

protected with a 1/2-inch thick sleeve of Splashtron coating.

Need for Hydrotest

GTFSS contends it is unnecessary to hydrostatically test this pipeline. GTFSS asserts that a hydrostatic test will not demonstrate the strength and integrity of the pipeline because the pipeline is designed of heavier wall pipe and it will never experience the wall stress intended to be produced by a hydrotest. The heavier wall pipe is used to prevent the collapse of the pipeline in the face of the huge external pressures exerted on it at a water depth of 5,300 feet.

Proposed Alternative Risk Control Activities

GTFSS proposes the following alternative risk control activities to provide a margin of safety and environmental protection comparable to that required by the pressure-test regulations:

1. Utilize thick wall, high strength, and high quality DSAW pipe;
2. Perform a pipe mill hydrotest on each length of fabricated pipe equivalent to 95% specified minimum yield strength (SMYS) to detect defects in the seam weld and prevent the deployment of defective pipe joints;
3. Perform extensive inspection and quality control during the line pipe manufacture, transport, fabrication, and installation to prevent pipe damage;
4. Utilize Automated Ultrasonic Inspection (AUT) for inspection of offshore welds to improve defect detection in the girth weld and to improve the weld quality during the pipeline and SCR fabrication;
5. Subject all buckle arrestors to complete radiographic and magnetic particle inspection, including radiographic inspection of all buckle arrestor to line pipe welds;
6. Perform complete radiographic inspection and hydrotesting of all welds connecting subsea valves and assemblies to the pipeline;
7. Perform a leak test of the pipeline's subsea tie-in flange that connects to the VR 397 riser flange; and
8. Perform factory acceptance hydrotests of all subsea 'wye', 'tee', ball valve, and check valve assemblies.

Intent To Consider Waiver

Although performing an in situ hydrotest on this pipeline would comply with the plain language of the regulation, GTFSS believes the intent of the regulations cannot be met by hydrostatic testing. Due to the heavier wall thickness requirements and external hydrostatic pressures in deep water, the traditional pipeline

hydrostatic test generates stresses as a percentage of SMYS that are well below those typically experienced in a pipeline test. GTFSS asserts that the hydrostatic test cannot demonstrate the strength or integrity of the system.

Therefore, RSPA/OPS will consider whether a hydrotest of this pipeline is necessary and whether the alternative risk control activities proposed by GTFSS will yield an equivalent or greater degree of safety. This Notice is RSPA/OPS' only request for public comment before making its final decision in this matter. After considering any comments, RSPA/OPS will make a final determination to grant or deny the waiver as proposed or with modifications and conditions. If the waiver is granted and RSPA/OPS subsequently determines that the effect of the waiver is inconsistent with pipeline safety, RSPA/OPS may revoke the waiver at its sole discretion.

Issued in Washington, DC on March 23, 2004.

Stacey L. Gerard,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. RSPA-03-16841; Notice 2]

Pipeline Safety: Grant of Waiver; Columbia Gas Transmission

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA); Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice; grant of waiver.

SUMMARY: Columbia Gas Transmission requested a waiver of compliance with the regulatory requirements at 49 CFR 192.611(d) which require natural gas pipeline operators to confirm or revise the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) of their natural gas pipelines within 18-months after a class location change.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Columbia Gas Transmission submitted a request to RSPA's Office of Pipeline Safety (RSPA/OPS) seeking a waiver of compliance with the regulatory requirements at 49 CFR 192.611(d) to confirm or revise the MAOP of its natural gas pipeline within 18-months after a class location change. Two segments of Columbia's Line MC pipeline changed from Class 2 to Class

3 locations. To maintain the current MAOP of 899 psig, Columbia elected to replace 9,500 feet of its pipeline with new, heavier wall pipe. The two segments of the pipeline, totaling approximately 1,700 feet, involve stream crossings or wetland areas. The two segments are 1,506 feet and 200 feet in length, respectively.

Columbia anticipated that 7,800 feet of its replacement project would be complete by October 31, 2003. However, due to unforeseen delays in obtaining joint State/Federal environmental permits for the pipe replacement in stream crossings and wetlands areas, Columbia was unable to complete the replacement of the remaining 1,700 feet of pipe prior to the expiration of the 18-month period allowed by § 192.611(d).

Columbia discontinued its pipe replacement project at the start of the winter heating season and intends to resume the project in May 2004. Columbia expects all 9,500 feet of its Line MC will be replaced not later than July 1, 2004. For this reason, Columbia requested a time extension until July 1, 2004, to comply with § 192.611(d).

