DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. 85–2W; Notice 1]

Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline; Petition for Waiver

Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corporation (Transco) has petitioned the Materials Transportation Bureau (MTB) for a waiver from compliance with the requirements of 49 CFR 192.553(d) to permit the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) of seven pipeline segments located in Somerset and Morris Counties, New Jersey (totaling eight and seven-tenths (8.7) miles) to be increased to 800 psig from the current 722 psig. These segments, which are in location Class 3, are part of a pipeline designated by Transco as the 36-inch Caldwell Lateral which is approximately 22.83 miles in length (MP 1789.53 to 1812.36). There is a need to increase the operating pressure of this pipeline segment to 800 psig due to anticipated swings in Transco's customers' delivery volume requirements. Transco estimates that replacement of the 8.7 miles of 36-inch pipeline involved would cost $13,000,000 if the waiver is not granted.

This pipeline extends from Transco's Compressor Station 505 to Transco's Caldwell Regulator Station and consists of 36-inch OD x .500 W.T. API 5LX 52 pipe. Transco states the coating is in good condition, and the line has been under cathodic protection since shortly after original construction in 1959 and has been maintained at acceptable levels since that time. According to the petition, there have been no leaks or failures since Transco began keeping such records in 1970, and there are no shorted casings.

The subject pipeline, which serves Transco's eastern market area in New Jersey and New York, was constructed in 1959 under a permit from the New Jersey Public Utility Commission. The design and construction of this line was in accordance with New Jersey Administrative Order 14:295. This order adopted the American Standard Code for Pressure Piping, ASA B31.1.8–1955. However, on February 17, 1959, this Administrative Order was amended, and although the ASA B31.1.8–1955 was still referenced, the classification of systems was quite different than under the B31.1.8–1955 code. As a result, Transco was unable to classify any part of its gas pipeline in New Jersey to operate at a stress level in excess of 50 percent of SMYS (0.50 Design Factor). A waiver for the subject pipeline was not sought from New Jersey even though the planning, design, and material ordering were done for an 800 psig MAOP prior to the effective date of the order.

A recent examination of overflight contact prints made in 1958 was made by Transco to determine the class locations of the pipeline at the time of the original construction. The 1958 overflight indicated the pipeline had no Class 3 locations as defined by ASA B31.1.8–1955 Code.

A 1984 actual house count indicates that the 22.8 miles of pipeline in this section there are 8.7 miles of Class 3 location, approximately 0.75 miles of Class 2 location, and approximately 13 miles of Class 1 location.

The original hydrostatic test was conducted to 1.5 times the operating pressure. On questioning Transco, MTB determined that the 1959 hydrostatic test was run in two segments, both of which were held under test pressure for at least 24 hours. The segment between MP 1789.53 and 1804.26 was tested to a minimum pressure (at the high point) of 1080 psig (74.8 percent of SMYS) and the segment between MP 1804.26 and 1812.36 at a minimum of 1086 psig (75.2 percent SMYS). Using these test pressures and a design factor, F=0.50, as was required by the State of New Jersey Administrative Order 14:295, as amended February 17, 1959, the allowable operating pressure permitted in New Jersey was established at 722 psig. When the Federal gas pipeline safety standards (49 CFR Part 192) were adopted, this value also became the MAOP under Part 192 in accordance with §192.619(a)(3), which limits MAOP to the highest actual operating pressure during the 5 years before July 1, 1970.

In contrast, had the pipeline been in any part of Transco's system outside New Jersey, it would have met the B31.1.8–1955 requirements for an MAOP of 864 psig, based on a design factor, F=0.60, permitted in Class 2 locations. Thus, it would have been operated at 800 psig, as were similarly designed and located pipelines outside New Jersey, and would have qualified for an 800 psig MAOP under §192.619(a)(3). Consequently, in areas with a subsequent change in class location to Class 3, the 800 psig MAOP could be maintained by pressure testing now to 90 percent SMYS under §192.611(c).

Section 192.553(d), Limitation on increase in maximum allowable operating pressure in uprating, reads as follows:

Except as provided in §192.555(c), a new maximum allowable operating pressure established under this subpart may not exceed the maximum that would be allowed under this part for a new segment of pipeline constructed of the same materials in the same location.

