. Conclusion

The Ohio Gas Association appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed emergency rule as well as for the opportunity to participate in the PUCO workshop held on August 25, 2016. Respectfully, the OGA asks that the Commission consider these comments and adopt the recommendations contained therein.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ Christopher J. Allwein
Christopher J. Allwein (0084914)
Kegler Brown Hill & Ritter Co., LPA
65 East State Street, Suite 1800
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Telephone: (614) 462-5400
Facsimile: (614) 464-2634
callwein@keglerbrown.com
Attorney for Ohio Gas Association

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing Comments by the Ohio Gas Association was served upon the following party of record via electronic mail, on September 2, 2016.

William J. Wright
Assistant Attorney General
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

/s/ Christopher J. Allwein
Christopher J. Allwein

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Summary: Comments by the Ohio Gas Association electronically filed by Mr. Christopher J. Allwein on behalf of Ohio Gas Association