Columbia provided the following justification for the waiver of their 30-inch Line MC pipeline:

- The 30-inch pipeline was internally inspected in 1999 using both geometry and high resolution magnetic flux leakage tools; no anomalies or dents were identified on the two pipeline segments in the stream crossing and wetland areas of Line MC.
- The cathodic protection test stations on these two segments of Line MC are above the minimum criteria.
- There have been no leaks on these two segments of Line MC.
- The existing pipe and coating on these two segments of Line MC appear in satisfactory condition.
- The existing Line MC was manufactured using a double submerged arc welding process.
- The existing Line MC was pressure tested twice; in 1962 during construction and again in 1974. The pipeline was tested above 100% specified minimum yield strength during both pressure tests.

After reviewing the waiver request, RSPA/OPS published a notice inviting interested persons to comment on whether a waiver should be granted (Notice 1) (68 FR 66156; Jan. 9, 2004). No comments were received from the public in response to the notice.

For the reasons explained above and those explained in Notice 1, RSPA/OPS finds that the requested waiver is not inconsistent with pipeline safety. Therefore, Columbia Gas's request for a waiver is granted until July 1, 2004.

Issued in Washington, DC on March 23, 2004.

Stacey L. Gerard,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

[FR Doc. 04-6904 Filed 3-26-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

Agency Information Collection Activities: Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice and request for comment.

SUMMARY: The OCC, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on a continuing information collection, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a respondent is not required to respond to, an information collection unless the information collection displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OCC is soliciting comment concerning its renewal, without change, of an information collection titled "(MA)—Municipal Securities Dealers and Government Securities Brokers and Dealers Registration and Withdrawal." The OCC also gives notice that it has sent the information collection to OMB for review and approval.

DATES: You should submit your comments to the OCC and the OMB Desk Officer by April 28, 2004.

ADDRESSES: You should direct comments to: OCC: Communications Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Public Information Room, Mailstop 1-5, Attention: 1557-0184, 250 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20219. Commenters are encouraged to submit comments by fax or e-mail. Comments may be sent by fax to (202) 874-4448, or by e-mail to regs.comments@occ.treas.gov. You can inspect and photocopy the comments at the OCC's Public Information Room, 250 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20219. You can make an appointment to inspect the comments by calling (202) 874-5043.

OMB: Joseph F. Lackey, Jr., OMB Desk Officer for the OCC, 1557-0184, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: You can request additional information or a copy of the collection from John Ference, Acting OCC Clearance Officer, or Camille Dixon, (202) 874-5090, Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 250 E Street, SW., Washington, DC 20219.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The OCC is proposing to extend OMB approval of the following information collection:

Title: (MA)—Municipal Securities Dealers and Government Securities Brokers and Dealers Registration and Withdrawal.

OMB Number: 1557-0184.

Description: This submission covers existing forms and involves no change to the forms. The OCC requests only that OMB extend its approval of the information collection.

This information collection is required to satisfy the requirements of the Securities Act Amendments of 1975 and the Government Securities Act of 1986 which require that any national bank that acts as a government securities broker/dealer or a municipal securities dealer notify the OCC of its broker/dealer activities. The OCC uses this information to determine which national banks are government and municipal securities broker/dealers and to monitor institutions entry into and exit from government and municipal securities broker/dealer activities. The OCC also uses the information in planning bank examinations.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Businesses or other for-profit; individuals.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 100.

Estimated Total Annual Responses: 3,080.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 2,706 hours.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Comments

The OCC has a continuing interest in the public's opinion regarding collections of information. Members of the public may submit comments regarding any aspect of this collection of information. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Dated: March 11, 2004.

Mark J. Tenhundfeld,

Assistant Director, Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division.

[FR Doc. 04-6950 Filed 3-26-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Area 1 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (Including the States of New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine)

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Area 1 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be conducted (via teleconference). The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is soliciting public comments, ideas and suggestions on improving customer service at the Internal Revenue Service.

DATES: The meeting will be held Tuesday, April 27, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marisa Knispel at 1-888-912-1227 (toll-free), or 718-488-3557 (non toll-free).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: An open meeting of the Area 1 Taxpayer Advocacy Panel will be held Tuesday, April 27, 2004 from 11 am EDT to 12 pm EDT via a telephone conference call. Individual comments will be limited to 5 minutes. If you would like to have the TAP consider a written statement, please call 1-888-912-1227 or 718-488-3557, or write Marisa Knispel, TAP Office, 10 MetroTech Center, 625 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Due to limited conference lines, notification of intent to participate in the telephone conference call meeting must be made with Marisa Knispel. Ms. Knispel can be reached at 1-888-912-1227 or 718-488-3557, or post comments to the Web site: <http://www.improveirs.org>.

The agenda will include: Various IRS issues.

Dated: March 23, 2004.

Bernard E. Coston,

Director, Taxpayer Advocacy Panel.

[FR Doc. 04-6962 Filed 3-26-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Open Meeting of the Small Business/Self Employed—Schedule C Non-Fileers Committee of the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

AGENCY: Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: An open meeting of the Small Business/Self Employed—Schedule C