

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Public Service Commission
Rock Solid Excavating, Inc.
Damage Prevention Enforcement

Case No. GS-14-633

CONSENT ORDER

August 17, 2016

Preliminary Statement

On July 22, 2014, the Commission received a ND One-Call Complaint from WBI Energy Transmission, Inc. The complaint alleged a violation by Rock Solid Excavating, Inc. of North Dakota Century Code chapter 49-23: One-Call Excavation Notice System.

On July 30, 2014 Public Service Commission staff sent a copy of the ND One Call Complaint to Rock Solid Excavating, Inc. for response.

On August 26, 2014 Rock Solid Excavating, Inc. filed a response.

On January 13, 2016 Commission Advocacy Staff filed a formal complaint against Rock Solid Excavating, Inc.

On February 10, 2016 the Commission determined the case states a prima facie case.

Discussion

Rock Solid Excavating, Ind. (Rock Solid) is a foreign corporation with principal offices at 102 6th Ave SE, Park City, MT 59063-0235. It's registered agent with the North Dakota Secretary of State is J&J Homes, LLC, 3820 6th Ave W, Williston, ND 58801-3547.

WBI Energy Transmission, Inc. (WBI) is a foreign corporation authorized to do business in North Dakota.

Commission Advocacy Staff (Staff) conducted an investigation of the alleged violation, including review of the filings and communication with Rock Solid, WBI, and

North Dakota One Call (NDOC).

North Dakota Century Code section 49-23-04(1) provides:

Except in an emergency, an excavator shall contact the notification center and provide an excavation or location notice at least forty-eight hours before beginning any excavation, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, unless otherwise agreed to between the excavator and operator. If an operator determines more time is necessary for location, the operator may request a twenty-four-hour extension of the excavation or location notice by notifying the notification center. The notification center shall notify the excavator of the extension. An excavation begins the first time excavation occurs in an area that was not previously identified by the excavator in an excavation notice.

North Dakota Century Code section 28-32-22 provides:

Unless otherwise prohibited by specific statute or rule, informal disposition may be made of any adjudicative proceeding, or any part or issue thereof, by stipulation, settlement, waiver of hearing, consent order, default, alternative dispute resolution, or other informal disposition, subject to agency approval. Any administrative agency may adopt rules of practice or procedure for informal disposition if such rules do not substantially prejudice the rights of any party. Such rules may establish procedures for converting an administrative matter from one type of proceeding to another type of proceeding.

North Dakota Century Code section 49-07-01.1 provides:

Any person who violates any statute, commission order, or commission rule which applies to matters within the authority of the commission under chapters 8-08, 8-09, 8-10, 24-09, 32-25, and 51-05.1, titles 60 and 64, and title 49 except for chapters 49-22 and 49-23, shall, in addition to any other penalty provided, be subject to a civil penalty of not to exceed five thousand dollars. A violation occurring under chapter 49-23, in addition to any other penalty, is subject to a civil penalty not to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars. The commission shall develop policies for the assessment of penalties under chapter 49-23 which will take into consideration the severity of damages and the conduct of the offender. The civil penalty may be compromised by the commission. The amount of the penalty when finally determined or agreed upon in compromise, if not paid, may be recovered in a civil action in the courts of this state.

North Dakota Administrative Code section 69-02-04-05 provides:

In any proceeding in which the commission is authorized to act after opportunity for hearing, opportunity is afforded by service of notice fixing a reasonable period of time within which any person desiring to be heard may file a protest or request for a hearing. If a protest or request for hearing is not filed within the time provided, the commission may dispose of the matter on the basis of the pleadings, other submittals, and the studies and recommendations of the staff. A party not requesting oral hearing in the party's pleading is deemed to have waived a hearing for the purpose of the decision, but not for the purpose of applying for rehearing with respect to the decision. If a person requests a hearing but does not show good cause, the commission may determine the matter without a hearing.

Investigation Summary

Based on its investigation, Staff concluded that Rock Solid personnel did not provide an excavation notice to the NDOC Notification Center before beginning their excavation to install a water line at White Tail Circle in Williston, North Dakota.

Based on its investigation, Staff concluded that on July 16, 2014, Rock Solid personnel began an excavation as defined under North Dakota Century Code section 49-23-01(7) while performing a water line install at White Tail Circle in Williston, North Dakota.

Based on its investigation, Staff concluded that a 12-inch natural gas transmission line was damaged during this excavation and that the amount of damage was approximately \$5500. No customers lost service as a result of the damage because WBI was able to install a repair sleeve on the damaged area which prevented the line from needing to be shut down.

Based on its investigation, Staff concluded that there was no agreement between Rock Solid and WBI under North Dakota Century Code section 49-23-04(1) prior to excavation that would relieve Rock Solid of its obligation to provide excavation notice at least forty-eight hours before the excavation.

Based on its investigation, Staff concluded that the excavation was not being made in a time of emergency under North Dakota Century Code section 49-23-04(4), allowing the excavator to give notification after the start of the excavation.

Based on its investigation, Staff concluded that Rock Solid violated North Dakota Century Code section 49-23-04(1) by failing to provide an excavation notice to the NDOC Notification Center at least forty-eight hours before beginning its excavation.

This agreement may be executed in counterparts and duplicate copies, each of which shall be deemed to be an original, and which, when taken together, shall constitute one and the same instrument.

Concurrences

Rock Solid and the Commission have agreed to resolve this matter without further administrative proceedings.

In the attached Consent to Entry of Order, Rock Solid expressly waives its rights to a hearing in this matter, to consult an attorney, to present argument to the Commission, and to appeal from any adverse determination after a hearing.

There are no covenants, promises, undertakings, or understanding other than as specifically set forth in this Order.

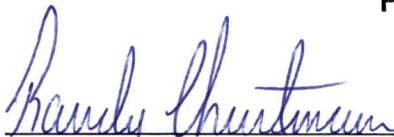
The Commission issues the following:

Order

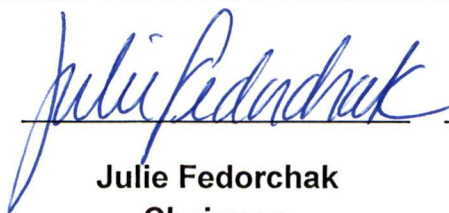
The Commission orders:

1. Rock Solid Excavating, Inc. violated North Dakota Century Code Section 49-23-04(1) by failing to contact the NDOC notification center forty-eight hours before beginning an excavation.
2. Rock Solid Excavating, Inc. to pay a fine of \$3000, payable to the North Dakota Public Service Commission within ten business days of service of this Order.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Randy Christmann
Commissioner



Julie Fedorchak
Chairman



Brian P. Kalk
Commissioner

CONSENT TO ENTRY OF ORDER

The undersigned, on behalf of Rock Solid Excavating, Inc. (Rock Solid). is authorized to act on behalf of Rock Solid and bind Rock Solid for purposes of this Consent Order; has read the Consent Order, knows and fully understands its content and effect; has been advised of the right to a hearing in this matter, the right to be represented by legal counsel, the right to present evidence and arguments to the Commission, the right to cross examine witnesses, and the right to appeal from an adverse determination after hearing; and that, by signing this Consent to Entry of Order, waives all those rights in their entirety on behalf of Rock Solid, and consents to entry of this Order by the North Dakota Public Service Commission to resolve the violation without further administrative proceedings. It is further expressly understood that this Order constitutes the entire settlement agreement between the parties, there being no other promises or agreements, either express or implied.

DATED this 19 day of July 2016

Rock Solid Excavating, Inc.

By Mark Todd

Its Vice Pres
{TITLE}