


National Transportation Safety Board  
Office of Railroad, Pipeline, and Hazardous Materials Investigations  
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20594

Reference: NTSB Accident No. DCA16FP003, Silver Spring, MD.  
Your Interview conducted on August 20, 2016.

I have reviewed my interview transcript from the above referenced accident and:

- (A) I have no comments to make.
- (B) My comments are submitted herewith.
- (C) My comments are marked on the attached copy.

  
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Lyle Kenneth Davis Jr.

2-27-17  
-----  
Date

## NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

-----:  
 IN RE: :  
 :  
 THE EXPLOSION OF APARTMENT : NTSB Accident No.  
 BUILDING 8701 OF FLOWER : DCA16FP003  
 BRANCH APARTMENTS IN SILVER:  
 SPRING, MARYLAND ON :  
 AUGUST 10, 2016 :  
 :  
 :  
 -----:

INTERVIEW OF: LYLE KENNETH DAVIS, JR.

Saturday,  
 August 20, 2016

Washington Gas Facility  
 Chillum, Maryland

BEFORE

RAVI CHHATRE, NTSB  
 RACHAEL GUNARATNAM, NTSB  
 KALU KELLY EMEABA, NTSB  
 LT. WILLIAM OLIN, Montgomery County  
 RASHMIKANT AMROLIWALA, State of Maryland  
 Public Service Commission  
 DOUGLAS STAEBLER, Washington Gas  
 STEVE PRICE, Washington Gas  
 DAVID SPANGLER, DOT Pipeline Safety  
 Compliance

This transcript was produced from audio  
 provided by the National Transportation Safety Board.

## APPEARANCES:

On behalf of the Interviewee and Washington Gas  
Company:

SPENCER NICHOLS, ESQ.  
Associate General Counsel  
Washington Gas Company

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Good afternoon.

3 Today is Saturday, August 28th, 2016. We are currently  
4 at -- I got it wrong. I'm sorry. Off the record.  
5 I've got the wrong text here.

6 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went  
7 off the record briefly)

8 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Good afternoon.

9 Today is Saturday, August 28th, 2016. We are currently  
10 in Washington Gas facility at Chillum. And we are  
11 meeting in regards to the explosion of Apartment  
12 Building 8701 of Flower Branch Apartments in Silver  
13 Spring, Maryland, and investigating the explosion that  
14 occurred on August 10, 2016.

15 The NTSB investigation number for this  
16 accident is DCA16FP003. My name is Ravi Chhatre. I am  
17 with National Transportation Safety Board, located in  
18 Washington, DC. And I'm investigator in charge of this  
19 accident.

20 I would like to start by notifying everyone  
21 present in this room that we are recording this  
22 interview for transcription at a later date. All  
23 parties will have a chance to review the transcripts if  
24 and when they are completed.

25 Also, I would like to inform Mr. Lyle Davis

1 that you are permitted to have one other person present  
2 with you during the interview. This is a person of  
3 your choice. Your supervisor, friend, family member,  
4 or if you choose, no one at all.

5 Please state for the record your full name,  
6 spelling of your name, contact information, such as  
7 work phone, email address, or postal mailing address,  
8 and whom you have chosen to be with you during your  
9 interview.

10 MR. DAVIS: Okay. So you want name,  
11 address, phone number, spelled --

12 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Spelling of your name  
13 --

14 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

15 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: -- and whom you have  
16 chosen.

17 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

18 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: If you forget  
19 anything I'll remind you.

20 MR. DAVIS: I have Spencer Nichols sitting  
21 here with me.

22 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

23 MR. DAVIS: And my name's Lyle Kenneth  
24 Davis, Jr. L-Y-L-E, Kenneth, K-E-N-N-E-T-H, Davis, D-  
25 A-V-I-S, Junior, J-R, J-U-N-I-O-R. I live at 123

1 Walnut Street, Ridgelee, Maryland 21660. And my, do  
2 you want my personal phone number?

3 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: No.

4 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

5 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Now, I would like to  
6 go around the room and have each person introduce  
7 themself. Please state your name, spelling of your  
8 name, your title, and the organization that you  
9 represent, and your contact information, such as work  
10 phone, email address, and mailing address. We will  
11 start from my left and go around the room.

12 INVESTIGATOR GUNARATNAM: Rachael  
13 Gunaratnam, R-A-C-H-A-E-L, G-U-N-A-R-A-T-N-A-M, NTSB  
14 Hazmat Investigator. Phone number, [REDACTED].

15 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Kalu Kelly Emeaba, K-  
16 A-L-U, K-E-L-L-Y, E-M-E-A-B-A. I'm an NTSB  
17 Investigator. My phone number is [REDACTED].

18 LT. OLIN: Lieutenant William Olin, Fire and  
19 Explosives Investigator from Montgomery County,  
20 Maryland. Office address, 100 Edison Park Dr.,  
21 Gaithersburg, Maryland, 20877. Phone number, [REDACTED]  
22 2264, email, William, [REDACTED]  
23 at [REDACTED].

24 MR. AMROLIWALA: My name is Rashmikant  
25 Amroliwala, R-A-S-H-M-I-K-A-N-T. Last name is A-M-R-O-

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1 L-I-W-A-L-A. I'm working with State of Maryland,  
2 Public Service Commission, Pipeline Safety Engineer.  
3 My phone number is 4 [REDACTED].

