

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. P-93-2W; Notice 2]

Grant of Waiver: Repair of Gas Transmission Lines

Summary. The Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) waives certain maintenance regulations to permit various gas pipeline operators to repair steel transmission lines with Clock Spring® wrap. The waiver, which is subject to conditions and future performance evaluations, advances the use of new technology.

Background. Twenty-eight companies and their subsidiaries,¹ all gas pipeline operators, requested that RSPA waive the safety standards in 49 CFR 192.713(a) and 192.485 for gas transmission lines operating at 40 percent or more of specified minimum yield strength (SMYS). The operators requested the waiver to get permission to repair the lines with Clock Spring® wrap.² The request came in a November 22, 1993, petition submitted by the Interstate Natural Gas Association of America (INGAA), a gas pipeline trade association.³

¹ ANR Pipeline Co.; Arkla Energy Resources Co. (including Mississippi River Transmission Co.); CNG Transmission Corp.; Colorado Interstate Gas Co. (including Wyoming Interstate Co., Ltd. and Young Gas Storage Co., LTD.); Columbia Gas Transmission Corp.; Columbia Gulf Transmission Co.; El Paso Natural Gas Co.; Enron Corp. (including Florida Gas Transmission Co., Houston Pipe Line Co., Intratex Gas Company, Northern Border Pipeline Co., Northern Natural Gas Company, Oasis Pipeline Co., and Transwestern Pipeline Co.); Granite State Gas Transmission Company; Great Lakes Gas Transmission Co.; Kern River Gas Transmission Co.; KN Energy, Inc.; Koch Industries, Inc. and all subsidiaries; Michigan Consolidated Gas Co.; Mid Louisiana Gas Co.; Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America and all subsidiaries; Michigan Consolidated Gas Co.; Mid Louisiana Gas Co.; Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America and all subsidiaries; Northwest Pipeline Corp.; Pacific Gas & Electric Co.; Pacific Gas Transmission Co.; Panhandle Eastern Corp. (including Panhandle Eastern Pipeline Co., Texas Eastern Transmission Co., Trunkline Gas Co., and Algonquin Gas Transmission Co.); Questar Pipeline Co.; Southern California Gas Co.; Southern Natural Gas (including Southern Natural Gas Co., South Georgia Natural Gas Co., Sea Robin Pipeline Co., Sonat Intrastate-Alabama Inc., and Bear Creek Storage Co.); Tenneco Gas Transportation Co. (including Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co., East Tennessee Natural Gas Co., Midwestern Gas Transmission Co., and Channel Gas Transmission Co.); Texas Gas Transmission Corp.; Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corp.; Williams Natural Gas Co.; and Williston Basin Interstate Pipeline Co.

² Clock Spring® wrap, manufactured by the Clock Spring Company of North America, is a composite material of polyester resin reinforced by glass filament. On installation, it is tightly wound and adhesively bonded to damaged pipe.

³ By letter dated March 22, 1994, INGAA added Granite State Gas Transmission Company to the original list of companies seeking a waiver.

Under § 192.713(a), each imperfection or damage that impairs the serviceability of a segment of transmission line operating at 40 percent or more of SMYS must be repaired. If it is feasible to remove the line from service, pipe containing the imperfection or damage must be replaced. Otherwise, a full encirclement welded split sleeve must be installed over the imperfection or damage. The waiver request asks permission to use Clock Spring® wrap for repairs instead of the methods prescribed by § 192.713(a).

Section 192.485(a) requires replacement of transmission line pipe that is generally corroded to the extent that wall thickness is unsafe, unless operating pressure is reduced appropriately or, if the area of general corrosion is small, the corroded pipe is repaired. A similar requirement applies under § 192.485(b) to transmission lines with unsafe localized corrosion pitting, except that repair is not limited to small areas. The waiver request asks permission to use Clock Spring® wrap to repair large areas of general corrosion as an alternative to pipe replacement or pressure reduction under § 192.485(a).⁴

In an earlier waiver of § 192.713(a), RSPA allowed Panhandle Eastern Corporation (Panhandle) to use Clock Spring® wrap to repair six locations on its Line # 2 in Fayette County, Ohio (58 FR 13823; March 15, 1993). The waiver was subject to the conditions that Panhandle: (1) Install the wrap using the procedures described in documents supporting its petition; (2) perform the inspections described in its petition;⁵ (3) promptly report to RSPA the results of the inspections and any unfavorable performance of the wrap, and (4) determine and report to RSPA the cause of any unfavorable performance. In addition, Panhandle advised that it would determine the need to repair generally corroded areas by using ASME B31G, "Manual for Determining the Remaining Strength of Corroded Pipelines." Also, Panhandle said it would determine whether Clock Spring® wrap would provide a reliable

⁴ Section 192.485(a) does not preclude the use of Clock Spring® wrap to repair small areas of general corrosion, nor does § 192.485(b) preclude the use of Clock Spring® wrap to repair localized corrosion pitting. However, if these defects are on transmission lines operating at 40 percent or more of SMYS, § 192.713(a) precludes their repair with Clock Spring® wrap.

