DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. 85–1W; Notice 1]

Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline; Petition for Waiver

The Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company has petitioned the Materials Transportation Bureau (MTB) for a waiver from compliance with the requirements of 49 CFR 192.553(d) to permit the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) of five transmission line segments shown on drawings TO–T16–300–1–66, TO–T16–300–1–67, TO–T16–300–1–70, and TO–T16–300–1–70A to be increased to 975 psig from the current 880 psig. These line segments are located in Sussex and Passaic Counties in New Jersey, with two (2) Class 3 locations between mainline valves (MLV) 325–1 and 326–1, one (1) Class 3 location between MLVZ 326–1 and 327–1, and two (2) Class 3 locations between MLV 328–1, and 329–1, on the Company[']s 300–1 transmission line.

Line 300–1 was designed and constructed in 1955 in accordance with the "USAS B31.8 Standard Code for Pressure Piping, Gas Transmission and Distribution Piping Systems," a code of industry consensus standards for safe gas piping systems. Pipe in line 300–1 is 24 inches in diameter, with a 0.375-inch wall thickness. It was manufactured according to API Standard 5LX, grade X52 requirements. The design pressure of the line sections involved is 975 psig, based on a design factor of 0.60.

When the Federal gas pipeline safety standards in 49 CFR Part 192 became effective in November 1970, the highest actual operating pressure of 880 psig (54 percent SMYS) became the MAOP of the line section in accordance with §192.619(a)(3). Subsequently, population density was determined under the requirements of §192.607. This study showed the five locations described above to be Class 3 locations. Thereafter, the entire line section was hydrostatically tested to at least 1462 psig for 8 hours, without leakage, a pressure level equivalent to 90 percent of the pipe's specified minimum yield strength (SMYS).

Under the provisions of §§192.553 and 192.555 governing permissible increases in a pipeline's MAOP (uprating), the 1462 psig pressure test and other steps performed by the Company requalified all but the five Class 3 segments of the line section for operation at an MAOP of 975 psig (60 percent SMYS). The five Class 3 segments are restricted from operation at the higher MAOP by §192.553(d), which provides in relevant part that "a new maximum allowable operating pressure established under this subpart may not exceed the maximum that would be allowed under this part for a new segment of pipeline constructed of the same materials in the same location." In accordance with §192.619(a), the maximum for a new pipeline in a Class 3 location constructed of pipe like that in line 300–1 would be 812 psig, or the design pressure for such a pipeline based on a 0.50 design factor. In contrast, this limitation did not affect the establishment of a 975 psig MAOP for the remaining Class 2 portion of the line section, because of a new pipeline of the same materials in the same Class 2 location would qualify for a 975 MAOP under §192.619(a) based on a design factor of 0.60. After the 1462 psig pressure test was made, four other segments of the line section between MLV 325–1 and MLV 326–1 have changed from Class 2 to Class 3 locations. However, under the provisions of §192.611(a), because they were previously tested to 90 percent of SMYS, these additional Class 3 segments may operate at their previously established MAOP of 975 psig. The §192.553(d) limitation does not apply since these additional segments were uprated to 975 psig before the change in class location occurred.

In support of its waiver request, the Company states that the current 880 psig operating pressure is no longer adequate to meet its delivery demands for the 300–1 line. The proposed increase pressure is part of a filing that is currently under consideration by the Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) to provide additional service to New England customers. Approval by FERC is anticipated in sufficient time to deliver additional gas for the 1985–86 heating season. This increase in capacity can in part be provided by uprating the five Class 3 segments for which the waiver is sought to 975 psig, or alternatively by replacing the five segments with new pipe at an estimated cost of $1,204,300. The Company also points out that the line section involved has been coated and cathodically protected against corrosion since 1956 and electrical surveys and visual inspections have shown the section to have no significant deterioration since the pressure tests were made in 1971 and 1973.

MTB beleives [sic] that a waiver of §192.553(d) to permit the proposed uprating should be granted because the five Class 3 segments for which the waiver is sought are not materially different with respect to design, construction, maintenance, and leak history from similar Class 3 segments in the same line section that now have an MAOP of 975 psig. The distinguishing factor is merely the timing of the 1462 psig qualifying pressure test. Had it been performed before the five segments involved changed from Class 2 to Class 3, the segments could have been qualified for the higher 975 MAOP without restriction by §192.553(d).

Interested persons are invited to comment on the proposed waiver by submitting in triplicate such data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the Docket and Notice numbers and be submitted to: Dockets Branch, Room 8426, Materials Transportation Bureau, Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C. 20590.

All comments received before April 25, 1985 will be considered before final action is taken. Late filed comments will be considered so far as practicable. All comments will be available for inspection at the Dockets Branch, Materials Transportation Bureau, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., before and after the closing date for comments. No public hearing is contemplated, but one may be held at a time and place set in a Notice in the **Federal Register** if requested by an interested person desiring to comment at a public hearing and raising a genuine issue.

(49 U.S.C. 1672; 49 CFR Part 1.53(a); Appendix A of Part 1, and Appendix A of Part 106)

Issueud [sic] in Washington, D.C., on March 21, 1985.