4 MR. PRICE: Steve Price, Division Head,  
5 System Operations, Washington Gas, [REDACTED],  
6 [REDACTED] is my email.

7 MR. STAEBLER: Doug Staebler, Senior Vice  
8 President of Operations at Washington Gas. Staebler is  
9 S-T-A-E-B-L-E-R. Phone number is [REDACTED]

10 MR. SPANGLER: David Spangler, S-P-A-N-G-L-  
11 E-R, Manager of DOT Pipeline Safety Compliance for  
12 Washington Gas. Phone number, [REDACTED].

13 MR. NICHOLS: Spencer Nichols, Associate  
14 General Counsel, Washington Gas, [REDACTED].

15 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Thank you very much.  
16 This is Ravi, NTSB. Mr. Davis, for the record just  
17 give us some background, your formal education,  
18 training, any courses you have taken during employment  
19 for your work.

20 MR. DAVIS: Okay. I went to high school. I  
21 didn't graduate, but I went to high school. I started  
22 at the gas company in 1974. I got 33 years at the  
23 Washington Gas Company. Spent probably 13, 15 years  
24 out in the street digging ditches and fixing gas leaks.

25 And did a little bit of, took a couple of

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1 years off at the gas company, on a little lighter note  
2 of driving this truck around delivering steel plates,  
3 and pick up supplies and stuff. Just a couple of year  
4 break.

5           And then I went out as a contract inspector  
6 for the gas company, inspecting new gas pipes. That's  
7 where I met Mr. Arkay (phonetic) at many of times.

8           And was there for years until they actually  
9 did away with the inspectors at the gas company. And  
10 then they put me back out in the field, doing service  
11 work as a service tech. And the dates, and exactly the  
12 dates of when all this happened, I don't know --

13           INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

14           MR. DAVIS: -- exactly. But I got 33 years  
15 total there at the gas company. And I've kind of done  
16 just about everything they have to do, from cleaning  
17 taws (phonetic) to digging ditches, sir.

18           And now I've been at Williams Meters. I  
19 took three months leave of absence off from the gas  
20 company when I left. And I've been at Williams Meters  
21 for, I think about nine years now, since I've been  
22 retired pretty much. And I'm a service tech there.  
23 And I also do leak work for the gas company through  
24 Williams. And that's pretty much it.

25           INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. So you retired



1 as a service tech from Washington Gas?

2 MR. DAVIS: Yes. Yes.

3 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So how many years you  
4 were a service tech? Just a ballpark.

5 MR. DAVIS: I probably, I'm thinking maybe  
6 ten years in there is probably, you know --

7 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Good enough.

8 MR. DAVIS: -- between getting rolled back  
9 here and rolled back there, you know. They did, you  
10 know --

11 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Right now you work  
12 for Williams Gas?

13 MR. DAVIS: Williams Meters.

14 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Williams Meters.

15 MR. DAVIS: Williams Meters Service.

16 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: As a service tech?

17 MR. DAVIS: Service tech.

18 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So, set me straight.  
19 What are your responsibilities at Williams Meters?

20 MR. DAVIS: Gas turn ons, turn offs. I also  
21 do leak shift, leak work for the gas company. And  
22 shifts. Like, basically pretty much through the whole  
23 winter I'm on the gas company leak shift.

24 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

25 MR. DAVIS: Doing leak work for the gas

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1 company.

2 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: When you say turn on,  
3 turn off, is it like turning some meter off, for  
4 whatever reason, then turning back on? Is that --

5 MR. DAVIS: Right. I didn't do turn off of  
6 bills, or anything like that. I did basically turn off  
7 for move outs.

8 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

9 MR. DAVIS: Like people moving out, and they  
10 want their gas terminated --

11 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Coming --

12 MR. DAVIS: -- for, you know, they're  
13 moving.

14 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

15 MR. DAVIS: That's the only thing I did turn  
16 offs for.

17 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

18 MR. DAVIS: Never for bill.

19 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. So, have you  
20 had a chance to look at this document, I guess that's  
21 given to you?

22 MR. DAVIS: Yes. Yes.

23 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Do you remember  
24 anything about this?

25 MR. DAVIS: To be honest with you, I

1 couldn't tell you. I couldn't tell you.

2 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Yes. Please be  
3 honest with me.

4 MR. DAVIS: You know, yes. That I don't  
5 know nothing about.

6 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

7 MR. DAVIS: I think they said this was  
8 actually the building next door to the explosion.

9 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Right. Okay, now if  
10 you don't know I won't ask any questions. We still  
11 have some (unintelligible) old entries made in here.  
12 And we're going to double check some of those entries.

13 You know, I guess what I'm asking Washington  
14 Gas, that's a record. Here's all the documents you had  
15 given us. Please check for any errors, just like we  
16 pointed out.

17 MR. PRICE: Yes. Yes. I've already said --

18 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Because I would put  
19 this, if we're to put this in the document I want to  
20 make sure everything is accurate, right. Some of the  
21 errors we just point out, just for the record, so  
22 nobody will forget.

23 Now, gas technicians, have you done any gas  
24 odor complaints response to --

25 MR. DAVIS: Several.

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1 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. To single  
2 family homes, or to apartment buildings like the one  
3 that --

4 MR. DAVIS: Both.

5 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Both, okay.

6 MR. DAVIS: Both.

7 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Have you replaced any  
8 pressure regulators?

9 MR. DAVIS: Pressure -- In the apartment  
10 building or --

11 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Both, both. Both.

