



## National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

February 21, 2017

Robert Kirschner  
Williams Construction & Meter  
7930 Cryden Way # 200,  
District Heights, MD 20747

Robert Kirschner:

Reference: NTSB Accident No. DCA16FP003, Silver Spring, MD.  
Your Interview conducted on August 19, 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

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 19, 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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Robert Kirschner

2-27-17  
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Date

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

\* \* \* \* \*

Investigation of: \*

THE EXPLOSION OF APARTMENT \*

BUILDING 8701 OF FLOWER BRANCH \*

APARTMENTS IN SILVER SPRING, \*

MARYLAND ON AUGUST 10, 2016 \*

Accident No.: DCA16FP003

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: ROBERT KIRSCHNER

Washington Gas Facilities  
Chillum, Maryland

Friday,  
August 19, 2016

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: RAVI CHHATRE  
Investigator-in-Charge

## APPEARANCES:

RAVI CHHATRE  
Investigator-in-Charge  
National Transportation Safety Board

RACHAEL GUNARATNAM, Hazmat Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board  
Tel: [REDACTED]

KALU KELLY EMEABA, Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board  
Tel: [REDACTED]

RASHMIKANT AMROLIWALA, Pipeline Safety Engineer  
Public Service Commission  
Tel: [REDACTED]

DOUGLAS STAEBLER, Senior Vice President Operations  
Washington Gas  
Tel: [REDACTED]

STEVE PRICE, Division Head of Systems Operations  
Washington Gas  
Tel: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SPENCER NICHOLS, Associate General Counsel  
Washington Gas  
Tel: [REDACTED]

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1

I N T E R V I E W

1  
2 MR. CHHATRE: Good afternoon. Today is Friday,  
3 August 19, 2016. We are currently in Chillum, Maryland, at  
4 Washington Gas, Chillum Station. We are meeting in regards to the  
5 explosion of Building 8701, Arliss Street, in Flower Branch  
6 Apartments, Silver Spring, Maryland. The explosion occurred on  
7 August 10, 2016. The NTSB investigation number for this accident  
8 is DCA16FP003.

9 My name is Ravi Chhatre. I am with the National  
10 Transportation Safety Board located in Washington, D.C., and I am  
11 Investigator-in-Charge of this accident.

12 I would like to start by notifying everyone present in this  
13 room that we are recording this interview for transcription at a  
14 later date. All parties will have a chance to review the  
15 transcripts if and when they are made.

16 Also, I would like to inform Mr. Robert Kirschner --

17 MR. KIRSCHNER: Kirschner.

18 MR. CHHATRE: Kirschner, that you are permitted to have one  
19 other present with you during the interview. This is a person of  
20 your choice: your supervisor, friend, family member or, if you so  
21 choose, no one at all.

22 Please state for the record your full name, spelling of your  
23 name, business contact information -- no personal information --  
24 such as work phone, email address or postal mailing address, and  
25 whom you have chosen to be present with you during your interview

1 today.

2 MR. KIRSCHNER: My name is Robert Kirschner, R-o-b-e-r-t,  
3 K-i-r-s-c-h-n-e-r. I work for Williams Meter Company at 7930  
4 Cryden Way, in Forestville, Maryland.

5 MR. CHHATRE: And whom you have chosen to be with you during  
6 the interview today?

7 MR. KIRSCHNER: Spencer.

8 MR. NICHOLS: Spencer Nichols.

9 MR. KIRSCHNER: Spencer Nichols.

10 MR. CHHATRE: Now I would like to go around the room and have  
11 each person introduce themselves. Please state your name,  
12 spelling of your name, your title, and the organization that you  
13 represent, and your contact information such as work phone, email  
14 address or postal mailing address. We will start from my left.

15 Kelly.

16 MR. EMEABA: Kalu Kelly Emeaba, K-a-l-u, K-e-l-l-y,  
17 E-m-e-a-b-a. I'm an NTSB investigator. Phone number is [REDACTED]  
18 [REDACTED]

19 MR. AMROLIWALA: My name is Rashmikan Amroliwala,  
20 R-a-s-h-m-i-k-a-n-t, and last name, A-m-r-o-l-i-w-a-l-a. I work  
21 with the State of Maryland, Public Service Commission, Pipeline  
22 Safety Engineer. My phone number is [REDACTED].

