

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120**

Theresa Karaffa v. Peoples Natural Gas
Company

Public Meeting September 13, 2012
2288380-ALJ
Docket No. C-2012-2288380

Debra Simconis v. Peoples Natural Gas
Company

Public Meeting September 13, 2012
2260079-ALJ
Docket No. C-2011-2260079

**MOTION OF
CHAIRMAN ROBERT F. POWELSON**

Before the Commission today for disposition are two Formal Complaints against Peoples Natural Gas Company (Peoples). While not consolidated, both Complaints raise the same issue: whether Peoples provided unreasonable service by paying to replace the risers¹ of certain customers but not others. In both cases, Peoples sought to have the Complaints dismissed. And, in both cases, the ALJs found that the Commission does not have jurisdiction since maintenance of risers are within the purview of customers, not Peoples.


I disagree that examining ownership of the facilities at issue completes the necessary analysis. Rather, I believe it is necessary to determine:

1. Whether Peoples paid its for riser replacement program out of retained earnings or ratepayer funds;
2. Whether Peoples undertook any operational activities or line replacement activities in the Hunting Ridge Subdivision that had the effect of raising the operating pressures in that subdivision, or otherwise disturbing the service lines in the subdivision immediately prior to the period when these risers developed leaks. If so, Peoples should describe these activities, when they occurred, and whether these activities could have precipitated these riser leaks; and
3. Whether Peoples undertook an investigation on the root causes of these riser leaks, and whether or not the service line installer methods or materials were at fault for these leaks. If so, Peoples should describe with reasonable detail the root cause, and who installed the original risers.

I therefore believe that these cases should be remanded to address the aforementioned issues, as well as any others that may arise during the course of the litigation. For the sake of judicial economy, however, these matters should be consolidated into a single proceeding.

THEREFORE, I MOVE THAT:

1. These matters be remanded and consolidated for the purposes set forth herein; and
2. The Office of Special Assistants prepare an Opinion and Order consistent with this Motion.


ROBERT F. POWELSON
CHAIRMAN

DATE: September 13, 2012

¹ A "riser" is the component of a natural gas distribution system that connects to a service line, rises above ground, and connects to the meter set. Risers are not part of Peoples' jurisdictional gas system.