



Public Service Commission

NEWS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release
For Interview Requests, Contact:
Stacy Eberl, (701) 328-4082

PSC Receives Perfect Score on Federal Evaluation of Gas Pipeline Safety Program

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) recently received a perfect score from the federal office of Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) for administration of its Gas Pipeline Safety Program in 2022. The federal evaluation included a review of annual progress report documents and program procedures and records, as well as observation of an onsite pipeline operator inspection by a PSC pipeline inspector.

“Our pipeline safety inspectors and manager are deeply dedicated to ensuring our program is of the highest standard,” said Commissioner Sheri Haugen-Hoffart, who holds the pipeline safety portfolio. “Their exceptional work was confirmed by our recent perfect audit, and I am so grateful for their commitment.”

The current Gas Pipeline Safety Program has three employees: one program manager and two full time inspectors. The second inspector was authorized by the Legislature during the 2021 session with recognition of the growth in our state and the importance of this program. The need for an additional inspector was noted in several past PHMSA evaluations and resulted in lost points during those evaluations.

“The safety of the natural gas system is a top priority for the PSC and our inspections provide assurance to customers that everything possible is being done to assure that safety,” said Commission Chair Randy Christmann.

During the 2019-21 biennium, the gas pipeline safety inspectors conducted inspections of five distribution systems operators, ten transmission system operators, one liquified natural gas facility operator, and seven gathering system operators on a combined total of over 4,150 miles of natural gas pipeline. These inspections are vital to keeping our natural gas system safe, which many in North Dakota rely on for heating their homes and businesses.

“This perfect score shows that our inspectors are doing their best to hold North Dakota gas companies to the highest required safety standards,” said Commissioner Julie Fedorchak. “Certainly part of the credit goes to our legislature for approving an additional gas safety inspector so we can more appropriately monitor the state’s growing gas pipeline infrastructure that provides vital energy to people and businesses throughout our state.”

The PSC submits annual certification to assume safety responsibility regarding intrastate transmission and distribution of natural gas and propane and other gas by pipeline, and for intrastate liquefied natural gas facilities used in the transportation of gas by pipeline.

The Commission has adopted rules for pipeline safety, including minimum safety standards, and has authority to require proof of compliance. The Commission requires each owner or operator of pipeline facilities to establish and maintain records, make reports, provide information, and conduct inspections as proof of compliance.

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate certain business activities in the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, auctioneers, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission at (701) 328-2400 or www.psc.nd.gov.

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