12 MR. DAVIS: Never, I don't think never in an  
13 apartment building. Residential, yes, replaced a few.

14 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. So, with your,  
15 I guess ten years with Washington Gas, and nine with,  
16 about, Williams, do (unintelligible) replaced, we are  
17 with the single family homes?

18 MR. DAVIS: That's pretty much right, yes.

19 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Have you seen any  
20 failed regulators in the apartment building that you do  
21 not replace, but you noticed the regulator is not  
22 working properly?

23 MR. DAVIS: And actually, we don't check, I  
24 don't check apartment building's regulators, because  
25 it's a multi meter rack. And you're not going to get a

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Don't Remember  
L. DAVIS

Don't Remember  
L. DAVIS

1 good number or nothing. Because the multi meter rack  
2 that's, you know, I could, no, I've never seen one  
3 fail.

4 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. Okay. Now,  
5 single family homes where the regulator fail, how do  
6 you know the regulator's not working?

7 MR. DAVIS: Well, you got several things on  
8 that. Inside meter, outside meter.

9 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Give me both.

10 MR. DAVIS: Okay. Outside meter, usually if  
11 it's failed and you put your test on it, if it doesn't  
12 lock up, in other words, if it doesn't lock up above  
13 the set pressure. If it doesn't lock up, and it keeps  
14 rising on the, if it's a two pound system, or inches  
15 system, if it doesn't lock up it's going to keep going.

16 If it goes up above two inches of set  
17 pressure it needs to be changed out. If it's not  
18 locking up within two inches of the set pressure it  
19 needs to be changed.

20 Also, the vent itself, which screens that,  
21 it will also be passing gas. It will actually, we call  
22 it fart. It will actually fart. It will fart gas out  
23 the vent.

24 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

25 MR. DAVIS: And so, you have to take the,

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1 either replace the regulator, or replace the head, or  
2 clean it. You can try cleaning it, but you're probably  
3 wasting your time. It's better to just put a new one  
4 on there.

5 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So, when you say lock  
6 up, educate me on that. What does that mean? When you  
7 put a gauge on, and you say for instance, lock up --

8 MR. DAVIS: If it doesn't --

9 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: What does that mean?

10 MR. DAVIS: Well, if it doesn't lock up that  
11 means it's not, if it's not going to hold your water,  
12 then it's not going to hold your gas.

13 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So, it's going to  
14 keep rising or keep dropping, or --

15 MR. DAVIS: That's right. It will keep  
16 rising out actually. It will keep rising all the way  
17 up, and actually probably spit more out of the bottom.  
18 It doesn't matter. Once it gets past, just turn off  
19 and replace it.

20 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

21 MR. DAVIS: But if it doesn't lock up, if  
22 it's not locking up your water, it's in your U gauge,  
23 then it's not going to lock up your gas.

24 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

25 MR. DAVIS: So you're getting, so if your

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1 water's going to continue coming, your gas is going to  
2 continue coming.

3 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So far as, the reason  
4 I'm using them, seven inches of water column, is  
5 because that was the pressure at the building that  
6 exploded. So, at seven inches of water column if you  
7 put a gauge on, then it should be stable, showing you  
8 seven inches. Is that, does that, you're saying?

9 MR. DAVIS: Well --

10 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: I'm trying to  
11 understand what this sort of process was.

12 MR. DAVIS: Yes. I mean, your lock up is  
13 going to rise a little bit. It may come up an inch.  
14 But if it comes up above like two inches at like say  
15 set pressure. Say if it, say if a lock up is --

16 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Seven inches.

17 MR. DAVIS: Okay. Say, well, let's just say  
18 it's set at seven inches.

19 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

20 MR. DAVIS: Say the regulator's set at seven  
21 inches.

22 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

23 MR. DAVIS: Okay. And you do your lock up  
24 test. And your lock up, and the water, and your U  
25 gauge, if the water keeps coming say past nine inches,

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1 it can come up like two inches. Say if it starts  
2 coming up ten inches, 11 inches, the regulator's bad.

3 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

4 MR. DAVIS: Okay. If it comes up an inch,  
5 stops dead, boom, regulator's good to go.

6 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. How do you do  
7 a lock up test? I mean --

8 MR. DAVIS: That's kind of, I'd probably  
9 have to show you than to have to tell you.

10 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. Never mind.

11 MR. DAVIS: It's easier to show you than --

12 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Never mind. We can  
13 do that --

14 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

15 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: -- later on, we can  
16 do that.

17 MR. DAVIS: But, you know, but if it doesn't  
18 lock up it needs to be changed.

19 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

20 MR. DAVIS: And if it keeps rising up the U  
21 gauge --

22 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So that's --

23 MR. DAVIS: -- it's bad.

24 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: -- one way. What  
25 other ways we can tell if, I mean, is it the only test



1 that tells you the regulator has, is not working  
2 properly, or fail? Or any other ways you have seen  
3 regulators --

4 MR. DAVIS: I'm not --

5 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. The regulator  
6 is not working properly or, I'm calling it failed  
7 regulator. Would you smell gas? Would you hear gas?  
8 Would the customer have no gas?

9 MR. DAVIS: I --

10 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: One question at a  
11 time?

12 MR. DAVIS: Yes. Could you --

13 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. A regulator  
14 which is not working properly, will you, if you go  
15 there will you smell gas odor?

16 MR. DAVIS: You can, yes. If the  
17 regulator's not working properly, and the vent line, if  
18 it's an outside meter, and if the regulator's not --  
19 One sign of it giving away is the vent, you're going to  
20 smell gas coming out of the vent. You'll smell it.

