

**PENNSYLVANIA
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

Public Meeting held June 16, 2022

Commissioners Present:

Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, Chairman
John F. Coleman, Jr., Vice Chairman
Ralph V. Yanora

Docket Number:
A-2022-3031656

Application for Approval of Abandonment of
Service by Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. to
One Residential Premises Located in Washington,
Washington County, Pennsylvania

ORDER

BY THE COMMISSION:

On March 24, 2022, Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. (Columbia Gas), Utility Code 120700, filed the above-captioned Application seeking a Certificate of Public Convenience authorizing it to abandon natural gas distribution service to one residential premises located in Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania. The Application was filed pursuant to Section 1102(a)(2) of the Public Utility Code, 66 Pa. C.S. §1102(a)(2). For the reasons expressed herein, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission) approves Columbia Gas's Application to abandon natural gas service to one residential premises.

Columbia Gas is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Columbia Gas is currently engaged in the business of selling and distributing natural gas to retail customers within the Commonwealth. Columbia

Gas provides retail natural gas service to approximately 440,000 customers in 26 counties of Pennsylvania, pursuant to certificates of public convenience granted by the Commission.

Columbia Gas is seeking approval to abandon natural gas service to one residential premises in Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania. Columbia Gas states that the one residential premises is served by an 873-foot-long distribution main owned and operated by Columbia Gas. Columbia Gas states that there has been no natural gas usage from that section of main since July of 2020 when the previous property owner chose to disconnect gas service and converted to propane. Columbia Gas also states that the distribution main which Columbia Gas proposes to abandon is no longer needed for the operation of Columbia Gas's system. Application ¶¶4-5, and 7.

Columbia Gas states that the distribution main it is seeking to abandon consists of two-inch diameter, medium-pressure plastic pipe, which was installed in 1975. Columbia Gas states that due to the main's age and condition, it must either be replaced or retired. Columbia Gas states that replacing the distribution main is not justified since the premises has been disconnected from the distribution system since July 2020 and there would be no expected revenue from the replacement of the facilities. Columbia Gas states that replacing the facilities that formally served the residential premises would result in a net increase to Columbia Gas's capital investment of at least \$260,000. Columbia Gas states that it is neither in the public interest, nor in the interest of Columbia Gas's other customers, to replace the facilities that formerly served the residential premises. Application ¶¶5- 6.

Columbia Gas states that prior to filing this Application, it sent a certified letter, dated February 24, 2022, to the property owner of the one residential premises (Property Owner). Columbia Gas states that it informed the Property Owner that on or after March 10, 2022, Columbia Gas would be seeking Commission approval to abandon service to the residential premises which would result in the unavailability of gas distribution service to the premises in the future from Columbia Gas. Columbia Gas states that the letter

advised the Property Owner to contact Columbia Gas if they had any questions or concerns. Columbia Gas states that as of the filing date of this application, it had not been contacted by the Property Owner. Application ¶7.

Accordingly, Columbia Gas requests that the Commission issue a Certificate of Public Convenience pursuant to 66 Pa. C.S. § 1102(a)(2) to permit Columbia Gas to abandon natural gas distribution service to one residential premises located in Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania.

Columbia Gas concludes that approval of its application is necessary and proper for the following reasons:

- 1) The medium-pressure distribution main which formerly provided service to the one residential premises must either be replaced or retired.
- 2) The residential premises was disconnected in July of 2020 and was converted to propane.
- 3) The significant cost of replacement of the medium-pressure distribution main which formerly served the one residential premises cannot be justified, since such facilities will not produce any revenues and are not otherwise operationally needed.

Notice of the filing of this Application was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on Saturday, April 9, 2022. Columbia Gas published notice of this application in the area newspaper¹ on April 8, 2022, and the notarized proof of publication was furnished to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission on April 25, 2022. No protests were filed, and no hearings were held.

¹ The Observer-Reporter.

Upon full consideration of the facts presented in this case, we concur with Columbia Gas's reasons for abandonment of the one residential premises located in Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania, and agree that it is not reasonable and prudent to replace the distribution main which formerly served the one residential premises. Therefore, we approve Columbia Gas's Application to abandon natural gas service to the one residential premises. However, we note that the abandonment shall be completed in accordance with 52 Pa Code §§ 56.91 - 56.100; **THEREFORE,**

IT IS ORDERED:

1. That the Application for Approval of Abandonment of Service by Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. to one residential premises located in Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania is hereby approved.

2. That a Certificate of Public Convenience be issued pursuant to 66 Pa. C.S. § 1102(a)(2) authorizing Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. to abandon natural gas distribution service to one residential premises located in Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania as discussed in the body of this Order.

3. That within ten (10) days following the abandonment of natural gas distribution service to one residential premises, Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. shall file a verified Notice of Abandonment with this Commission at Docket No. A-2022-3031656, containing the following information:

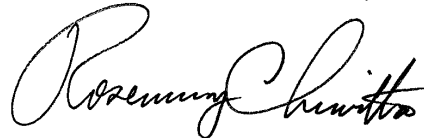
- (a) The completion date for the abandonment of gas service to one residential premises;

- (b) A statement explaining how compliance with 49 C.F.R. § 192.727 relating to abandonment or deactivation of facilities was completed; and
- (c) A copy of the verified Notice of Abandonment shall also be served upon the Gas Safety Division of this Commission's Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement.

4. That a copy of this Order shall be served upon Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc., the Commission's Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement – Gas Safety Division, the Office of Small Business Advocate, Office of Consumer Advocate, and the owner of the one residential premises located in Washington, Washington County, Pennsylvania.

5. That upon filing of the notice mentioned in Ordering Paragraph 3, above, that this case be marked closed.

BY THE COMMISSION,



Rosemary Chiavetta

Secretary

(SEAL)

ORDER ADOPTED: June 16, 2022

ORDER ENTERED: June 16, 2022