Richard L. Beam,
Associate Director for Pipeline Safety Regulation, Materials Transportation Bureau.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. 85–1W; Notice 2]

Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline; Grant of Waiver

The Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company petitioned the Materials Transportation Bureau (MTB) for a waiver from compliance with the requirements of 49 CFR §192.553(d) to permit the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) of five transmission line segments shown on drawings TO–T16–300–1–66, TO–T16–300–1–67, TO–T16–300–1–70, and TO–T16–300–1–70A to be increased to 975 psig from the current 880 psig. These line segments are located in Sussex and Passaic Counties in New Jersey, with two (2) Class 3 locations between mainline valves (MLV) 325–1 and 326–1, one (1) Class 3 location between MLV 326–1 and 327–1, and two (2) Class 3 locations between MLV 328–1 and 329–1, on the Company's 300–1 transmission line.

Line 300–1 was designed and constructed in 1955 in accordance with the "USAS B31.8 Standard Code for Pressure Piping, Gas Transmission and Distribution Piping Systems," a code of industry consensus standards for safe gas piping systems. Pipe in line 300–1 is 24 inches in diameter, with a 0.375-inch wall thickness. It was manufactured according to API Standard 5LX, grade X52 requirements. The design pressure of the line sections involved is 975 psig, based on a design factor of 0.60.

When the Federal gas pipeline safety standards in 49 CFR Part 192 became effective in November 1970, the highest actual operating pressure of 880 psig (54 percent specified minimum yield strength (SMYS) became the MAOP of the line section in accordance with §192.619(a)(3). Subsequently, population density was determined under the requirements of §192.607. This study showed the five locations described above to be Class 3 locations. Thereafter, the entire line section was hydrostatically tested to at least 1462 psig for 8 hours, without leakage, a pressure level equivalent to 90 percent of the pipe's SMYS.

Under the provisions of §§192.553 and 192.555 governing permissible increases in a pipeline's MAOP (uprating), the 1462 psig pressure test and other steps performed by the Company requalified all but the five Class 3 segments of the line section for operation at an MAOP of 975 psig (60 percent SMYS). The five Class 3 segments are restricted from operation at the higher MAOP by §192.553(d), which provides in relevant part that "a new maximum allowable operating pressure established under this subpart may not exceed the maximum that would be allowed under this part for a new segment of pipeline constructed of the same materials in the same location." In accordance with §192.619(a), the maximum for a new pipeline in a Class 3 location constructed of pipe like that in line 300–1 would be 812 psig, or the design pressure for such a pipeline based on a 0.50 design factor. In contrast, this limitation did not affect the establishment of a 975 psig MAOP for the remaining Class 2 portion of the line section, because a new pipeline of the same materials in the same Class 2 location would qualify for a 975 psig MAOP under §192.619(a) based on a design factor of 0.60. After the 1462 psig pressure test was made, four other segments of the line section between MLV 325–1 and MLV 326–1 have changed from Class 2 to Class 3 locations. However, under the provisions of §192.611(a), because they were previously tested to 90 percent of SMYS, these additional Class 3 segments may operate at their previously established MAOP of 975 psig. The §192.553(d) limitation does not apply since these additional segments were uprated to 975 psig before the change in class location occurred.

In support of its waiver request, the Company states that the current 880 psig operating pressure is no longer adequate to meet its delivery demands for the 300–1 line. The proposed increased pressure is part of a filing that is currently under consideration by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to provide additional service to New England customers. Approval by FERC is anticipated in sufficient time to deliver additional gas for the 1985–86 heating season. This increase in capacity can in part be provided by uprating the five Class 3 segments for which the waiver is sought to 975 psig, or alternatively by replacing the five segments with new pipe at an estimated cost of $1,204,300. The Company also points out that the line section involved has been coated and cathodically protected against corrosion since 1956, and electrical surveys and visual inspections have shown the section to have no significant deterioration since the pressure tests were made in 1971 and 1973.

In response to this petition, MTB issued a notice of a petition for waiver inviting interested persons to comment (50 FR 11987; March 26, 1985). In this notice, MTB stated that it believed that a waiver of §192.553(d) to permit the proposed uprating should be granted because the five Class 3 segments for which the waiver is sought are not materially different with respect to design, construction, maintenance, and leak history from similar Class 3 segments in the same line section that now have an MAOP of 975 psig. The distinguishing factor is merely the timing of the 1462 psig qualifying pressure test. Had it been performed before the five segments involved changed from Class 2 to Class 3, the segments could have been qualified under §192.611(a) for the higher 975 psig MAOP without restriction by §192.553(d). Comments were received from two pipeline operators and one industry organization in response to the invitation to comment and all supported the granting of the waiver. The commenters indicated that, under the conditions faced by the petitioner, there would not be any reduction in public safety and a waiver is the most logical course of action.

In consideration of the foregoing, MTB, by this order, finds that compliance with §192.553(d) is unnecessary for the reasons set forth in Notice 1, and that the requested waiver would not be inconsistent with pipeline safety. Accordingly, effective immediately, Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company is granted a waiver from compliance with §192.553(d) regarding the five Class 3 segments described above for the purpose of uprating to 975 psig.

(49 U.S.C. 1672; 49 CFR Part 1.53(a); Appendix A of Part 1, and Appendix A of Part 106)

Issued in Washington, DC, on June 27, 1985.

Richard L. Beam,
Associate Director for Pipeline Safety Regulation, Materials Transportation Bureau.

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