

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

Before Commissioners: Shari Feist Albrecht, Chairman  
Jay Scott Emler  
Dwight D. Keen

In the Matter of the General Investigation Into )  
the Operations of Kansas Gas Service, a )  
Division of ONE Gas, Inc., Regarding the ) Docket No. 18-KGSG-120-GIP  
Natural Gas Incident that Occurred at 4505 W )  
91<sup>st</sup> Street in Prairie Village, Johnson County, )  
Kansas. )

**NOTICE OF FILING OF STAFF'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

COMES NOW, the Staff of the Kansas Corporation Commission (Staff and Commission, respectively), and files its Report and Recommendations regarding a natural gas incident which occurred at 4505 W 91<sup>st</sup> Street in Prairie Village, Johnson County, Kansas. Staff recommends the Commission find the subject incident was caused by natural forces beyond the control of Kansas Gas Service, a division of ONE Gas, Inc., and requests this docket be closed.

WHEREFORE, Staff submits it's Report and Recommendation for Commission review and consideration and for such other relief as the Commission deems just and proper.

Respectfully Submitted  
Litigation Counsel



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# STATE OF KANSAS

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GOVERNOR JEFF COLYER, M.D.

SHARI FEIST ALBRECHT, CHAIR | JAY SCOTT EMLER, COMMISSIONER | DWIGHT D. KEEN, COMMISSIONER

## REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION UTILITIES DIVISION

**TO:** Chair Shari Feist Albrecht  
Commissioner Jay Scott Emler  
Commissioner Dwight Keen

**FROM:** Chris Greve, Pipeline Inspector  
Leo Haynos, Chief Engineer  
Jeff McClanahan, Utilities Director

**DATE:** April 13, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Docket 18-KGSG-120-GIP: In the Matter of the General Investigation Into the Operations of Kansas Gas Service, a Division of ONE Gas, Inc., Regarding the Natural Gas Incident that Occurred at 4505 W. 91st Street in Prairie Village, Johnson County, Kansas.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On July 23, 2017, Kansas Gas Service, a Division of ONE Gas, Inc. (KGS) (Kansas Gas Service) was notified of a fire involving natural gas located at 4505 W. 91<sup>st</sup> Street, in Prairie Village, Kansas. Because the natural gas fire resulted in \$450,560 property damage to the home, this event is considered to be a natural gas incident as defined in 49CFR Part 191.5 and adopted by K.A.R. 82-11-3. There were no injuries associated with this incident. Pursuant to an agreement between the Kansas Corporation Commission and the U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)<sup>1</sup>, the Commission Staff (Staff) is responsible for investigating intrastate natural gas incidents, determining if any violations of pipeline safety regulations occurred, and making recommendations to minimize the possibility of reoccurrence.

After investigating the incident, Staff has determined natural gas leaking from a meter set contributed to the extent of the property damage caused by the fire. The customer's meter set was owned and operated by KGS and is considered to be a pipeline facility under the jurisdiction of pipeline safety regulations. Staff found no evidence of a violation of pipeline safety regulations associated with this incident. Staff found no definitive evidence of an ignition source for the fire, nor was there clear evidence as to what caused the release of natural gas. The damage to the meter set is believed to have been caused by a thunderstorm that was accompanied with high winds and

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<sup>1</sup> 49 USC 60105 and PHMSA Guidelines for States Participating in the Pipeline Safety Program

numerous lighting strikes that occurred in the area shortly before the fire was reported. Therefore, Staff concludes natural forces were most likely the cause of this incident. Because the incident is believed to have been caused by natural forces that were beyond the control of KGS, Staff has no recommendation to minimize reoccurrence of an incident of this nature. Therefore, Staff recommends this investigation be closed.

### **BACKGROUND:**

On the evening of July 22, 2017, a thunderstorm accompanied by wind and lightning was in progress. Homeowners adjacent to the subject property reported hearing a loud noise at approximately 10:00 p.m. and speculated the noise was thunder or a tree limb falling during the storm. On July 23, 2017 at 1:00 a.m., a fire in the vicinity of the gas meter set on the subject property was reported to the Prairie Village Fire Department by a passerby. The caller described the fire as having flames that resembled a "blow torch". KGS was notified of the fire at 1:09 a.m. and arrived at the scene at 1:37 a.m. The owners of the house were not present at the time of the incident. Firefighters state they removed a 3 to 6 inch diameter burned tree limb from the area of the gas meter. Firefighters described the top half of the meter as melted and state that gas was burning when they arrived. After the fire department put out the fire on the meter, KGS was able to shut off the flow of gas using the aboveground inlet riser valve on the service line. The meter, located between the valve and the house piping, was destroyed (see attached photographs). Staff was notified of the incident on July 24, 2017, by KGS. Staff conducted an investigation of the site with KGS and the Northeast Johnson County Fire Marshall on July 27, 2017. The investigation indicated the fire started outside the home in the area of the meter. There was no evidence on the house of a lightning strike or damage other than that caused by the fire. Staff continued the on-site investigation on August 3, 2017, with a representative from the homeowner's insurance company. At that time, the gas piping inside the house was pressure tested and demonstrated no gas leaks had occurred from the inside piping.