⁵ The inspections include examination and measurement of Clock Spring® wrap repairs and samples of wrap buried next to the repairs. Two repairs are to be evaluated at intervals of 2, 4, and 8 years. Measurements include strain gage readings of two repairs at 6-month intervals to verify the absence of wrap and adhesive creep.

repair in particular instances by using a computer program developed by the Gas Research Institute (GRI) based on laboratory and field tests of pipe repaired with the wrap.

In the present waiver request, the operators offered to conform to the Panhandle waiver, except that they would: (1) Use an enhanced program, GRI WRAP, to determine whether Clock Spring® wrap would provide a reliable repair in particular instances; (2) use either the ASME B31G procedure or RSTRENG⁶ to determine if corroded areas require repair under § 192.485; (3) coordinate Clock Spring® wrap installations with GRI (to establish a representative data base to support a possible rule change), and within 2 years, with GRI's assistance, excavate and evaluate a statistical sampling of sites,⁷ record the results, and give the results to RSPA upon request; (4) report Clock Spring® wrap repairs to RSPA or its state agent within 30 days of repair; (5) use personnel to install Clock Spring® wrap who have been trained and certified by Clock Spring Company; and (6) record installations of Clock Spring® wrap under § 192.709.⁸

Comments on Proposed Waiver/ In Notice 1 of this proceeding (59 FR 49739; September 29, 1994), RSPA proposed to grant the present waiver request for the safety and economic reasons stated in the notice. However, we proposed to restrict the waiver to repairs no more than 10 feet long. We felt this restriction was needed because the pipeline industry has had no experience in repairing large areas of generally corroded pipe other than by pipe replacement. At the same time, we specifically requested comments on the aspect of the waiver request that would allow unlimited areas of general corrosion to be repaired with Clock Spring® wrap. In addition, regarding the offer to report Clock Spring® wrap repairs, we proposed that reports be sent both to RSPA and to the state agent. We also proposed that the reports be sent

⁶ RSTRENG is a computer program developed to carry out the procedure called "A Modified Criterion for Evaluating the Remaining Strength of Corroded Pipe." This procedure was developed by Battelle for the American Gas Association as an alternative to the ASME B31G procedures. Both B31G and RSTRENG may be used to comply with § 192.485.

⁷ The INGAA petition defined a site to include multiple repairs on a single pipeline in the same area or multiple pipelines in the same right-of-way in the same area.

⁸ Section 192.709 requires pipeline operators to keep a record of each repair to a transmission line for as long as the line is in service. This requirement applies to all transmission line repairs, and would apply to Clock Spring® wrap repairs regardless of the offer to comply with the regulation.

before the time of installation to give RSPA or the state agent a chance to inspect the installation process. As to the offer concerning personnel qualification, we proposed that initial training and certification be supplemented by periodic refresher training and recertification. Finally, we said we would review the performance evaluations of Clock Spring® wrap repairs, and consider terminating the waiver 3 years after it is granted.

RSPA received written comments on the proposed waiver from eight entities: INGAA, Enron Operations Corp. (Enron), Southern Natural Gas (Southern), Coastal Corporation (Coastal), Bay State Gas Company (Bay State), Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation, Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America (Natural), and Panhandle. The comments are discussed below according to the issues presented. All the commenters supported the proposed waiver, although some commenters requested changes in the proposed conditions under which the waiver could be applied.

Reporting Repairs. INGAA, Enron, Natural, and Panhandle advised that 30 days' advance notification would not be in the public interest when repairs are needed quickly. Coastal wanted RSPA to accept the original proposal to report Clock Spring® wrap repairs within 30 days after installation. INGAA and Natural suggested the waiver allow operators to give notice when they decide to use Clock Spring® wrap to repair a damaged pipeline. The operators, said INGAA, Coastal, and Natural, should then be allowed to proceed immediately with repairs, unless, INGAA and Natural said, the appropriate agency tells the operator it wants to view the installation. Panhandle opposed this latter condition because it would make pipeline maintenance subject to agency schedules.

