

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

THE PETITION OF THE UNION LIGHT, HEAT AND)
POWER COMPANY FOR A DEVIATION FROM 807) CASE NO. 99-240
KAR 5:006, SECTIONS 25(5)(A)(1) AND (2))

O R D E R

On June 14, 1999, The Union Light, Heat and Power Company ("ULH&P") applied to the Commission for authority to deviate from 807 KAR 5:006, Section 25(5)(a)(1) and (2).¹

ULH&P proposes to eliminate the annual curb box and valve accessibility inspection, and to substitute for it an inspection of curb box and valve operability every 3 years in conjunction with its leak survey. Currently ULH&P inspects each curb box and valve for accessibility annually and for operability every 10 years.

In addition, ULH&P requests permission to perform a 10-year residential customer service regulator, vent, and relief valve inspection geographically by dividing its service area into 10 sections and inspecting the equipment of each section annually,

¹ 807 KAR 5:006, Section 25(5)(a)(1), states At intervals not to exceed every fifteen (15) months but at least once each calendar year, the utility shall inspect and visually examine accessibility of the curb box and valve on a service line.

807 KAR 5:006, Section 25(5)(c), states At intervals not to exceed the periodic meter test intervals, the curb box and valve on the service line shall be inspected for operable condition.

one section per year. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 25(5)(a)(2)(b),² requires the utility to inspect the equipment every 10 years. ULH&P indicates that the geographical inspection may exceed the 10-year inspection requirement to a maximum of 19 years.

ULH&P states that eliminating annual curb box inspections and performing curb box and valve operability checks every 3 years in conjunction with the leak survey will provide a more efficient means of accomplishing the Commission's regulatory objectives. In response to the Commission's Order dated August 12, 1999, ULH&P indicates that 351 curb boxes and valves were inaccessible during 1997 inspections and that number dropped to 237 in 1998. ULH&P indicates that it serves 75,222 residential customers and that approximately 34,000 curb boxes have inside meter sets.

After reviewing the record and being advised, the Commission finds that:

1. ULH&P has requested permission to deviate from 807 KAR 5:006, Section 25(5)(a)(1) and (2), and has proposed to inspect the curb boxes and valves for accessibility and operability every 3 years.
2. ULH&P proposes to conduct the inspection of residential regulators, vents, and relief valves vents geographically by dividing its service area into 10 sections. Each section would be tested once every 10 years.
3. ULH&P has not provided evidence of safe operation by reducing the inspection for curb box and valve accessibility from annually to 3 years.

² 807 KAR 5:006, Section 25(5)(a)(2)(b), states At intervals not to exceed the periodic meter test intervals, individual residential customer service regulators, vents and relief valve vents shall be checked for satisfactory operation.

4. ULH&P's request for permission to deviate from KAR 5:006, Section 25(5)(a)(1), should be denied because it will reduce the effectiveness of the Commission's gas safety regulations.

5. ULH&P's request to inspect regulators, relief valves and vents geographically should be denied because some of the equipment will not be inspected within the 10 years as required by the Commission's regulations.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

1. ULH&P's request for permission to deviate from 807 KAR 5:006, Section 25(5)(a)(1) and (2), is denied.

2. ULH&P's plan to inspect service regulators, relief valves, and vents geographically is denied.

Done at Frankfort, Kentucky, this 23rd day of September, 1999.

By the Commission

ATTEST:

Executive Director