### **ANALYSIS:**

Based on KGS AMR reading intervals, Staff determined the meter at the subject property quit communicating before 11:45 p.m. on July 22, 2017. Because the AMR reading demonstrates the meter was functioning normally at 9:45 p.m. on that date, Staff concludes the incident occurred within that two hour timeframe. Staff also reviewed the records of the National Weather Service which indicate a strong thunderstorm with wind gusts of 80 mph was in the area during the timeframe of 9:00 p.m. to 11:20 p.m. Based on this data and the report of the fire first responders, Staff concludes that natural forces were the most likely cause of the incident.

Staff notes the unusual melt pattern of the meter set caused by the fire. A contributory factor to the intensity of the fire may have been the lithium batteries that are required to operate the AMR meter. The batteries were destroyed in the fire. Staff also notes there was no excess flow valve (EFV) on the service line to this residence. If an EFV had been installed, the valve most likely would have prevented or at least minimized the fire damage. In this case, however, the service line was constructed before EFV installation was required by regulation.

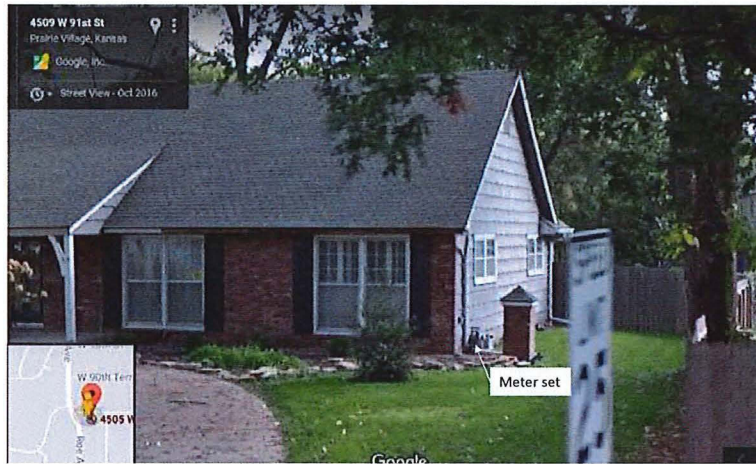
Because the incident is believed to have been caused by natural forces that were beyond the control of KGS, Staff has no recommendation to minimize reoccurrence of an incident of this nature. Therefore, Staff recommends this investigation be closed.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This incident has been fully investigated and documented by KGS and Staff. Staff recommends the Commission find the subject incident was caused by natural forces beyond the control of KGS, and we recommend subject Docket be closed.

Attachments

4505 W. 91<sup>st</sup> Street  
google maps street view

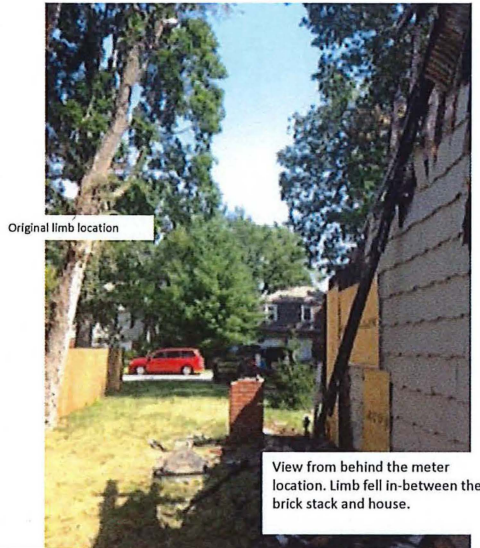


4505 W. 91<sup>st</sup> Street  
After Fire





## Meter Set Location after fire



## Gas Piping after fire



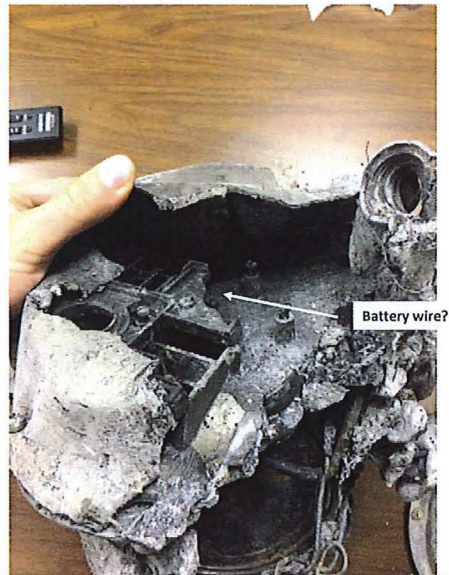
Front of meter



Back of meter



Back of meter





**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

18-KGSG-120-GIP

I, the undersigned, certify that a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing Notice of Filing of Staff's Report and Recommendation was served via electronic service this 17 th day of April, 2018, to the following:

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/s/ Vicki Jacobsen

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Vicki Jacobsen