

LETTER OF CONCERN

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

February 19, 1998

Mr. George Kolb
Director, Department of Public Utilities
City of Richmond
600 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

CPF No. 18002C

Dear Mr. Kolb:

On November 18-21, 1997, representatives of the Eastern Region, Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS), conducted an onsite inspection of your natural gas pipeline facilities and records in Richmond, Virginia.

During the inspection, it was noted that the natural gas cast iron, steel, and ductile iron main replacement or renewal program was substantially reduced during the last two (2) years as compared to the original fiscal years in 1993-94, and 1994-95. Mr. Galli, Gas and Water Administrator, and Mr. Howard, Senior Utility Engineer informed OPS inspectors that natural gas main replacement or renewal program was not conducted as planned because of other emergency water problems and less available budget. The Department of Transportation, Research and Special Programs Administration has issued two (2) alert notices emphasizing the importance of establishing a program to identify and replace cast iron that may threaten public safety. The city informed us that you had previously decided to go forward with a 40 year program to replace the cast iron piping system, starting in 1993-94. We urge you to maintain your capital project as planned for natural gas main replacement, especially the cast iron mains, to help assure public safety for the city.

We intend to visit the city again this Fall to follow-up on the above item. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office on the following number (202) 366-4580.

Sincerely,

William H. Gute
Eastern Regional Director
Office of Pipeline Safety

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