21 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

22 MR. DAVIS: You'll smell it there coming out  
23 the vent.

24 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

25 MR. DAVIS: Now, if you're on a inside

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1 meter, and the meter's inside, and you got your vent  
2 line going outside, your vent line, you can also smell  
3 it at the vent line coming out the wall at the outside.

4 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Outside.

5 MR. DAVIS: Which, yes.

6 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Would you hear any  
7 noise?

8 MR. DAVIS: You can, I've seen them, I've  
9 heard them, yes. Oh, yes. I mean, I've heard them  
10 before, yes.

11 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: In what pressures?  
12 In just the water column?

13 MR. DAVIS: Well, every one I've had,  
14 probably I'd say inches.

15 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

16 MR. DAVIS: But I've actually --

17 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Yes.

18 MR. DAVIS: You have to get up close, you  
19 know. I mean, if the truck's around my car, you  
20 probably won't. But you can hear it if you get up  
21 close though. You can hear it.

22 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: And what kind of  
23 noise it makes?

24 MR. DAVIS: Like, ssssssssss (phonetic).

25 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. So it's -- And

1 if it's making noise can you smell it, irrespective of  
2 whether you're (unintelligible) or not.

3 MR. DAVIS: Of course. Of course you're  
4 going to --

5 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

6 MR. DAVIS: Yes. It's gas coming out.

7 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Gas coming out. So  
8 that's definitely (unintelligible). Okay. And, but  
9 you said you had never seen anything that failed in the  
10 apartment, multi dwelling?

11 MR. DAVIS: I've never checked one, to be  
12 honest with you, sir.

13 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Oh, okay.

14 MR. DAVIS: (Inaudible).

15 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So you really can't  
16 tell?

17 MR. DAVIS: No. I can't say that --

18 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Yes. That's, I'm  
19 with you.

20 MR. STAEBLER: But --

21 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Have you worked on --  
22 Oh, go ahead.

23 MR. STAEBLER: This is Doug Staebler. So,  
24 but you're not able to check to see if one's locking  
25 up. But if one failed and was blowing gas out the

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1 vent, you would --

2 MR. DAVIS: Oh. Well, I mean, he didn't ask  
3 me that.

4 MR. STAEBLER: Yes.

5 MR. DAVIS: Of course, when you get, any  
6 inside meters I go to, or any, to check those, your  
7 inside meter, it's natural for me, because I'm coming  
8 from the gas company, and I know.

9 I actually, it's, and we're trained, and  
10 we're taught that, to check for the vent line outside.  
11 And make sure that it has a vent line coming from the  
12 inside to the outside.

13 If not, you can't turn the gas on. The gas  
14 doesn't get turned back on. You have to call the gas  
15 company to come out there and replace the vent line.

16 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: That is good  
17 clarifications. How do you check the vent line? How  
18 do you do that? How do you know that the vent line is  
19 not blocked?

20 MR. DAVIS: Put a pump test on it. Put a  
21 pump test on it, then you take it apart at the union on  
22 the inside, put a pump test on it and blow it through.  
23 And if blows up above two inches of water column, if it  
24 goes up above two inches, then it's locked up,  
25 something's clogged.

1 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So you --

2 MR. DAVIS: If your gauge, you're using a U  
3 gauge, you're using a pump. You put the two together,  
4 you take the union apart, you put the two together, you  
5 pump it. If it starts, if the U gauge pumps up more  
6 than two inches you got a, some kind of --

7 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Clog.

8 MR. DAVIS: -- bee's nest in there, or  
9 something --

10 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Some kind of  
11 blockage?

12 MR. DAVIS: Yes. And then you have to leave  
13 it off, and have somebody come down and replace it or  
14 fix it.

15 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So, like you put, and  
16 how much pressure you put on that --

17 MR. DAVIS: You just put your hand pressure,  
18 you know, you got a hand pump --

19 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

20 MR. DAVIS: -- like a bicycle pump. And you  
21 pump it up.

22 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: So how many inches of  
23 water column?

24 MR. DAVIS: If it goes up above two inches.  
25 In other words, it's set, if it goes up, if it blows

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1 two inches and you're pumping, and it's still blowing  
2 free, you're going to, your line's blowing free, and  
3 you're clean.

4 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

5 MR. DAVIS: But if it goes, if the U gauge  
6 goes, and the U gauge starts going, it rides above two  
7 inches --

8 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: That would be --

9 MR. DAVIS: -- the line's clogged, your  
10 line's clogged up.

11 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. I'm with you.

12 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

13 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. And that's  
14 really I have right now. Thank you so much. Rachael.

15 INVESTIGATOR GUNARATNAM: So, you don't  
16 remember this --

17 MR. DAVIS: No.

18 INVESTIGATOR GUNARATNAM: Okay. All right.  
19 Do you remember visiting the building at all?

20 MR. DAVIS: No. I remember getting some  
21 tacos from the taco truck across the street. Because  
22 they're just my favorite place to --

23 INVESTIGATOR GUNARATNAM: And that's off the  
24 record.

25 MR. DAVIS: -- (unintelligible)

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1 MR. PRICE: Which would be my question.  
2 What did you eat for lunch that day?

3 INVESTIGATOR GUNARATNAM: No, I don't have  
4 anything.

5 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. Kelly.

6 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Mr. Davis, this is  
7 Kalu Kelly Emeaba. Currently you work for Williams  
8 Meters, correct?