23 MR. PRICE: I'm -- oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead.

24 MR. STAEBLER: My name is Doug Staebler, I'm the Senior Vice  
25 President of Operations for Washington Gas. Staebler is

1 S-t-a-e-b-l-e-r. And my phone number is [REDACTED]

2 MR. PRICE: I'm Steve Price, Division Head, System

3 Operations, Washington Gas, and my cell phone number is [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED].

5 MR. NICHOLS: My name is Spencer Nichols. My title is

6 Associate General Counsel, Washington Gas. My phone number is

7 [REDACTED]

8 MR. CHHATRE: Who you are representing?

9 MR. NICHOLS: I'm representing Mr. Kirschner.

10 MS. GUNARATNAM: My name is Rachael Gunaratnam,

11 R-a-c-h-a-e-l, G-u-n-a-r-a-t-n-a-m, NTSB investigator. My phone

12 number is [REDACTED]

13 MR. CHHATRE: Thank you for that.

14 INTERVIEW OF ROBERT KIRSCHNER

15 BY MR. CHHATRE:

16 Q. Mr. Kirschner, the reason you are here because you have  
17 information that we think might help us finding out what happened  
18 in this accident. So it's your forum. Please tell us some  
19 personal information, background, your education background,  
20 experience, how long you have been doing what you are doing. Walk  
21 us through.

22 A. My background before Williams Meter?

23 Q. All the pertinent background, whatever is related to --

24 A. Well, I've been in the car business, the automotive  
25 business --

1 Q. Oh, okay.

2 A. -- for many years.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I left that, and I came to work for Williams Meter as a  
5 credit collector.

6 (Noise)

7 BY MR. CHHATRE:

8 Q. Go ahead.

9 A. And they have trained me to -- I've been there about 6 years,  
10 and they trained me to do some service work, turning on the gas at  
11 residential homes and apartments when the gas is off. What was  
12 his other -- just the background, that's it?

13 MS. GUNARATNAM: Yes.

14 MR. KIRSCHNER: Okay. So I've been with Williams Meter about  
15 6 years now. I don't know what else to --

16 BY MR. EMEABA:

17 Q. So what education or training did you require to perform your  
18 current position?

19 A. I trained with three or four of the employees with Williams  
20 Meter for quite a few months. I did a lot of tests and book  
21 training. I rode with the different employees. I rode with  
22 management. All along they were teaching me how to do the  
23 different tests and the pressure checks and the safety checks and  
24 taught me about the gas, taught me about gas.

25 Q. Okay. From your -- virtually they were all on-hands

1 training, from what you stated?

2 A. Eventually they were?

3 Q. On-hands.

4 A. All hands?

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. On-hands?

7 Q. Are there some paper evaluation you received to --

8 A. I don't understand. I'm sorry.

9 Q. Were there some written evaluations that was part of your  
10 training?

11 MS. GUNARATNAM: Written evaluations.

12 MR. KIRSCHNER: Many written evaluations. As far as tests?

13 BY MR. EMEABA:

14 Q. Paper, written, yes.

15 A. Paper tests, yes. Questionnaires and tests and quizzes and  
16 so forth, yes.

17 A. Okay.

18 MS. GUNARATNAM: Do you have certifications in anything?

19 MR. KIRSCHNER: I have journeyman's license.

20 BY MR. EMEABA:

21 Q. This still Kalu Kelly Emeaba. Could you please walk me  
22 through how your day started on all work or non-work activities  
23 you have performed in the previous day before the time of the  
24 accident on August 2016.

25 A. The day before the accident?

1 Q. Yes. What you have done up to the time of the accident.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Let me just ask for a clarification,  
3 Kelly.

4 MR. EMEABA: I can repeat it.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No. The question I have for you is  
6 are you thinking that he responded to the accident?

7 BY MR. EMEABA:

8 Q. Were you involved in the accident?

9 A. No, sir.

10 Q. Okay. So before the accident on a regular day-to-day work,  
11 could you just tell me, lead me through on the work activities you  
12 perform before the day of the accident?

13 A. I work credit for the credit department for Washington Gas.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And I receive my work about 8:30 in the morning. I get it on  
16 paper. I have it printed out at FedEx. It's emailed to me and I  
17 have the paperwork printed. And I get about 45 jobs, different  
18 houses to go to, and I go around and knock on doors and collect  
19 money --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- for Washington Gas.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And I believe that's what I was doing. It was a Monday or  
24 Tuesday, I think before the accident.

