



U.S. Department
Of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration**

October 24, 2013

OVERNIGHT EXPRESS MAIL

Chairman David W. Danner
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
1300 South Evergreen Park Drive, SW
P.O. Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98502

Dear Chairman Danner:

Sections 60105(e) and 60106(d) of the Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011 (Act) provides for the monitoring of State pipeline safety programs by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). This annual monitoring ensures State Pipeline Safety Programs are compliant with the Act's requirements and with the annual Progress Report score determines a State's total point award for next year's PHMSA pipeline safety grant.

On August 26-29, 2013 a representative of PHMSA's Office of State Programs evaluated the CY 2012 Pipeline Safety program activities of both the natural gas and hazardous liquid programs conducted by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC). The evaluation encompassed the validation of annual Progress Report documents submitted to PHMSA, review of the pipeline program procedures and records, and the observation of an on-site inspection of a pipeline operator conducted by your staff. Thank you for the courtesies extended to Mr. Rex Evans, PHMSA State Programs, by your staff.

PHMSA appreciates the contributions to pipeline safety by Mr. David Lykken who serves on the American Public Gas Association Security and Integrity Foundation as a board member and his committee participation on ASME B31Q and Common Ground Alliance Advocacy as a representative for the National Association of Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSR). We also appreciate the work of Mr. Joe Subsits who has also served on various NAPSR committees. These efforts are extremely important in accomplishing our mutual goal of pipeline safety.

Based on the evaluation and the validation of Progress Report information, it appears the pipeline safety program is generally complying with PHMSA's requirements. As a result of this evaluation, I would like to bring the following items to your attention:

1. We appreciate the efforts of the WUTC in being able to revise the damage prevention law that was signed by the governor on January 1, 2013. This includes mandatory subscription to the State one-call locate service along with reporting of damages to the WUTC for data evaluation. The WUTC should be commended for its efforts and progress in this area.
2. We would also like to note the excellent job done in making the pipeline safety inspection and compliance activities transparent through the WUTC website. These efforts are often hard to keep current from year to year, but we appreciate the work undertaken by WUTC staff in making this information available.

Thank you for your contributions and continuing support of the pipeline safety program. A reply to this letter is not necessary; however, your comments are always welcome. I appreciate the efforts of the WUTC to improve pipeline safety.

Sincerely,



Zach Barrett
Director for State Programs
Office of Pipeline Safety

cc: David Lykken, State Program Manager
Chris Hoidal, Western Region Director, PHP-500, PHMSA
Rex Evans, State Programs, PHP-50, PHMSA

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SHIP TO:

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