9 MR. DAVIS: Yes, sir.

10 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: What kind of trainings  
11 do you have to, from your current work with them?

12 MR. DAVIS: Training as far as a service  
13 tech?

14 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Yes.

15 MR. DAVIS: Actually, I got most of my  
16 training from the gas company. And when I came to  
17 Williams they put me through training too. And I went  
18 out with those techs. They're tough, the techs that  
19 they had when I went out there.

20 And showed them that I was qualified to do  
21 the job. I passed every paper test they give me. Been  
22 doing it a long time, you know, I've been doing it a  
23 long time, you know.

24 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Do you work over the  
25 area of Flower Branch Apartment? Your work area?

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1 MR. DAVIS: That used to be my area,  
2 probably in 2010. That used to be my area.

3 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Where do you currently  
4 work, the district?

5 MR. DAVIS: Right now I'm in Hyattsville,  
6 maybe Riverdale, Hyattsville, College Park, Bowie.  
7 That's probably the most right there.

8 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Which are close to  
9 this place?

10 MR. DAVIS: Peachtree County.

11 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: And you stay close to  
12 this (unintelligible)?

13 MR. DAVIS: Yes. I probably, for me  
14 probably 20 minutes away, probably. I know the  
15 apartments very well. I know, you know, I mean, I  
16 can't go in, and I can't tell you what the metering  
17 looks like, or can't tell you --

18 But I know the apartments, because I've been  
19 in there before. But I can't tell you -- I ride by  
20 them all the time going to the other jobs. I know, but  
21 I can't tell you exactly what the metering looks like.

22 I can't even, you know, I can't tell you  
23 whether the meter's inside or outside, to be honest  
24 with you. I know that it used to be inside. They  
25 might be outside now.

*Don't  
Remember  
L. Davis*

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1 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Okay. While you were  
2 with Washington Gas did you work at other multi  
3 dwelling apartments, with multi meters like this? Did  
4 you?

5 MR. DAVIS: I've done turn offs.

6 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: For other apartments?

7 MR. DAVIS: For apartments in general, yes.

8 Apartments --

9 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: That do have the multi  
10 dwelling meters?

11 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

12 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Okay. And when you go  
13 there for turn or, which is similar to this, can you  
14 just lead us through what you normally do?

15 MR. DAVIS: I mean, if you, like a turn on,  
16 turn off?

17 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Yes. For a turn on.

18 MR. DAVIS: Normally I probably have to go  
19 to the rental office, make sure I can get in the meter  
20 room. That's, you know, make sure I can get in the  
21 meter room. Because usually meter rooms are locked.  
22 Sometimes they are, sometimes they aren't.

23 Find the meter, make sure the customer's  
24 home. Find the meter. And I'll probably do a, cut the  
25 appliances off in the unit. Find the meter. Make sure

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1 to cut the appliances off. And it's basically, you  
2 know --

3 In the meantime I'm always like, it's  
4 natural for me to just walk in there. As soon as I  
5 walk into, I'm looking for dead grass, smelling,  
6 looking for odor of gas. Making sure where the meter's  
7 at, making sure where the vent line's coming out at.  
8 And then I just turn off the appliances and start doing  
9 my turn on.

10 There's not a whole lot, there's not a --  
11 Again, in an apartment building, I don't check  
12 regulators in the apartment building. But that's the  
13 main time consuming as far as when you're going to a  
14 resident's house, a regular normal house, one regular  
15 house.

16 So it kind of, the time's cut down a little  
17 bit less with not checking the regulator. When I do a  
18 turn on, and I check for the vent line, make sure  
19 nothing's passed on the vent line. I do the barn  
20 (phonetic) test at the building wall, where the entry  
21 of the gas line comes in that.

22 And I'll check the appliances, make sure all  
23 the appliances are, all the flues are connected, you  
24 know, make sure everything's safe there. Relight the  
25 appliances. And that's pretty much it. There's not a

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1 whole lot. It's --

2 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: So, in your current  
3 position with Williams Meter do you still work in multi  
4 dwell apartments?

5 MR. DAVIS: Yes. Oh, yes.

6 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Okay. And can you  
7 compare them with, any of them with this particular one  
8 on 8703?

9 MR. DAVIS: I'm not sure what you're saying.

10 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Can you compare the  
11 meter locations, these certain, with this particular  
12 one at this apartment?

13 MR. DAVIS: I know it's a big apartment  
14 development. And I'm in big apartment developments  
15 every day probably. There's probably 50 meters in  
16 there, or 20 meters, or 30 meters. So it's pretty  
17 much, you know, they're all pretty much the same, I  
18 mean, as far as multi meters. That's a lot of meters  
19 in --

20 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Okay. But from what  
21 you mentioned, you, even currently you still do turn  
22 ons, correct?

23 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

24 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Okay. And when you do  
25 turn ons, what other (unintelligible) do you have to

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1 perform, like (unintelligible) of a line test, house  
2 line test, and all that? Do you ever do tests like  
3 that?

4 MR. DAVIS: You know what, I do the test on  
5 the meter on a house line test. I do a half foot, on  
6 the half foot hanger (phonetic) when I turn it on.  
7 After I turn all the appliances off and I do, make sure  
8 I got a tight half foot hanging on the meter. I do  
9 that.

10 And on a 5AR (phonetic) meters it's five  
11 minutes. So, I do the five minute test on it. It may  
12 get longer than that sometimes. But that's pretty much  
13 the only test that makes sure that the line's tight  
14 that I do. It's the line tight test.