25 Q. Can you tell me how did you hear about this accident?

1 A. I heard it on the radio on the news, you know, the news  
2 station. I drive in my car and I listen to the news.

3 Q. Have you performed work related to 8701 Arliss Street, Silver  
4 Spring?

5 A. I was at 8703 Arliss Street. They tell me it was on  
6 June 24th and I did service work there. I turned on a gas meter  
7 for a certain apartment, number 204; 8703, number 204.

8 Q. Besides 8703, what does the turn on the meter involve?

9 A. What does turning on the meter involve?

10 Q. Yes. What do you have to do to perform that task?

11 A. I have to go into the apartment. I have to turn off the gas  
12 valves to the appliances. Then I go into the meter room. I have  
13 to remove the disk from the meter. There's a disk. It's a multi-  
14 meter rack on an apartment building. So I put new washers in the  
15 meter and turn the gas on. I set the test hand, and I check the  
16 test hand for a while to see if there's any movement in the test  
17 hand. And if there's no movement, I -- after that I do a soap  
18 test with water and soap, and at the same time I have my CGI  
19 machine, my Ranger tester that's on and sniffing for gas, you  
20 know, around the meter. I take the meter reading, write down the  
21 meter information.

22 After I'm satisfied there's no movement with the test hand, I  
23 proceed back to the apartment where I open the valves, the shutoff  
24 valves, and again with my Ranger test I check around the stove and  
25 around any appliance, any gas appliance that might be in the

1 apartment. Usually it's a furnace or hot water heater or  
2 something like that. I -- you know, I'm sniffing for gas the  
3 whole time with the machine. I soap test all the connections.

4 As long as I'm happy with the -- you know, that I'm not  
5 finding any leaks or anything, then I light the appliance. It  
6 either has a standing pilot which you have to light with a match  
7 or it has an electronic ignition; same with the stove, the range,  
8 the oven. So I light that up and let it run for a minute, 2, 3  
9 minutes, you know, just depending on how far away the appliances  
10 is from the meter. Make sure there's no air in the lines.

11 I shut it down. I reset the thermostat to whatever it was on  
12 when I got there. I make sure the water temperature is a normal  
13 temperature. I set the arrows on the dial so it's a normal  
14 temperature, which I believe is about 125 degrees. And that's  
15 about it. And I'm done.

16 Q. Okay. Kalu Kelly Emeaba. The turn-on procedure you follow,  
17 is it the same thing you do when it's also a turn-off -- you are  
18 turning off a meter to a customer?

19 A. It is not. I do not have to go into the unit, either the  
20 house or the apartment if the meter is outside. I mean, all I  
21 have to do is go to the meter. I turn the gas off at the riser  
22 valve or the stopcock, as they call it. I turn that off. I  
23 loosen the swivel heads on the meter. I put a disk in the top of  
24 the meter. That blocks any gas. If somebody would come by and  
25 turn the gas on, the gas cannot go through the meter to go

1 anywhere into the dwelling. So I put a disk in it and, of course,  
2 tighten it all down. Same time I have the CGI machine going and I  
3 make sure there's no leaks.

4 Q. And that is what you describe -- this is Kalu Kelly Emeaba.  
5 What you described is the work you perform at 8703, correct?

6 A. Yes, the first work, the turning on.

7 Q. The turning on, yes. So have you had work performed at 8701?

8 A. No, sir.

9 Q. Okay. And when was the last time you performed, you worked  
10 at 8703?

11 A. June 24th is what's here on this paper. I can't recall the  
12 day, you know, myself. I do know I was there, but I have the date  
13 here, that it shows I did the work on that day.

14 Q. Okay. You mentioned using your CGI. To what extent do you  
15 apply the CGI?

16 A. To what extent?

17 Q. Yes.

18 A. I don't understand.

19 Q. How do you use it? What do you have to do, activities you  
20 have to do at the meter locations?

21 A. That is a sniff gas detecting machine. It's Combustible Gas  
22 Indicator. Okay. It's programmed and calibrated to, you know,  
23 take a reading of the gas in the air or a gas reading at a  
24 junction or a fitting or something like that. So I have that on  
25 with me. I turn it on outside the building so it gets a -- to

1 calibrate it and do the test, and then I turn the knob to sniff.  
2 I think it says sniff. And I walk in the building with it and  
3 it's on. And after I get done turning on the gas, I'm taking the  
4 probe at the end of it and I'm going around all the connections  
5 around what I've worked on.

6 Q. This is Kalu Kelly Emeaba. Beside the work you're performed  
7 on June of this year of 2016, did you get any other report from  
8 residents of any complaint?

