



# Idaho Public Utilities Commission

PO Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0074

**Brad Little, Governor**

**Paul Kjellander, Commissioner**

**Kristine Raper, Commissioner**

**Eric Anderson, Commissioner**

July 2, 2019

Report # I201905

Pat Darras  
Intermountain Gas Company  
400 N 4<sup>th</sup> St.  
Bismarck, ND 58501

Dear Mr. Darras:

On May 13, 2019, representatives of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission, Pipeline Safety, pursuant to Chapter 601 of Title 49, United States Code, conducted an onsite specialized inspection of your contractors performing new service installations.

As a result of the inspection, there are some probable violations of the pipeline safety regulations Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 192 for calendar year 2019. The probable violations are as follows:

## **PROBABLE VIOLATIONS**

1. **49 CFR §192.605 (a) Procedural manual for operations, maintenance, and emergencies**  
*Each operator shall prepare and follow for each pipeline, a manual of written procedures for conducting operations and maintenance activities and for emergency response...*
2. **IGC Procedure 4308 3.6 step 2.**  
*In service stubs (i.e. stub extensions) require a short purge to remove possible debris, reference procedure 3206 – Pipeline Purging and Cleaning.*
3. **IGC Procedure 3206 2.6.2.1.**  
*New or replacement service lines one inch (1”) or smaller in diameter under 150 feet in length do not require the use of a CGI to verify 100% gas. Purge through service riser until a strong gas odor is smelled and a tone shift is heard.*
4. **IGC Procedure 4100.1 2.8**  
*Remove the squeezers and mark the plastic pipe in the location of the pinch to ensure a re-squeeze will not occur in that location.*

**Finding:**

We observed a Das-co employee performing a tie-in at 2756 W. Midnight in Kuna, ID. When we approached the tie-in location we noticed he had the service stub already squeezed off but had wrapped the stub with multiple wraps of electrical tape in the squeeze location prior to applying the squeezers directly on top of the tape. He then unscrewed the cap-n-go coupling and released the squeezers to see if there was gas in the line. He then re-squeezed the service line in the same spot to shut down the gas flow. When asked why he did that and if it was part of the procedure, he couldn't answer if it was or wasn't in the procedure but stated that's the way he was taught and how everyone does it. No fire extinguisher was present.

Once their supervisor arrived we had brought up our concern about the way the employee had released the squeezers to let gas purge into the bell hole the way he did and he didn't see the concern as they've always done it that way.

**REQUESTED ACTION**

A reply to this letter, as outlined below, is required no later than 45 days from the date of this letter. Please send all documents to our office at P.O. Box 83720-0074, Boise, Idaho 83720-0074. Be advised that all material you submit in response to this enforcement action may be a public record, subject to disclosure under Idaho's Public Records Law. See Idaho Code § 74-101-126.

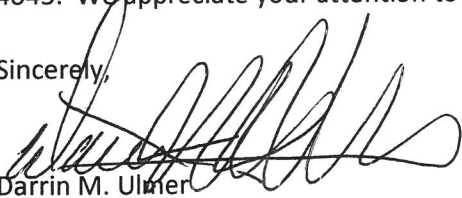
You have a right to appear before the Pipeline Safety Division in an informal conference before August 19, 2019, at the Commission's offices at 472 W. Washington St, Boise. You have the right to present relevant documents to the Commission at that conference. The Commission will make available to you any evidence which indicates that you may have violated the law, and you will have the opportunity to rebut this evidence. If you intend to request an informal conference, please contact the Pipeline Safety Division no later than August 5, 2019.

If you wish to dispute the allegations in this notice, but do not want an informal conference, you may send the Pipeline Safety Division a written reply to this notice. This written reply must be filed with the Commission on or before August 19, 2019, and must be signed by a Company Official. The reply must include a complete statement of all relevant facts including a complete description of the corrective action(s) taken and any and all actions to be taken to prevent future failures in these areas of concern.

If you do not respond to this notice, as specified above, by August 19, 2019, you may be subject to statutory civil penalties and further enforcement, as allowed by law. Idaho Code § 61-712A states that "[a]ny person who violates or fails to comply with, or who procures, aids or abets any violation of title 61, Idaho Code, governing safety of pipeline facilities and the transportation of gas, or of any order, decision, rule or regulation duly issued by the Idaho public utilities commission governing the safety of pipeline facilities and the transportation of gas, shall be subject to a civil penalty of not to exceed two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for each violation for each day that the violation persists. However, the maximum civil penalty shall not exceed two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for any related series of violation."

If you have any questions concerning this notice, please contact me at (208) 334-0321. Also all written responses should be addressed to me at the above address or you may fax your response to (208) 334-4045. We appreciate your attention to this matter and your effort to promote pipeline safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Ulmer', written over a horizontal line.

Darrin M. Ulmer

Pipeline Safety, Program Manager  
Idaho Public Utility Commission