

**THE STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF KANSAS**

Before Commissioners: Dwight D. Keen, Chair
 Susan K. Duffy
 Andrew J. French

In the Matter of the General Investigation into the)
Operations of Westar Energy, Inc. Regarding an)
Accident that Occurred Due to a Steam Release) Docket No. 19-WSEE-441-GIE
at Jeffrey Energy Center on June 3, 2018, in St.)
Mary's, Kansas.)

ORDER ADOPTING STAFF'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
AND CLOSING DOCKET

This matter comes before the State Corporation Commission of the State of Kansas (Commission) for consideration and decision. Having reviewed the file and records, the Commission finds:

1. On June 3, 2018, at approximately 11:30 am, a high pressure steam release from an inadequate flange closure occurred on the 14th floor of Jeffrey Energy Center Unit 3, resulting in two Jeffrey Energy Center (JEC) employees being fatally injured.¹ Jeffrey Energy Center is operated by Westar Energy, Inc. (Westar) a subsidiary of Evergy, Inc.²

2. On April 17, 2019, Commission Staff (Staff) submitted a Report and Recommendation (R&R), recommending the Commission open a general investigation in the operations of Westar regarding the steam release accident. Staff explained the primary objective of its investigation is to determine the root cause of the accident and recommend any actions Westar should take to minimize the possibility of other similar accidents.³

¹ Staff Report and Recommendation, July 16, 2020, Exh. A, p. 1.

² *Id.*, p. 3.

³ Order Opening General Investigation Docket, Apr. 30, 2019, ¶ 4.

3. On April 30, 2019, the Commission opened this Docket to allow Staff to conduct its investigation.⁴

4. On March 1, 2022, Staff filed a Report and Recommendation recommending closing this Docket. In July of 2020, Staff completed the bulk of its investigation and prepared a report detailing its opinion as to the potential root cause of the accident and recommending several actions to be taken by Jeffrey Energy Center to minimize the possibility of another similar accident.⁵ In its July 2020 Report, Staff recommended Jeffrey Energy Center: (1) develop procedures recognizing the heightened risks of working around safety release valves before a valve repair inspection is completed; (2) train its personnel on the requirements of the National Boiler Inspection Code; and (3) improve its review and documentation of services provided by contractors working on or inspecting safety release valves.⁶ In its March 1, 2022 Report and Recommendation, Staff advised that by November 2020, Jeffrey Energy Center provided Staff with copies of the procedures and training modules that implemented Staff's recommendations.⁷ After conducting additional discovery, Staff believes that Jeffrey Energy Center followed its revised procedures and completed the tasks outlined in the recommendations contained in Staff's July 2020 Report.⁸

5. Based on its review of the record, the Commission believes the purpose of this investigatory Docket has been fulfilled. Since Staff met its stated objective to determine the root cause of the accident and recommend any actions Westar should take to minimize the possibility of other similar accidents, the Commission adopts Staff's recommendation to close this Docket.

⁴ *Id.*, ¶ 5.

⁵ Staff Report and Recommendation, p. 1.

⁶ Staff Report and Recommendation, p. 1.

⁷ *Id.*, p. 2.

⁸ *Id.*

THEREFORE, THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- A. Staff's March 1, 2022 Report and Recommendation is adopted.
- B. This Docket is closed.

BY THE COMMISSION IT IS SO ORDERED.

Keen, Chair; Duffy, Commissioner; French, Commissioner.

Dated: 09/13/2022



Lynn M. Retz
Executive Director

BGF

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

19-WSEE-441-GIE

I, the undersigned, certify that a true copy of the attached Order has been served to the following by means of
electronic service on 09/13/2022.

CATHRYN J. DINGES, SR DIRECTOR & REGULATORY
AFFAIRS COUNSEL
EVERGY KANSAS CENTRAL, INC
818 S KANSAS AVE
PO BOX 889
TOPEKA, KS 66601-0889
cathy.dinges@evergy.com

BRIAN G. FEDOTIN, GENERAL COUNSEL
KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSION
1500 SW ARROWHEAD RD
TOPEKA, KS 66604
b.fedotin@kcc.ks.gov

MICHAEL NEELEY, LITIGATION COUNSEL
KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSION
1500 SW ARROWHEAD RD
TOPEKA, KS 66604
m.neeley@kcc.ks.gov

/S/ KCC Docket Room

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