9 A. No, sir. You mean for this building or for any building?  
10 For any --

11 Q. For that building or any other building.

12 A. No, sir. No complaints.

13 Q. Nobody has talked to you and tell you of anything at all?

14 A. No, sir.

15 MR. EMEABA: Okay. Thank you. That's it for me. I'll pass  
16 on to Ravi.

17 MR. CHHATRE: Rachael, do you have any questions?

18 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

19 Q. I just had a question about the CGI machine. Do you  
20 calibrate it?

21 A. We go once a month to a Washington Gas office, like this one  
22 here, and we install -- we plug it into a machine, a tester, and  
23 it calibrates. It calibrates it that way.

24 Q. Once a month?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. It's every 30 days actually, so --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I usually try to do it every <sup>other</sup> payday, kind of reminds me to do  
5 that.

6 MS. GUNARATNAM: Okay.

7 BY MR. CHHATRE:

8 Q. Ravi Chhatre. Sorry. I was gone for a few minutes. If I  
9 ask you a question that's already asked, just tell me it was done  
10 and we can save ourself time.

11 You're a contractor for the gas company. Are you required to  
12 have same OQ qualifications as the gas company's employees?

13 A. I believe I am, yes, and I have the OQ card.

14 Q. And how do you get qualified, OQ qualified?

15 A. We have exams at the Williams Meter training facility.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. You know, I'm not too up on who is doing it. There's people  
18 that call in. It's a company, I think, that tests us.

19 Q. And what kind of test you have to go through?

20 A. It's usually a computer program test. You're, you know, on a  
21 computer screen.

22 Q. And yearly or how often you have to renew your  
23 qualifications, I guess?

24 A. Certain different codes have certain expiration dates. So I  
25 don't know if it's yearly or bi-yearly or --

1 Q. Okay. How will you know if your qualifications are expiring  
2 or have expired? How will you know?

3 A. I look at my card every so often.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. And I'm also called by the office.

6 Q. Your company's office or Washington Gas?

7 A. My company's office.

8 Q. Okay. Somebody in your company is keeping track of the  
9 operator qualifications --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- for all employees? Does Washington Gas check your card  
12 and check --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- where you are working?

15 A. Not Washington Gas. Williams Meter does.

16 Q. Right. But when you come to do a job for Washington Gas,  
17 does anybody from Washington Gas say show me your card and make  
18 sure you are OQ qualified?

19 A. I'd have to say no because I don't usually see anyone from  
20 Washington Gas when I'm at a job.

21 Q. Okay. And what is it that you did in Building 8703?

22 A. I just answered that.

23 Q. Okay. No, don't do it again.

24 A. Yeah. I mean --

25 Q. No, no. I just want to make sure that question is answered,

1 that's all.

2 A. I explained the whole procedure.

3 Q. Beautiful. Okay. Do you routinely check the piping system  
4 when you go in?

5 A. Yes, I do. I check the piping system. It goes from the  
6 meter I'm working on to the unit, and I also check the piping  
7 system that comes into the building where the gas service is fed.

8 Q. You have some kind of a checklist that you have to go in and  
9 say, okay, meter checked, radiator checked or regulator checked,  
10 piping system checked? Is there some kind of a checklist like  
11 that?

12 A. I don't have a checklist, no. But in our computer that we  
13 have with our vehicles, it asks me questions there what I've done.

14 Q. So your computer has a checklist?

15 A. We check all things we do --

16 Q. But then after you -- I mean, after you are done and go back  
17 to fill that thing in, right --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- on the computer? Okay.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Now is there a guideline that tells you that something is  
22 right, something is wrong or what to worry about? I guess, maybe  
23 alarms, if you would. How do you know if everything is working  
24 kosher?

25 A. Well, I -- how do you know everything is working kosher?

1 You're testing the house line to see if there's any movement in  
2 the test hand. So --

3 Q. In the test?

4 A. In the test hand on the meter.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And if I have any movement there, I know something is not  
7 kosher, there's something leaking.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Okay. So I don't turn on the gas.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I visually check piping, meter bars, meter racks. We have a  
12 place where if we notice an AOC, which is an abnormal operating  
13 condition, which is I think what you're asking --

14 Q. Yes.

15 A. -- we either try to remediate it or we report it. If I go to  
16 a house and I don't see something I'm supposed to see, I have to  
17 call it in to dispatch or my office, and they'll direct me on, you  
18 know, what to do next.

