National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of the Chairman

JUL 1 3 2000

DPP-Contra
cc: Jack - see,
Kelley
Stacey

Honorable Kelley S. Coyner
Administrator
Research and Special Programs Administration
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Coyner:

The National Transportation Safety Board is reviewing its records for safety recommendations for which there has been no follow-up correspondence for some time. The following safety recommendations were issued to the Research and Special Programs (RSPA) as a result of various Safety Board investigations, described below.

On September 24, 1987, as a result of its investigation of a March 12, 1986, Lone Star Gas Company natural gas explosion and fire near Fort Worth, Texas, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendation P-87-34, stated below.

P-87-34

> Revise 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 192 to require that gas company system maps and records be maintained accurately to identify the locations, size, and operations pressure of all of their pipelines.

On June 29, 1999, based on information in the RSPA letter of October 30, 1998, Safety Recommendation P-87-34 was classified "Open—Acceptable Response," pending a further response from RSPA.

On April 20, 1990, as a result of its investigation of several natural gas pipeline accidents, between September 16, 1988, and March 29, 1989, with the Kansas Power and Light Company, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendation P-90-21, stated below.

P-90-21

> Assess existing gas industry programs for educating the public on the dangers of gas leaks and on reporting gas leaks to determine the appropriateness of information provided, the effectiveness of educational techniques used, and those techniques used in other public education programs and based on its findings, amend the public education provisions of the Federal regulations.

On June 29, 1999, based on information in the RSPA letter of October 30, 1998, Safety Recommendation P-90-21 was classified "Open—Unacceptable Response," pending a further response from RSPA.

On February 7, 1995, as a result of its investigation of the March 23, 1994, fire and explosion from a Texas Eastern Transmission Corporation (TETCO) pipeline rupture in Edison Township, New Jersey, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendation P-95-4, stated below.

P-95-4

> Expedite the completion of the study on methods to reduce public safety risks in the siting and proximity of pipelines, modify that study to include consideration of building standards, and make the completed study widely available to local and State governments.

On June 18, 1999, based on information provided in the RSPA letter of July 1, 1998, Safety Recommendation P-95-4 was classified "Open—Acceptable Response," pending a further response from RSPA.

On February 6, 1996, as a result of the Safety Board's special investigation report *Evaluation of Accident Data and Federal Oversight of Petroleum Product Pipelines*, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendation P-96-1, stated below.

P-96-1

> Develop within 1 year and implement within 2 years a comprehensive plan for the collection and use of gas and hazardous liquid pipeline accident data that details the type and extent of data to be collected, to provide the Research and Special Programs Administration with the capability to perform methodologically sound accident trend analyses and evaluations of pipeline operator performance using normalized accident data.

On April 15, 1998, based on information provided in the RSPA letter of February 9, 1998, Safety Recommendation P-96-1 was classified "Open—Acceptable Response," pending further response from RSPA.

On January 6, 1998, as a result of the Safety Board's investigation of the San Juan Gas Company, Inc./Enron Corporation propane gas explosion in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on November 21, 1996, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendations P-97-6 through -8, stated below.

P-97-6

Modify your monitoring of State pipeline safety programs to ensure that the States are timely in monitoring the correction of identified safety deficiencies and to ensure that they implement enforcement action as necessary.

P-97-7

Complete a final rule on employee qualification, training, and testing standards within one year.

P-97-8

Require that San Juan Gas Company, Inc., take action necessary to ensure that abandoned pipelines are properly disconnected, purged of propane, and adequately secured to prevent the transmission of flammable vapors and gases, and to ensure that abandoned pipelines are properly identified on maps.

On February 19, 1999, based on information provided in the RSPA letter of July 8, 1998, Safety Recommendation P-97-6 was classified "Open—Acceptable Response," Safety Recommendation P-97-7 was classified "Open—Unacceptable Response," and Safety Recommendation P-97-8 was classified "Open—Acceptable Response."

On April 30, 1998, as a result of the Safety Board's Pipeline Special Investigation Report – *Brittle-like Cracking in Plastic Pipe for Gas Service*, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendations P-98-1 through -5, stated below.

P-98-1

Notify pipeline system operators who have installed polyethylene gas piping extruded by Century Utility Products, Inc., from Union Carbide Corporation DHDA 2077 Tan resin of the piping's poor brittle crack resistance. Require that these operators develop a plan to closely monitor the performance of this piping and to identify and replace, in a timely manner, any of the piping that indicates poor performance based on such evaluation factors as installation, operating, and environmental conditions; piping failure characteristics; and leak history.

P-98-2

Determine the extent of the susceptibility to premature brittle-like cracking of older plastic piping (beyond that piping marketed by Century Utility Products, Inc.) that remains in use for gas service nationwide.

P-98-3

Immediately notify those States and territories with gas pipeline safety programs of the susceptibility to premature brittle-like cracking of much of the plastic piping manufactured from the 1960s through the early 1980s and of the actions that RSPA will require of gas system operators to monitor and replace piping that indicates unacceptable performance.

P-98-4

In cooperation with the manufacturers of products used in the transportation of gases or liquids regulated by the OPS, to develop a mechanism by which the OPS will receive copies of all safety-related notices, bulletins, and other communications regarding any defect, unintended deviation from design specification, or failure to meet expected performance of any piping or piping product that is now in use or that may be expected to be in use for the transport of hazardous material.

P-98-5

Revise the *Guidance Manual for Operators of Small Natural Gas Systems* to include more complete guidance for the proper installation of plastic service pipe connections to steel mains. The guidance should address pipe bending limits and should emphasize that protective sleeves, in order to be effective, must be of the proper length and inner diameter for the particular connection and must be positioned properly.

On November 15, 1999, based on information in the RSPA letter of March 17, 1999, Safety Recommendations P-98-1 through -5 were classified "Open—Acceptable Response," pending further reply from RSPA.

On October 16, 1998, as a result of the Safety Board's investigation of the October 23, 1996, natural gas pipeline rupture and fire in Tiger Pass, Louisiana, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendation P-98-25, stated below.

P-98-25

Require pipeline system operators to precisely locate and place permanent markers at sites where their gas and hazardous liquid pipelines cross navigable waterways.

On April 6, 1999, based on information in the RSPA letter of March 16, 1999, Safety Recommendation P-98-25 was classified "Open—Acceptable Response," pending further response from RSPA.

Copies of the above recommendations and associated correspondence are enclosed. The Safety Board would appreciate learning of any action taken or planned to comply with these recommendations, especially P-97-7 and -8, which may be discussed at a Board meeting.

Sincerely,

Jim Hall
Chairman

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Robert Clarke, Safety and Health Team Leader
Office of Transportation Policy Development