

BEFORE THE  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Complaint of Orwell	)	
Natural Gas Company,	)	
	)	
Complainant,	)	
	)	Case No.: 15-475-GA-CSS
Vs.	)	
	)	
	)	
Orwell-Trumbull Pipeline Company, LLC	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF JEFFREY J. HEIDNIK**

**Submitted on behalf of Orwell Natural Gas Company**

**March 15, 2016**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**Q. Please state your name and business address**

**A.** Jeffrey J. Heidnik. Orwell Natural Gas Company ("ONG"). 8470 Station Street, Mentor, Ohio 44060.

**Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

**A.** I am employed by ONG as the General Manager.

**Q. On whose behalf are you testifying in this proceeding?**

**A.** I am testifying on behalf of ONG.

**Q. Please describe your professional experience and qualifications.**

**A.** I was employed by ONG on September 1, 2014 as their General Manager. Prior to that, between February 1, 2011 and August 31, 2014, I worked for Energy West Resources as the Vice President of Operations. I built and managed a liquefied natural gas regasification plant. I also oversaw two small LDC's in Pennsylvania. From December 5, 2009 until January 31, 2011, I was the onsite Superintendent for The Chessler Group. During this time, we performed the historic restoration of the ASM International, American Society of Metals building in Newbury, Ohio. Prior to that I worked for Liberty Self Stor, a self-storage REIT, as their Vice President of Operations from 1998 through June 15, 2009.

**Q. Describe the duties of your current positions?**

**A.** I am responsible for all the day-to-day operations of ONG.

**Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

**A.** The purpose of my testimony is to support the claims ONG asserted against Orwell-Trumbull Pipeline Company, LLC ("OTP") in the complaint filed by ONG in Commission Case No. 15-475-GA-CSS.

**Q. Please summarize your testimony.**

**A.** First, I describe the events that occurred prior to filing the Complaint in Case No. 15-475-GA-CSS and my involvement with customers following the filing of the Complaint. Second, I describe a specific instance wherein the customers were without service. Finally, I summarize ONG's recommendations for the Commission with respect to ONG's various concerns.

**II. DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS**

1   **Q.           Please describe the events prior to the filing of the Complaint in Commission**  
2                   **Case No.: 15-475-GA-CSS.**

3   **A.**           On March 5, 2015 Dale Strickland from Cobra Pipeline Company (“Cobra”)  
4                   stopped in to the Orwell Natural Gas Office at 8470 Station Street, Mentor to inform  
5                   me that they would be disconnecting the Orwell Trumbull Pipeline feed on  
6                   Vrooman Road that runs under Interstate 90 on Friday, March 13, 2015.<sup>1</sup> When I  
7                   asked him about the short notice he claimed that they have known about it for some  
8                   time, but they needed to move forward now because the Ohio Department of  
9                   Transportation was threatening to impose large fines for everyday the line was not  
10                  disconnected and free of gas. When I asked him about alternatives to terminating  
11                  service to the over forty (40) customers out of gas while they did their work, he told  
12                  me that the original plan was to use inflatable bags to allow them to keep the lines  
13                  charged with gas and yet still be able to weld in valves, but Richard M. Osborne,  
14                  President of OTP, did not want to spend the extra money. I went on to ask Dale  
15                  what the plan was for isolating the section of pipe that they needed to work on. He  
16                  said that they were going to close valves along Vrooman Road on each side of the  
17                  Interstate. Mr. Strickland truly did not know what customers this would affect or  
18                  even how many customers this would affect. I pressed him for more details so we  
19                  could put a game plan together, but he was very vague and unsure about everything.  
20                  He told me to have a crew on site to turn customers off in the morning and to plan  
21                  to be ready to turn them back on sometime Friday afternoon (March 13, 2015). The  
22                  entire meeting lasted about ten minutes. At this point myself and my crew went into  
23                  scramble mode, as we were provided such short notice and minimal, if any, details.  
24                  We began looking at maps, identifying valves, compiling customer lists and  
25                  checking on the weather to see what kind of conditions we could expect on March  
26                  13, 2015. OTP provided no help, guidance or information with respect to preparing  
27                  and planning for the outage. Further, OTP was not willing to give any details on  
28                  what valves were going to be closed and how long the outage was going to last, so  
29                  the decision was made to file a complaint with the Commission.