15 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: The line tight --

16 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

17 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: -- test?

18 MR. DAVIS: Make sure that the house line's  
19 tight, the house line tight test.

20 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Okay. Are there  
21 safety precautions, procedure you have to follow  
22 through to confirm that, beside, or beyond the line  
23 tight test you mentioned? Are there some things you  
24 have to do extra?

25 MR. DAVIS: As far as that one during a turn

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1 on?

2 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: For one apartment you  
3 are trying to turn on, yes. Are there activities you  
4 have to perform using, without, maybe with your CGI,  
5 things like that?

6 MR. DAVIS: Well, I mean, when I check my  
7 points of entry and exit when I do my turn on, you  
8 know, turn on. I do my points of entry at the gas line  
9 where it comes into the unit. Usually my nose is the  
10 best sign of anything when I'm in a multi meter rack  
11 like that. If I smell something I'm checking it.

12 But as far as the house line itself, that  
13 one unit I'm testing it through the meter, as far as  
14 the tight house line test through the meter. And I'll  
15 soak test the swivel, soak test all the, everything  
16 that I've, especially everything I've touched or  
17 loosened up.

18 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: So, while you are in a  
19 meter room would your CGI be on while you are in there?  
20 Or do you not turn in on?

21 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

22 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Which one?

23 MR. DAVIS: Sometimes, you know, sometimes  
24 the CGI will be on because I got to test the outside.  
25 Now, I mean, I take it inside every time, you know, I

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1 walk in there right off the bat. I may test at the end  
2 of when I'm done.

3 But I don't, as far as doing any testing,  
4 like, once I leave out of there I test the building  
5 wall at the building wall, and the entry and the exit  
6 of the building wall.

7 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: So, you turn it on to  
8 test it outside, then you turn it off, then go inside  
9 to do your work? Is that correct?

10 MR. DAVIS: Say that again?

11 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Do you turn it on,  
12 your CGI on to do the test outside? Then you turn it  
13 off, go downstairs to the, what is it, the meter room,  
14 and do your work?

15 MR. DAVIS: No, it was, I usually leave it  
16 on the whole time when, you know, the whole time when  
17 I'm -- If it's on, it's on. Now you got to wait for it  
18 to restart all over, reset itself, every time you turn  
19 it on and off.

20 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Thank you. That's it.

21 LT. OLIN: I got nothing.

22 MR. AMROLIWALA: This is Rashmikant  
23 Amroliwala, State of Maryland Public Service  
24 Commission. When you just go out for gas turn on or  
25 gas turn off, what normally AOCs, that's abnormal

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1 operating conditions, you can observe? So, did you see  
2 any AOCs while doing any turn on or turn off procedure?

3 MR. DAVIS: On this particular place here?

4 MR. AMROLIWALA: No. No, no, no.

5 MR. DAVIS: Or anywhere? Say like --

6 MR. AMROLIWALA: In general. Not that  
7 particular case. That's the case that you don't know.  
8 So, this is in general. I'm asking you what are the  
9 AOCs that you can observe during gas turn on and gas  
10 turn off?

11 MR. DAVIS: Rusty pipe at the meter buildup.  
12 Rust, rusty pipe at the meter buildup. You know, like  
13 I said, I'm coming from the gas company. This is like  
14 a natural thing to me.

15 When I walk up, as soon as I get out of the  
16 car, I'm looking for dead trees, dead vegetation. I'm  
17 looking for any kind of dead grass, any kind of yellow  
18 marks if that's showing gas line. I'm looking for  
19 anything that's dead, it's over top.

20 It's just, it's natural for me to do that.  
21 And the guys coming from the gas company, we're taught  
22 that, you know, we're taught. We look for dead grass,  
23 dead trees, rusty pipe.

24 MR. AMROLIWALA: This is inside the  
25 building. This is not outside.

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1 MR. DAVIS: It doesn't matter. I don't care  
2 if it's inside or outside. You still got a gas line  
3 going in the house.

4 MR. AMROLIWALA: Yes. So, inside the  
5 building what do you see you can observe?

6 MR. DAVIS: Do you want inside or outside?

7 MR. AMROLIWALA: Out, inside. I'm asking  
8 inside.

9 MR. DAVIS: On the inside? Well, there's  
10 not too many rusty pipes I see on the inside. That  
11 gives me something to think about. Because there's not  
12 too much abnormal --

13 MR. AMROLIWALA: (Unintelligible) of  
14 appliances, high pressure, a leak, or any --

15 LT. OLIN: Well, that wouldn't be an AOC.

16 MR. AMROLIWALA: -- (unintelligible) maybe  
17 the meter is maybe close to the electrical connection?

18 MR. DAVIS: Well, it --

19 MR. AMROLIWALA: I'm sorry. Any kind of --

20 MR. DAVIS: You're probably talking about a  
21 meter that's probably been sitting there for 50 years.

22 MR. AMROLIWALA: (Unintelligible).

23 MR. DAVIS: And it, but as far, inside it's  
24 hard to find really something abnormal on the inside.

25 MR. AMROLIWALA: The inside.



1 MR. DAVIS: Yes. Unless you're coming in,  
2 maybe somebody decided to use the gas line for a  
3 clothes hanger, or something like that. Or, you know,  
4 something like that. But as far as, I mean, you're  
5 talking about something that's probably been sitting  
6 there for years, and been sitting that way for 40, 50,  
7 30, 20 years.