19 Q. Which order you follow? Office first and then Washington Gas  
20 or Washington Gas and then office?

21 A. I usually call my office first and they'll tell me who to  
22 call.

23 Q. Oh, okay. Has it ever happened to you in your experience  
24 with Washington Gas that you have called because of AOC?

25 A. I called my office a while back -- I can't remember how long;

1 a couple of months ago -- because there was no post in front of  
2 the meter on a driveway. Okay. There's supposed to be a  
3 protection post. And I noticed there was no post so I figured it  
4 was an AOC, so I called my office to make sure I should put that  
5 in as an AOC. He told me what to do. I put it in on the computer  
6 as an AOC. That's what I did.

7 Q. But the single-family homes you do or apartment complexes or  
8 just a mix?

9 A. It's a mix.

10 Q. Okay. And how often you went to 8703? Just one time or  
11 you --

12 A. They have me there as one time. That's all they told me  
13 about.

14 Q. That's right, you told the year, but what is the year? What  
15 year you went to 8703?

16 A. 2016.

17 Q. Okay. Recently?

18 A. June 24th.

19 Q. June 24th. Did you see any abnormal conditions, anything AOC  
20 in that building?

21 A. I did not.

22 Q. And does Washington Gas offer you any training or Williams  
23 offer some training?

24 A. Yes. They offer lots of training and I've been through a lot  
25 of training.

1 Q. And where is Williams' headquarters?

2 A. It's Cryden Way, 7930, I believe is the office address in  
3 Forestville.

4 Q. Now, in 8703, did you go out and check if the vent line is  
5 blocked, plugged or you don't go --

6 A. I do not check vent lines, sir, on a multi-unit building.

7 Q. Okay, but 8703, wouldn't that have a vent line?

8 A. It's an apartment building.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. So I never --

11 Q. Check. Okay.

12 A. I do not check vents on an apartment building.

13 Q. So that's not on your checklist, I guess is what I'm asking?

14 A. Not on my checklist, no.

15 Q. Okay. Then you wouldn't do it. Okay.

16 A. Right.

17 Q. Makes sense.

18 MR. CHHATRE: And that's all I have for now.

19 Go ahead.

20 BY MR. AMROLIWALA:

21 Q. Yes. This is Rashmikant Amroliwala. I work with the State  
22 of Maryland Public Service Commission. I have just question about  
23 the OQ that's operator qualification requirement. When you do the  
24 job for Washington Gas, do you have your OQ card available right  
25 now with you?

1 A. I do.

2 Q. Do you know the what covered tasks or what OQ number for the  
3 gas turn on and gas turn off in your OQ card?

4 A. I do not know the number off the top of my head.

5 Q. Okay. If you have your OQ card, can you just show me 0703  
6 and 0706? That's the requirement for the gas turn on and gas turn  
7 off; is that right? Because that's what I got it from the  
8 Southeast Station, that they told me that this is for the pressure  
9 relief -- the meter check, pressure relief check, all the  
10 information.

11 A. Okay. I'd have to check it.

12 Q. Yeah. So that -- and I need to just make sure that that  
13 qualification is current.

14 A. 0703.

15 Q. Yeah.

16 A. 2/14/19.

17 Q. 2/14/19.

18 A. And 070 -- what was the other one?

19 Q. 06.

20 A. 0706.

21 Q. Or is there a 0704, -5?

22 A. I have 0701, 0702, 0703.

23 Q. Okay. What was the --

24 A. I have a 2706.

25 Q. What was the 0702?

1 A. 11/12/16.

2 Q. 11/12/16. And 0701?

3 A. 11/12/16.

4 Q. 11/12/16. Okay. So these are the code tests that the  
5 Washington Gas conducted with you, maybe the test or maybe the  
6 in-house training. I don't know. Whatever the way the training  
7 needs to be, the material you need to read it or you need to just  
8 pass the test on the computer or whatever the way.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. But the Washington Gas is taking care for conducting the  
11 training for you, right, all -- that's the card?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Oh, okay. All right. So then I can -- 00 -- or 0703, I can  
14 see the current qualification, so that question is already  
15 answered.

16 The second question, when you went out at the 8703 Arliss  
17 Street and the Building Number 204, Apartment Number 204, and that  
18 was just a gas turn on; is that correct?

