



Caleb Simburger, Program Manager
ND Gas Pipeline Safety Program
600 East Boulevard, Department 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0408

January 22, 2020

RE: Case Number: GS-19-385

Dear Mr. Simburger,

Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota company and wholly owned subsidiary of Xcel Energy Company (NSP) received a Notice of Probable Violation from the North Dakota Public Service Commission (NDPSC) on December 19, 2019 regarding the investigation at 5220 12 St South and 5210 12th St S in Fargo.

PROBABLE VIOLATION NO. 1

AUDIT FINDINGS:

Service regulator and relief vents were not located where gas from the vents could escape freely away from any opening into the building.

PIPELINE SAFETY REGULATION IN EFFECT AT TIME OF PROBABLE VIOLATION:

49 CFR Part 192.355: Customer meters and regulators: Protection from damage.

(b) Service regulator vents and relief vents. Service regulator vents and relief vents must terminate outdoors, and the outdoor terminal must —

(2) Be located at a place where gas from the vent can escape freely into the atmosphere and away from any opening into the building.

EVIDENCE:

- Exhibit #1 – Photograph at 5220 12th St South, Fargo - Building C, showing regulator vent piping not vented freely to the atmosphere and away from openings into the building.
- Exhibit #2 – Photograph at 5220 12th St South, Fargo - Building C, showing a close-up view of gas meter regulator and vent piping.

PROPOSED CIVIL PENALTY

Proposed Civil Penalty: \$10,000.00

Any person who violates a rule or order of the commission pursuant to section 49-02-01.2 is subject to a civil penalty under 49-07-05.1, to be imposed by the commission of not to exceed two hundred thousand dollars for each violation for each day that the violation continues,

except that the maximum penalty may not exceed two million dollars for any related series of violations.

COMPLIANCE ACTION:

By January 20, 2020, provide to the Commission:

- Documentation showing the installation of gas regulator and vent piping and relief vent piping that allows gas to escape freely to the atmosphere and away from any opening into the building located at: Riverview Place - 5220 Building C 12th St South, Fargo, ND.
- Documentation (current O&M Plan or other) of the procedure for continuing surveillance of facilities to discover unauthorized changes in customer service installations.

RESPONSE:

- The meter set at 5220 Building C, 12th St South, Fargo has not been replaced. When service is reinstated, the meter set venting will be installed to meet the Pipeline Compliance and Standards (PC&S) Manual Section 8.5.4.
- PC&S Manual Section 12.3 Patrolling states “Evaluate each meter set to verify valve is accessible, venting of the regulator is adequate, meter is not in contact with soil, vegetation does not prohibit access, meter support is adequate, etc.” This Section will be reviewed with employees in the Fargo and Grand Forks Service Center by February 1, 2020.
- A check for \$10,000 has been requested and will be submitted under separate cover.

PROBABLE VIOLATION NO. 2

AUDIT FINDINGS:

Customer service piping and fittings were not protected from atmospheric corrosion at Riverview Place, 5220 Building C & 5210 Building B 12th St South Fargo, ND.

PIPELINE SAFETY REGULATION IN EFFECT AT TIME OF PROBABLE VIOLATION:

CFR Part 192.479: Atmospheric Corrosion: General.

(a) Each operator must clean and coat each pipeline or portion of pipeline that is exposed to the atmosphere, except pipelines under paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) Coating material must be suitable for the prevention of atmospheric corrosion.

(c) Except portions of pipelines in off-shore splash zones or soil-to-air interfaces, the operator need not protect from atmospheric corrosion any pipeline for which the operator demonstrates by test, investigation, or experience appropriate to the environment of the pipeline that corrosion will – (1) Only be a light surface oxide; or (2) Not affect the safe operation of the pipeline before the next scheduled inspection.

EVIDENCE:

- Exhibit #1 – Photograph at 5220 12th St S, Fargo - Building C, showing substantial atmospheric corrosion on customer service piping and fittings.
- Exhibit #3 – Photograph at 5220 12th St S, Fargo - Building C, showing substantial atmospheric corrosion on gas inlet and regulator vent piping.

- Exhibit #4 – Photograph at 5210 12th St S, Fargo - Building B, showing substantial atmospheric corrosion on gas inlet and regulator vent piping.

PROPOSED CIVIL PENALTY

Proposed Civil Penalty: \$2,000.00

Any person who violates a rule or order of the commission pursuant to section 49-02-01.2 is subject to a civil penalty under 49-07-05.1, to be imposed by the commission of not to exceed two hundred thousand dollars for each violation for each day that the violation continues, except that the maximum penalty may not exceed two million dollars for any related series of violations.

COMPLIANCE ACTION:

By January 20, 2020, provide to the Commission:

- The Respondent’s procedure for inspecting and classifying atmospheric corrosion severity.
- A revised leak report form that contains a comment section for the inspector to describe the condition and/or classify the atmospheric corrosion.

RESPONSE:

- PC&S Manual Section 9.10.3 Piping Exposed to the Atmosphere describes the requirements for inspecting pipe. PC&S Manual Section 9.11.4 states “Gas piping exposed to the atmosphere that has evidence of corrosion pitting or wall loss shall be repaired or replaced. The remedial action shall be based on engineering analysis and occur no later than one year from discovery of the condition.” Note, a revision to correct “that” to “then” will be submitted to the Pipeline Compliance and Standards Team for correcting in the next publication of the PC&S Manual.
- When atmospheric corrosion is observed, a notification that describes the condition of piping is created in SAP to generate a Work Order for corrective actions. The Leak Sheet is intended to document a corrosion leak, not the condition of aboveground piping. NSP does not agree that a revision is need to the Leak Sheet.
- A check for \$2,000 has been requested and will be submitted under separate cover.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Lisa Kallberg at 651-229-2282.

Sincerely,



Luke Litteken

Sr Vice President, Gas

cc:

Christopher Akins, Manager Pipeline Compliance and Standards
Lauren Gilliland, Director Ga Governance
Lisa Kallberg, Principal Gas Standards Consultant