8 MR. AMROLIWALA: Hanging line, like no  
9 support, nothing like that. So, any kind of AOCs I'm  
10 just asking, in general. Okay. Let me go to the next  
11 question then. This is a, the second question is like,  
12 the operative qualification. Do you have the OQ card  
13 right now available?

14 MR. DAVIS: Yes. I think I do. I think you  
15 might have, I think I do have it.

16 MR. AMROLIWALA: So that we can just check  
17 071 and 072.

18 MR. DAVIS: I think I do. I think I have it  
19 now. Let's see what I got here. Might, maybe that's  
20 it. Maybe that's old, new one. I'm not sure.

21 MR. NICHOLS: Do you want him to show you  
22 the card?

23 MR. AMROLIWALA: Or he can (unintelligible).

24 MR. DAVIS: I'm not sure whether that's my  
25 new one or not there. I think that's, I think, yes, I

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1 think I just got that one.

2 MR. AMROLIWALA: This is a lot of days.  
3 Yes, 12, 117, and there are more than 17. Yes, I, from  
4 this OQ card I can say that his qualification is  
5 current --

6 MR. DAVIS: It is --

7 MR. AMROLIWALA: -- for the requirements of  
8 the turn on, gas turn on and gas turn off.

9 MR. DAVIS: So, I don't get, what are you  
10 saying?

11 MR. NICHOLS: You're good.

12 MR. AMROLIWALA: Yes. These are  
13 (unintelligible).

14 LT. OLIN: We're going to keep your answers.

15 MR. AMROLIWALA: They're required to know  
16 that, what is 071 and what is 072. I have the --

17 (Simultaneous)

18 MR. AMROLIWALA: -- when he saw that I  
19 identified from the list that, okay, these are the  
20 requirements that --

21 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. Any questions?  
22 Any more questions?

23 MR. AMROLIWALA: No. No more questions.

24 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

25 MR. STAEBLER: Doug Staebler. See, you

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1 mentioned doing a pump test on the regulator vents. Do  
2 you do that on every service, on every call?

3 MR. DAVIS: On, you know, I'd be lying if I  
4 said I did.

5 MR. STAEBLER: Yes.

6 MR. DAVIS: Okay.

7 MR. STAEBLER: Yes. So you don't break the  
8 vent?

9 MR. DAVIS: I'd be lying if I said I did.

10 MR. STAEBLER: And now, if you went into a  
11 commercial park, an apartment building with a multi  
12 meter set, and you're doing a turn on, would you go  
13 over and break apart their pipe --

14 MR. DAVIS: No.

15 MR. STAEBLER: -- and do a pump test?

16 MR. DAVIS: Never, no.

17 MR. STAEBLER: Okay. No more questions.

18 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Ravi Chhatre, NTSB.

19 And to follow up on that, that is my question. Are you  
20 required by your procedure, are you required to go,  
21 anytime you go to anyplace, house, single family home,  
22 multi family dwelling, does the procedure, what you  
23 know (unintelligible) require you to check the vent?

24 MR. DAVIS: Well, he's asking me for an  
25 apartment building, right? I would be lying if I said

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1 I broke every apartment building loose to check the  
2 regulator.

3 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: I understand.

4 MR. DAVIS: Okay. As far as residential,  
5 yes, I check them.

6 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: My understanding is -  
7 -

8 MR. DAVIS: And it's real, it doesn't take a  
9 minute.

10 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: No.

11 MR. DAVIS: So, you know, it's not a, it  
12 doesn't take long.

13 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: No, I understand. I  
14 guess my question about normally you, I mean, you  
15 already answered that, that, you know, you don't on the  
16 multi family dwelling.

17 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

18 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: You don't.

19 MR. DAVIS: I'm not going to say I've never,  
20 I've had maybe sometimes missed one here and there.

21 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Yes.

22 MR. DAVIS: You know what I mean?

23 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Sure.

24 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

25 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: I guess my question

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1 really is not that, whether you missed or not. The  
2 question is whether the procedure requires you guys to  
3 do that?

4 MR. DAVIS: Yes. Now, I don't know about  
5 the apartments. I don't think it requires it on the  
6 apartments.

7 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. But the  
8 documents you are going to give us will have that  
9 requirement in there.

10 MR. DAVIS: You do check the vent line to  
11 make sure it's going outside. That's --

12 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Yes. Okay. That's  
13 all I have actually. If nobody has anything --

14 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Well, I'm --

15 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Oh, yes.

16 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Just clarity. Even  
17 though you may not remember working on 8703, if you go  
18 to a property for turn on work, what activities will  
19 you perform for you to say that a vapor test is clear,  
20 and the other end is okay? What test will you perform  
21 to confirm that vapor test is clear, and other end is  
22 okay?

23 MR. DAVIS: The, with the ranger. With our  
24 ranger. Our ranger.

25 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: With your ranger?

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1 MR. DAVIS: Yes. Yes, that's the only way  
2 you, that's, you know, that's the only way you can.

3 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: With the ranger can  
4 you confirm that the other end is okay?

5 MR. DAVIS: Well, if it was reading 100  
6 percent on it, yes. If, say this, yes. There's no  
7 other way that I can check it. There's no other way  
8 that the gas company employees have to check it but a  
9 ranger.

10 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: No. We're talking  
11 about other.