19 A. Yes, that's correct.

20 Q. So when you turn on the gas, you just use the -- downstairs  
21 in the basement there is a meter rack.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Fifteen, 16 meters. When you turn on gas for that particular  
24 apartment, 204, did you check on the meter rack for the leak, that  
25 if any other meter is leaking or any leaking in the piping, above-

1 ground piping? Do you check?

2 A. I have my Ranger machine on so it is sniffing gas in the room  
3 as I'm in there. I do not check every fitting on that meter bar,  
4 no.

5 Q. Okay, but you --

6 A. I check the brick wall for the gas that enters into the  
7 building, but I do not check the entire meter rack with 16 meters,  
8 no.

9 Q. But you make sure that there is no leak; is that correct? Do  
10 you check with the CGI? You keep your CGI on or maybe the  
11 Gas-Trac --

12 A. I have my CGI on, yes.

13 Q. -- Gas-Trac on and -- you don't check with the Gas-Trac all  
14 meter X --

15 A. No.

16 Q. -- all meters? Normally when you go, as far as I know, that  
17 when you go at certain place and when you see the bank of meters,  
18 so with the Gas-Trac you should just check all the meters and make  
19 sure that there is no leak in that particular basement area.

20 MR. CHHATRE: Okay, next.

21 BY MR. EMEABA:

22 Q. This is Kalu Kelly Emeaba. Just to follow-up, as a follow-up  
23 question, and follow-up with what you -- or, I mean, R.K. has just  
24 asked you, what is your procedure when you go to do a meter turn  
25 on at the meter location like apartment unit such as 8703 that do

1 have lots of meters in there? Can you tell me what does the  
2 procedure say? Does it say check only the meter you are working  
3 on or you should do a survey, a leak survey of the system that is  
4 in place?

5 A. I don't know the answer to that question, what the manual  
6 says. I do not know.

7 Q. Okay. How were you trained to do that?

8 A. I don't recall.

9 Q. And do you remember how often if when an employee job  
10 function will require the individual to be requalified?

11 A. I'm sorry. Can you say that again, please?

12 Q. At this situation or do you remember a situation that a job  
13 function of an employee like you will need that individual to be  
14 requalified?

15 A. You're asking when I should be requalified?

16 Q. Yes. What situation could you be in that require your  
17 requalification?

18 MR. CHHATRE: If you don't understand the question, you know,  
19 maybe he can rephrase it or make sure that, you know,  
20 communication is there. So do you understand what he's saying?

21 MR. KIRSCHNER: I'm not sure I'm understanding. I mean, he's  
22 asking about qualifications.

23 MR. CHHATRE: Oka, then don't answer. Let him rephrase it  
24 then.

25 MR. KIRSCHNER: I mean, I have the qualification, the OQ card

1 that says I'm supposed to be qualified, I guess, in 2016, November  
2 2016 is when it's coming up due for requalification.

3 BY MR. EMEABA:

4 Q. While you are current with your qualifications, are there  
5 some actions that you take at the site that would require you to  
6 be requalified before your due date?

7 A. No, sir. If you're asking if I think I should be  
8 requalified? Is that what you're asking, if I should be  
9 requalified?

10 MR. CHHATRE: I think -- let me see if I'm translating  
11 exactly. What he's asking is if there is any action you took that  
12 the company might feel that you need to go through requalification  
13 check. Is that what you're asking?

14 MR. EMEABA: Yes. Yes.

15 MR. KIRSCHNER: Has the company ever come to me and said,  
16 hey, Bob, we think you need to have this redone?

17 MR. CHHATRE: Well, Bob, you did this and this. Maybe we  
18 need to check and see if you're really qualified to do this work,  
19 requalified.

20 MR. KIRSCHNER: I do not recall them ever asking me that, no.

21 MR. EMEABA: Thank you. That's it.

22 MR. CHHATRE: Do you have any questions?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was it. Yeah, I asked them.

24 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Do you have any questions?

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing.

1 MR. CHHATRE: Thank you so much for coming, and thank you for  
2 your patience in waiting outside for an hour and a half.

3 MR. KIRSCHNER: Not a problem.

4 MR. CHHATRE: Appreciate that.

5 Off the record.

6 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: THE EXPLOSION OF APARTMENT  
BUILDING 8701 OF FLOWER BRANCH  
APARTMENTS IN SILVER SPRING,  
MARYLAND ON AUGUST 10, 2016  
Interview of Robert Kirschner

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA16FP003

PLACE: Chillum, Maryland

DATE: August 19, 2016

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,  
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed  
to the best of my skill and ability.

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Katherine Motley  
Transcriber