

WARNING LETTER

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

August 18, 1999

Mr. Tom Blake
Vice President
Equitable Production Company
1989 East Stone Drive
Kingsport, TN 37662-1983

CPF No. 29101W

Dear Mr. Blake:

On April 26-28, 1999, Derick Turner, representatives of the Southern Region, Office of Pipeline Safety, pursuant to Chapter 601 of 49 United States Code, conducted an onsite pipeline safety inspection of your Kentucky West Virginia Gas Company facilities and records at Prestonsburg, Kentucky.

As a result of the inspection, it appears that you have committed probable violations as noted below of pipeline safety regulations Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 192.

The items inspected and the probable violations are:

1. **§192.705(b) requires the operator to patrol transmission lines in class 3 locations at highway and railroad crossings at intervals not exceeding 4 1/2 months, but at least four times each calendar year.**

A review of patrolling records indicated that patrolling of highway and railroad crossings in class 3 locations was done only in March and June of 1998 and not the required 4 times in that calendar year.

2. **§192.731(c) requires for compressor stations that the operator inspect and test each remote control shutdown device at intervals not exceeding 15 months, but at least once each calendar year, to determine that it functions properly.**

A review of the ESD inspection records indicated that the devices were not inspected and tested in 1998.

Under 49 United States Code, § 60122, you are subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$25,000 for each violation for each day the violations persists up to a maximum of \$500,000 for any related series of violations.

We have reviewed the circumstances and supporting documents involved in this case, and have decided not to assess you a civil penalty. We advise you, however, that should you not correct the circumstances leading to the violations, we will take enforcement action when and if the continued violations comes to our attention.

You will not hear from us again with regard to the noted inspection and our subsequent action. Because of the good faith that you have exhibited up to this time, we expect that you will act to bring your pipeline (and/or your operations) into compliance with pipeline safety regulations.

Sincerely,

Frederick A. Joyner
Director, Southern Region
Office of Pipeline Safety