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<sup>1</sup> A true and accurate copy of a map of the Vrooman Road area, attached as **JJH Attachment A.**

1   **Q.           Please describe your involvement with customers and the timeline of events**  
2                   **after the Complaint was filed.**

3   **A.**           On March 13, 2015, letters were hand-delivered to the affected customers and we  
4                   followed up with phone calls to inform the customers of the upcoming interruption  
5                   of service. We also advised the customers we would be revisiting them once service  
6                   was restored to lite appliances and to make sure everything was operating properly.  
7                   On March 16, 2015, the OTP line was disconnected. The customers were out of gas  
8                   starting at around 9:00 a.m. and the last of the customers were re-lit by 8:30 p.m.,  
9                   other than the one customer that was not available until the next morning to be re-  
10                  lit. ONG crew members and OTP members worked well together and the work went  
11                  smooth. The fourteen (14) customers north of Interstate 90 are supplied via a farm  
12                  tap on the OTP line, going forward the gas feeding this farm tap was being supplied  
13                  by a well or wells located on property to the West of Vrooman road. Four of the  
14                  five wells are owned by Great Plains Exploration, LLC which is currently involved  
15                  in Bankruptcy proceedings.

16                On or about September 21, 2015, I contacted Mr. King, the Ohio Department of  
17                Transportation representative to inquire about the completion schedule for the  
18                Vrooman Road bridge project which had precipitated the need for the disconnection  
19                of the OTP line. I was told that the project was essentially done. One more week  
20                was needed for the underside of the bridge to be painted and the project would be  
21                considered complete. I shared this information with my colleagues and Mike  
22                Zappitello sent an email to Jessica Carothers at OTP, to inform her of this and to  
23                ask for an update as to when the line under the Interstate would be reconnected.

24  
25                Since the March 16, 2015 disconnection date, ONG Field Operation Technicians  
26                have been monitoring the well gas pressure that is feeding the fourteen (14)  
27                customers north of Interstate-90 to assure that the wells are providing adequate  
28                volumes of gas to keep these customers supplied.

29  
30   **III.           INCIDENT WHEREIN CUSTOMERS WERE WITHOUT SERVICE**

1   **Q.           Please describe any instances when any of the customers of ONG who receive**  
2                   **gas from the production wells were without service.**

3   **A.           On February 11, 2016, around 3:00 a.m., with outside temperature 15 degrees, the**  
4                   24-hour answering service ONG has in place received a call from a customer  
5                   advising that they were without gas. The answering service contacted the on- call  
6                   employee of ONG who responded to the call. I spoke with my crew members on  
7                   site and it was assumed that the production wells off the north end of Vrooman  
8                   Road were frozen off. We then contacted Elliott Duley, an employee from OTP,  
9                   to inform him of the issue. Mr. Duley, then, called a well tender from Great  
10                  Planes Exploration, LLC to request that a check on the well that was feeding the  
11                  system. Mr. Duley was told that the gate leading to the well had a different lock  
12                  on it and that the well tender was unable to access it. To the best of my  
13                  knowledge, no one had been able to check on this well for about a week. The well  
14                  tender came out and met with ONG's crew and decided to turn on another well  
15                  that was accessible and, by doing so, was able to feed an ONG farm tap. ONG  
16                  then bled the line to assure no air had gotten in the line and began the door to door  
17                  process of re-lighting our customers and making sure their appliances were  
18                  working properly. The last of the customers were re-lite by 8:30 a.m.

19  
20               All fourteen customers were without gas on February 11, 2016. While it was only  
21               for a brief period of time, and the issue was remedied, this is an example that  
22               justifies ONG's and my concerns with respect to reliability of the sole source of gas  
23               from the production wells. Leaving customers without gas is not an option and  
24               ONG had no control over this situation.

25   **IV.           ONG'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMISSION**

26   **Q.           What are your recommendations regarding the Complaint filed in**  
27                   **Commission Case No.: 15-475-GA-CSS?**

28   **A.           First, the Commission should create a final deadline for OTP to reconnect the**  
29                   Vrooman Road line. ONG's reliance on production well gas, wherein four of the  
30                   five wells are currently involved in Bankruptcy proceedings, puts the fourteen (14)  
31                   customers that are fed by this production well gas in limbo, as the status of these

1 wells and their ownership are not stable. Furthermore, ONG only has one source  
2 of gas for these customers, as the line severed prevented any connection with  
3 interstate gas. ONG also requests that OTP provide status reports on a monthly  
4 basis with respect to the Vrooman Road to the Commission and ONG, similar to  
5 the status report as ordered in the Entry filed in this case dated March 15, 2015.  
6 In the alternative, the Commission can order reconnection of this line by OTP, as  
7 of this time the supply of natural gas to this system is very much in doubt.

8 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

9 **A. Yes. However, I reserve the right to supplement or revise my testimony.**





# WELLS AND PIPELINE LOCATIONS VROOMAN ROAD, LEROY TWP.



0 250 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 Feet

1 inch = 200 feet



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Summary: Testimony Testimony of Jeffrey Heidnik on behalf of Orwell Natural Gas Company  
electronically filed by Ms. Gina M Piacentino on behalf of Orwell Natural Gas Company