Given the importance of repairing unsafe conditions as soon as practicable, requiring notification of Clock Spring® wrap repairs at least 30 days beforehand could discourage use of the wrap. Although we agree operators should not have to conform their repair plans to government work schedules, RSPA or state agents need some period of advance notification to prepare to inspect wrap installations. Therefore, as a condition of the waiver, we are requiring that operators report scheduled Clock Spring® wrap repairs a reasonable time in advance of installation to allow for government inspection. Under this condition, which does not apply to emergency installations, deciding when to install

Clock Spring® wrap after giving notice must take into account the reasonable travel time of government inspectors. But operators would not have to delay installation to conform to government work schedules apart from reasonable travel time.

Personnel Training. INGAA, Coastal, and Natural suggested the waiver allow installation personnel who have been trained and certified by the Clock Spring Company to train and certify other personnel. Also, INGAA suggested refresher training and recertification should be required only for personnel who infrequently install Clock Spring® wrap. Enron recommended that certified installers maintain their qualifications under RSPA's proposed qualification of personnel rules.⁹

Our concern about Clock Spring® wrap installers is that they be qualified. The suggestion that persons who have received initial training and certification from the Clock Spring Company be allowed to train and certify others is reasonable and would satisfy this concern. As for refresher training, installers would be subject to the refresher training requirements of the proposed qualification rules. Because we probably will issue final qualification rules before installers need refresher training, it is not now necessary to make refresher training part of this waiver. However, when we consider the performance evaluations of Clock Spring® wrap, we will reexamine the refresher training issue if final qualification rules have not been published.

Waiver Termination. Enron asked us not to include a termination date in the waiver. Instead, Enron recommended the waiver remain in effect until it is revoked or becomes unnecessary because of a change in the regulations. Southern advised the waiver should be extended after 3 years if the performance evaluations are favorable.

By saying we would consider terminating the waiver within 3 years after it is granted, we meant the waiver might be revoked after 3 years if the performance of Clock Spring® wrap repairs is generally unfavorable. We did not intend for the waiver to last only 3 years. If the initial evaluations are favorable, the waiver would continue in effect, unless new information causes us to revoke the waiver or a rule change makes the waiver no longer necessary.

⁹ RSPA proposed qualification standards for persons who perform, or supervise the performance of, operation, maintenance, or emergency-response functions regulated under 49 CFR Part 192 or 195 (59 FR 39506; Aug. 3, 1994). To maintain qualifications, refresher training was proposed to occur at 24-month intervals after certification.

Repair Length. Southern requested that we clarify that the proposed 10-foot restriction applies to corroded pipe under § 192.485(a), and not to imperfections or damage under § 192.713(a). Coastal asked that we eliminate the proposed restriction entirely, saying there is no practical limit to repairs using Clock Spring® wrap. Bay State said the 10-foot limit was arbitrary, since Clock Spring® wrap has been shown to be an effective alternative to pipe replacement. Panhandle felt the 10-foot limit was unnecessary and artificial.

As stated above, RSPA specifically asked for comments on the merits of allowing unlimited areas of general corrosion to be repaired with Clock Spring® wrap. None of the commenters expressed concern about the safety of using Clock Spring® wrap beyond the 10-foot range. Indeed, a few commenters pointed out there is no engineering basis for imposing a 10-foot limit.

Accordingly, in the absence of an engineering basis, and considering the sound GRI test results and the plans to evaluate Clock Spring® wrap installations, we believe the waiver may be applied safely without a limit on the length of repair.

Role of GRI. Panhandle requested clarification of GRI's role in carrying out the waiver. The operator did not welcome assistance from GRI in any capacity other than as a record keeper.

Because Clock Spring® wrap is new technology, a major purpose of this waiver is to provide an opportunity to evaluate the performance of the wrap under various operating conditions. Long range, if the results are favorable, we would use the collected data as a basis to change the safety standards that, in certain instances, prohibit the use of Clock Spring® wrap as a pipeline repair method. As mentioned above, GRI has agreed to assist operators in this data collection effort by assuring the data are representative. GRI also will assist operators to evaluate the wrap in a statistical sampling of sites, record the results, and provide the results to RSPA. GRI's participation will add uniformity and reliability to evaluations that might otherwise vary among operators. Thus, we believe GRI's participation is an integral part of this waiver. Any operator who is unwilling to cooperate with GRI in the data collection aspect of this waiver is not entitled to apply the waiver.