12 MR. DAVIS: Well, my nose.

13 (Off microphone comment)

14 MR. DAVIS: My nose and the ranger. That's  
15 the only, there's no other way you can check the  
16 odorant in it and, you know, I can check it.

17 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Okay.

18 MR. DAVIS: I have, we have other little  
19 sensits (phonetic), like sensit type things. But  
20 that's not giving you a number or a percentage. It's  
21 just giving you, it's just telling you that there's gas  
22 indicated there. But it's not giving you a number.

23 It's not a number machine that gives you  
24 numbers like the ranger does. The ranger's from zero  
25 to 100. So, if it's getting 100 percent or 90 percent

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1 of the gas, it's telling you that's, it's, I'm taking  
2 it that the machines are just made for natural gas  
3 right, the rangers?

4 MR. STAEBLER: Yes. So you, this is Doug  
5 Staebler. Are you asking about a combustible gas test,  
6 or an odorant test --

7 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: No.

8 MR. STAEBLER: -- to check for odorant  
9 levels in the gas?

10 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Correct. Like this  
11 one is a service call he went to --

12 MR. STAEBLER: Yes.

13 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: -- which is a turn on.

14 MR. STAEBLER: And he said --

15 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: That's what I'm trying  
16 to find out from him in an apartment like this.

17 MR. STAEBLER: So, would you do a smell  
18 check to indicate that you smell odorant while you're  
19 doing a turn on?

20 MR. DAVIS: Yes. But, you know, the machine  
21 tells me the best. And I, now, if something happens --

22 MR. STAEBLER: Yes. But I think he's asking  
23 if your check, the check to make sure that the gas is  
24 properly odored, not that it's leaking, that you would,  
25 whether you'd break a connection, or something. You

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1 could also do an odorant check to make sure --

2 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Yes, yes.

3 MR. STAEBLER: -- the odorant levels --

4 MR. DAVIS: At the end of (unintelligible).

5 MR. STAEBLER: Yes.

6 MR. DAVIS: At the end of the

7 (unintelligible) you can check, yes.

8 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Yes. And the reason  
9 I'm asking, because the machine cannot give you the  
10 odorant. But it can tell you the level of gas in the  
11 air. That's what the machine's going to do.

12 MR. DAVIS: Well, as far as I know, the  
13 odorant, the only thing it picks up is the odorant,  
14 right, the gas and the odorant, right?

15 MR. STAEBLER: Yes. It picks up the gas,  
16 right.

17 MR. DAVIS: But I mean --

18 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: The gas, not the  
19 odorant. That's what I'm trying, asking the question.

20 MR. DAVIS: Hell, I'm lost on this.

21 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: No, no, no. The  
22 machine you have --

23 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

24 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: -- would tell you the  
25 percentage of gas in the air. Okay?

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1 MR. DAVIS: Yes.

2 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: But not the odorant.

3 MR. DAVIS: I'm thinking that the two are  
4 the same. So, I'm, you, know, I'm confused on your  
5 question. I'm thinking that the two are the same.

6 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: For example, for you  
7 to have an odorant in a gas pipeline. Remember, it's  
8 odorless and not --

9 MR. DAVIS: Right.

10 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: --(unintelligible).

11 The gas, the machine doesn't pick it up. That's what  
12 I'm asking, how you are able to confirm it's okay. And  
13 initially your answer --

14 MR. DAVIS: By the ranger. That's, you  
15 know, that's --

16 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: You mentioned your  
17 nose. So, I'm okay with that already.

18 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: All right. Let's  
19 move on.

20 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Yes. Yes.

21 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Let's move on.

22 INVESTIGATOR EMEABA: Thank you.

23 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay.

24 (Off microphone comment)

25 INVESTIGATOR CHHATRE: Okay. If nobody has

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1 any questions, thank you for coming.

2 MR. DAVIS: Okay, guys. You guys have nice  
3 weekend.

4 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went  
5 off the record.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

MATTER: Explosion of Apartment Bldg 8107  
in Silver Spring, MD, August 10, 2016  
Accident No. DCA16FP003  
Interview of Lyle Kenneth Davis, Jr.

DATE: 08-20-16

I hereby certify that the attached transcription of page 1 to 42 inclusive are to the best of my professional ability a true, accurate, and complete record of the above referenced proceedings as contained on the provided audio recording; further that I am neither counsel for, nor related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action in which this proceeding has taken place; and further that I am not financially nor otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.



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## National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

February 21, 2017

Lyle Kenneth Davis Jr.  
Williams Construction & Meter  
7930 Cryden Way # 200,  
District Heights, MD 20747

Lyle Kenneth Davis Jr.:

Reference: NTSB Accident No. DCA16FP003, Silver Spring, MD.  
Your Interview conducted on August 20, 2016.

Enclosed is a copy of the transcript of your interview that was conducted as a part of the on-going investigation of the above referenced accident. Please review the transcript for accuracy and make any necessary editorial changes on the attached transcripts. Please put your initials next to each suggested change. After your review, please sign the attached endorsement and return it with the marked copy of the transcript to the following address on or before February 28, 2017:

Kalu Kelly Emeaba  
National Transportation Safety Board (RPH-20)  
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20594.

Or if you desire e-mail your comments to: [REDACTED]

Please note that this transcript should be treated as confidential at this time. This transcript is for your use only, and is not for release. If you have any questions, please contact Investigator-in-Charge. Thank you for your assistance and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Electronic Signature

Ravindra M. Chhatre  
Investigator-in-Charge  
[REDACTED]

Enclosure