

January 16, 1997

LETTER OF CONCERN

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

**Mr. A. Ray Griffin, Jr.
City Manager
City of Danville
P.O. Box 3300
Danville, VA 24543**

CPF No. 17001C

Dear Mr. Griffin:

I am writing to you to express the Office of Pipeline Safety's (OPS) concern, regarding the City of Danville's gas distribution operation and maintenance activities.

During the month of September of 1996, it came to our attention that the Director, Mr. Bill Keener, and the Chief Engineer, Mr. Paul Johnson, both with the Water and Gas Distribution Department, had resigned. Our office had been working closely with Mr. Keener and Mr. Johnson since they began working for the City (May of 1995, and February of 1996, respectively), to resolve outstanding pipeline safety issues with OPS. We are concerned that with their recent departure and the vacancies that they have created, the pipeline safety issues may not be receiving the required attention they deserve. Mr. James Harr, the current Acting Director for the Water and Gas Distribution Department, has been most cooperative in keeping our office updated as to the interim efforts he and his staff have made in addressing the outstanding pipeline safety issues. I am enclosing copies of the correspondence letters from our office that outline the issues I am referring to.

We have not visited Danville since Mr. Keener's and Mr. Johnson's departure but intend to do so in February or March of 1997. The primary purpose of our visit will be to understand more fully the impact of their departure and the lack of their permanent replacements, on the safety of the City's gas distribution operations. The purpose of our

visit will also be to conduct a routine standard inspection on the records and facilities of the gas distribution system.

I assure you that it is our intent to fully cooperate with the City in its efforts to address the pipeline safety issues raised by our office. I would appreciate a written response within 20 days to inform our office of the City's plan in addressing these issues. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Gustilo, a member of my staff, on the following number (202) 366-4580.

Sincerely,

William H. Gute
Eastern Regional Director
Office of Pipeline Safety

Enclosures

cc: Mayor E. Lindwood Wright
Director James Harr, Acting Director of the Water and Gas Distribution Dept .

PGUSTILO/sj/DPS-24/366-0568/1/16/97

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cc: DPS-22.1, DPS-24, NJDO, Paul, All Regions

Mayor E. Lindwood Wright

Director James Harr, Acting Director of the Water and Gas Distribution Dept.