Grant of Waiver. Therefore, for the reasons stated in Notice 1 of this proceeding, RSPA, by this order, finds that the requested waiver is not inconsistent with pipeline safety. The petition for waiver of §§ 192.485 and

192.713(a), allowing the use of Clock Spring® wrap to repair large areas of general corrosion or other imperfections or damage on transmission lines operating at 40 percent or more of SMYS, is granted to the 28 companies and their subsidiaries, subject to the following conditions:

(1) Clock Spring® wrap must be installed using procedures recommended by the manufacturer;

(2) Clock Spring® wrap must be installed consistent with the program, GRI WRAP;

(3) Clock Spring® wrap must be installed consistent with a GRI plan, including, at 2-year intervals, excavating and evaluating a statistical sample of sites, recording the results, and sending the results to RSPA;

(4) To allow inspection by RSPA and state agencies serving as interstate enforcement agents, scheduled non-emergency installations of Clock Spring® wrap must be reported (by phone, fax, or mail) a reasonable time before installation to the RSPA pipeline regional office and state agent with authority over the repair; and

(5) Persons installing Clock Spring® wrap must have been trained and certified in installation procedures either by the Clock Spring Company or by persons the Clock Spring Company has trained and certified.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. § 60118(c)

George W. Tenley, Jr.,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Fund Availability Under the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program

AGENCY: Veterans Health Administration, VA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Veterans Affairs is announcing the availability of funds for applications for assistance under VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem program. This Notice contains information concerning the

program, application process and amount of funding available.

DATES: An original completed grant application (plus three copies) for assistance under the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program must be received in Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences Service in Washington, DC by 5:30 p.m. Eastern Time on April 28, 1995. Applications may not be sent by facsimile (FAX). In the interest of fairness to all competing applicants this deadline is firm as to date and hour, and VA will treat as ineligible for consideration any application that is received after the deadline. Applicants should take this practice into account and make early submission of their material to avoid any risk of loss of eligibility brought about by unanticipated delays or other delivery-related problems.

FOR A COPY OF THE APPLICATION PACKAGE,

CONTACT: For a copy of the application package contact Veterans Industries, 10770 N. 46th Street (A 400), Tampa, FL, 33617; (813) 228-2871 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (this is not a toll-free call). For documents relating to the VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program see the final rule codified at 38 CFR 17.700 published elsewhere in this Federal Register (see also 59 FR 28284). Funds made available through this Notice are subject to those regulations.

ADDRESSES: An original completed grant application (plus three copies) must be submitted to the following address: Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences Service (111C), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20420, Attention: Roger J. Casey. Applications must be *received* in Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences Service by the application deadline.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Roger J. Casey, Program Manager, VA Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program, Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences Service (111C), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20420; (202) 535-7313 (this is not a toll-free number).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This Notice announces the availability of funds for assistance under VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem program. This program is authorized by Pub. L. 102-590, the Homeless Veterans

Comprehensive Service Programs Act of 1992. Funding applied for under this Notice may be used for: (1) Expansion, remodeling or alteration of existing buildings; (2) acquisition of buildings, and acquisition and rehabilitation of buildings; (3) new construction; and (4) procurement of vans. Applicants must have established supportive housing or supportive services programs after November 10, 1992. Applicants may apply for more than one type of assistance.

Those applicants interested in applying for per diem payments, or in-kind assistance through VA in lieu of per diem payments, need only submit Request for Recognition of Eligibility. Requirements for receiving per diem payments are specified at 38 CFR 17.715-17.723.

Grant applicants may not receive assistance to replace funds provided by any state or local government to assist homeless persons. For existing projects, VA will fund only the portion of the project that will expand the program. A proposal for an existing project that seeks to shift its focus by changing the population to be served or the precise mix of services to be offered is not eligible for consideration. Not more than 25 percent of services available in projects funded through this grant program may be provided to clients who are not receiving those services as veterans.

Authority

VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program is authorized by sections 3 and 4 of Pub. L. 102-590, the Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Service Programs Act of 1992; 38 USC 7721 note. The Program is implemented by the final rule codified at 38 CFR 17.700 published elsewhere in this Federal Register. The funds made available under this Notice are subject to the requirements of those regulations.

Allocation

A total of \$6.0 million is available for the grant and per diem components of this program. A maximum of one award will be made for the procurement of a van or vans as Pub. L. 102-590 limits the number of such grants to twenty and VA made nineteen such awards last year. Such award, like all others, will be contingent upon the applicant achieving the requisite score.