Without a waiver, this standard restricts Transco to operation at 722 psig due to the 0.5 design factor applicable to new pipelines of like materials in Class 3 locations. The rule presents [sic] operators from uprating the MAOP of existing pipelines to what might be dubious or unsafe design pressures. The restriction seems unreasonable in this case; however, because the original test and design qualified this line for more than the desired 800 psig MAOP under current part 192 standards, and if it were not for the 722 psig limit set by New Jersey in Class 2 areas, the line could have been operating at 800 psig, as are other similarly designed and located Transco pipelines. MTB is considering granting Transco a waiver from §192.553(d) to permit uprating to an MAOP of 800 psig. Transco could then qualify the pipeline in the 8.7 miles of Class 3 Locations for the desired 800 psig MAOP by confirming this [M]AOP for [C]lass 3 areas with a 90 percent SMYS hydrostatic test as permitted by §192.611(c), assuring an equivalent level of pipeline safety. Transco states in the petition that it will hydrostatically test the entire subject pipeline to over 90 percent SMYS.

Interested persons are invited to comment on the proposed waiver by submitting in triplicate such data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Docket and Notice numbers and be submitted to: Dockets Branch, Room 8426, Materials Transportation Bureau, Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C. 20590.

All comments received before July 29, 1985 will be considered before final action is taken. Late filed comments will be considered so far as practicable. All comments will be available for inspection at the Dockets Branch, Materials Transportation Bureau, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., before and after the closing date for comments. No public hearing is contemplated, but one may be held at a time and place set in a Notice in the **Federal Register** if requested by an interested person desiring to comment at a public hearing and raising a genuine issue.

(49 U.S.C. 1672; 49 CFR Part 1.53(a); Appendix A of Part 1, and Appendix A of Part 106)

Issued in Washington, D.C., on June 21, 1985.

Richard L. Beam,
Associate Director for Pipeline Safety
Regulation, Materials Transportation Bureau.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Petition No. 85–2W; Notice 2]

Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline; Grant of Waiver; Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corp.

Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corporation (Transco) has petitioned the Materials Transportation Bureau (MTB) for a waiver from compliance with the requirements of 49 CFR 192.553(d) to permit the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) of seven pipeline segments located in Somerset and Morris Counties, New Jersey (totaling eight and seven-tenths (8.7) miles) to be increased to 800 psig from the current 722 psig. These segments, which are in location Class 3, are part of a pipeline designated by Transco as the 36-inch Caldwell Lateral which is approximately 22.83 miles in length (MP 1789.53 to 1812.36). There is a need to increase the operating pressure of this pipeline segment to 800 psig due to anticipated swings in Transco's customers' delivery volume requirements. Transco estimates that replacement of the 8.7 miles of 36-inch pipeline involved would cost $13,000,000 if the waiver is not granted.

In response to this petition, MTB issued a notice of a petition for waiver inviting interested persons to comment (50 FR 26652, June 27, 1985). In this notice MTB explained why it was considering granting Transco a waiver from §192.553(d) to permit uprating to an MAOP of 800 psig. Transco could then qualify the pipeline in the 8.7 miles of Class 3 Locations for the desired 800 psig MAOP by confirming this MAOP for class 3 areas with a 90 percent SMYS hydrostatic test as permitted by §192.611(c) assuring an equivalent level of pipeline safety. Transco stated in the petition that it will hydrostatically test the entire subject pipeline to over 90 percent SMYS.

Comments were received from three pipeline operators and one industry organization in response to the invitation to comment. All comments supported the granting of the waiver. The commenters indicated that, under the conditions faced by the petitioner, there would not be any reduction in public safety and a waiver is the most logical course of action.

In consideration of the foregoing, MTB by this order finds that compliance with §192.553(d) is unnecessary for the reasons set forth in Notice 1, and that the requested waiver would not be inconsistent with pipeline safety. Accordingly, effective immediately, Transcontinental Gas Pipe Corporation is granted a waiver from compliance with §192.553(d) regarding the seven Class 3 segments described above for the purpose of uprating to 800 psig.

(49 U.S.C. 1672; 49 CFR Part 1.53(a); Appendix A of Part 1, and Appendix A of Part 106)

Issued in Washington, D.C., on August 15, 1985.

Richard L. Beam,
Associate Director for Pipeline Safety Regulation, Materials Transportation Bureau.

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