



**U.S. Department
of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous
Materials Safety
Administration**

**1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590**

Mr. Royce A. Ramsay
Vice President of Operations
Northern Natural Gas Company
1111 South 103rd Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68124

Ref: Special Permit Renewal April 15, 2020 to April 15, 2030

Docket No. PHMSA-2008-0141

Dear Mr. Ramsay:

On October 4, 2019, pursuant to 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 190.341, the Northern Natural Gas Company (Northern) applied to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) for the renewal of the special permit, PHMSA-2008-0141, originally issued on April 10, 2010, and renewed on April 7, 2015, with an expiration date of April 15, 2020. The special permit waives compliance with the 49 CFR § 192.625(b)(1) for the non-odorized operation of the special permit segment, where over 50 percent of the pipeline segment is in either a Class 3 or Class 4 location as defined in 49 CFR § 192.5.

The special permit segment is defined as 10,726 feet of the 14-inch diameter Sioux Falls Main Line (SDM90201), located in the city of Harrisburg, Lincoln County, South Dakota. The special permit allows Northern to continue the non-odorized operation of SDM90201, subject to the conditions set forth in the special permit.

On December 13, 2019, PHMSA published a Federal Register notice (84 FR 68294) announcing the special permit renewal request. The special permit renewal request and all other pertinent documents are available for review in Docket No. PHMSA-2008-0141 in the Federal Docket Management System located at www.regulations.gov.

One comment was submitted to the docket on January 14, 2020 concerning circumvention of the regulations.¹ In addressing this comment, PHMSA performs extensive technical analysis on special permit applications. A special permit is granted to waive or modify compliance with a

¹ <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=PHMSA-2008-0141-0010>

regulatory requirement and must be consistent with pipeline safety. In its review, PHMSA determined that granting this special permit would be consistent with public safety and the protection of the environment. PHMSA included conditions in Northern's special permit requiring alternative safeguards to mitigate safety and environmental risks. PHMSA has reviewed all operational and maintenance data submitted by Northern for SDM90201. PHMSA finds that there has been no material change in conditions and that Northern continues to meet the terms of the special permit. Based on the information provided by Northern, PHMSA has determined that renewal of the special permit would not be inconsistent with pipeline safety. Furthermore, PHMSA is modifying the renewal timing interval from 5 years to 10 years, and updating the special permit contacts in Limitation 7. The modifications to Limitation 7 are *italicized* and underlined below.

Limitation 7: PHMSA grants this special permit for a period of no more than *ten (10)* years from the grant date. If Northern elects to seek renewal of this special permit, a renewal request must be submitted at least 180 days prior to expiration of the *ten-year* period, to the PHMSA Associate Administrator, with copies to the Director, Division of Engineering and *Research*, and Director, Office of Pipeline Safety, Western Region. PHMSA may seek additional information from Northern prior to granting a request for special permit renewal.

Accordingly, pursuant to 49 CFR § 190.341, by this Order, and as outlined in the existing special permit, PHMSA grants the renewal of PHMSA-2008-0141, from April 15, 2020, through April 15, 2030, to Northern to continue its operation of SDM90201 in Lincoln County, South Dakota. This special permit renewal Order continues to waive compliance with certain Federal regulations in 49 CFR § 192.615(b)(1).

My staff would be pleased to discuss this special permit or any other regulatory matter with you. Senth White, Director of Engineering and Research Division, may be contacted at 202-366-2415, for technical matters; and Allan Beshore, Director, Office of Pipeline Safety, PHMSA Central Region may be contacted at 816-329-3811, for operational matters specific to this special permit.

Sincerely,

Alan K. Mayberry,
Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety