

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

NATURAL GAS LEAKS RESULTING IN FATAL *
HOME EXPLOSION ON JANUARY 24, 2024 *
& SECOND HOME EXPLOSION ON JANUARY *
27, 2024 IN JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI *

Accident No.: PLD24FR003

* * * * *

Interview of: KYARA WILLIAMS, EMT
American Medical Response
(Regarding January 24, 2024)

AMR Main Office
Jackson, Mississippi

Wednesday,
January 31, 2024

APPEARANCES:

ELENA BOZHKO, Pipeline Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

RYAN WILSON, Operations Manager
American Medical Response

KALEB GIBSON, Pipeline Safety Investigator
Public Service Commission

GREG SMITH, Director of System Integrity and Compliance
Atmos Energy Corporation

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I N T E R V I E W

(4:09 p.m.)

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2
3 MS. BOZHKO: So, today's January 31st, 2024, and it's about
4 4:09 local time. My name is Elena Bozhko. I'm a pipeline
5 accident investigator with the National Transportation Safety
6 Board with Office of Railroad, Pipeline, and Hazardous Materials.
7 For this accident, I am the emergency response group chair. We
8 are at AMR main station at 660 (ph.) Melvin Bender Drive in
9 Jackson, Mississippi.

10 This interview is being conducted as part of the
11 investigation into the explosion that occurred at 185 Bristol
12 Boulevard on January 24th, 2024. The NTSB case number for this
13 accident is PLD24FR003.

14 The purpose of this investigation is to increase safety, not
15 to assign, fault, blame or liability. The NTSB is an independent
16 federal agency charged with determining the probable causes of
17 transportation accidents and promoting safety. NTSB has no
18 regulatory or enforcement powers.

19 This interview is being recorded and may be transcribed at a
20 later date. A copy of the transcript will be provided to you for
21 review prior to being entered in the public docket. You are
22 permitted to have one person with you during the interview. This
23 person of your choice can be a supervisor, friend, family member,
24 or nobody at all. We will ask you to state for the record who you
25 are, your spelling of your name, the company you work for, and

1 your job title.

2 I'm going to ask each person to introduce themselves with
3 spelling of their name, title, and the agency or organization
4 they're representing. Could you please start, with your name and
5 title and organization that you represent?

6 MS. WILLIAMS: Kyara Williams. That's K-y-a-r-a. Last name
7 Williams. I am an EMT working for AMR Central Mississippi.

8 MS. BOZHKO: And who is the person that you chose to have as
9 a support?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: One of my supervisors. Ryan --

11 MR. WILSON: Yeah. So, Ryan Wilson, R-y-a-n W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s,
12 operations manager for American Medical Response.

13 MS. BOZHKO: My name is Elena Bozhko. It's E-l-e-n-a B-o-z-
14 h-k-o, and I'm an accident investigator for NTSB.

15 MR. GIBSON: My name is Kaleb Gibson, K-a-l-e-b. Last name
16 G-i-b-s-o-n. I'm a pipeline safety investigator with the Public
17 Service Commission, Pipeline Safety Division.

18 MR. SMITH: And I'm Greg Smith, G-r-e-g S-m-i-t-h, I am
19 director of Pipeline System Integrity and Compliance with Atmos
20 Energy Corporation.

21 INTERVIEW OF KYARA WILLIAMS

22 BY MS. BOZHKO:

23 Q. So, would you please tell us about your job experience? How
24 many years have you been with the company? And just tell us about
25 yourself.

1 A. Well, I've been with AMR for two years and a few months. And
2 I'm sorry, what else?

3 Q. And just the background information about you. Like, I don't
4 know, what you did before that relevant to your profession, I
5 guess.

6 A. Oh, before starting in EMS, I was -- the pandemic happened.

7 Q. Oh, yeah.

8 A. I was working, then I got laid off due to the pandemic, and
9 then I just waited until I was cleared to start class for EMT
10 school.

11 Q. Nice. All right. So, two years with the --

12 A. Yes, two years at AMR (ph.).

13 Q. All right. So, we understand that you were one of the people
14 who responded to the events at the 185.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. All right. Can you tell us more about the date and how you
17 ended up being dispatched?

18 A. Yes. We were dispatched and told that there was a fire on
19 scene and that there was entrapment, there was a patient on scene
20 who needed transport. So, we went lights and sirens to the scene.
21 And our sprint medic, who was already there with the patient, told
22 us he had the patient in his vehicle and was ambulatory. So, we
23 just needed to go ahead and get him transferred to our ambulance.
24 Had a few abrasions and cuts on his face, and the patient himself
25 was just concerned about his spouse, who was still inside.

1 He couldn't really hear very well. So, we just communicated
2 via writing, telling him that they're still working on getting to
3 his wife, but he does need to be transported to the hospital. We
4 just asked him the hospital about his choice, to which he told us
5 Baptist Medical, and once again continued to ask about his wife.
6 And then once we were cleared to go ahead and transport, my sprint
7 medic helped me back out because there was a lot of vehicles, and
8 we left.

9 Q. Do you know, roughly, what time did you arrive there?

10 A. Unfortunately, no, not off the top of my head. We had a lot
11 of calls. So, it all tends to blend together, so I don't want to
12 tell you a time, and it's not accurate, but I don't recall the
13 exact time.

14 Q. And when you got the call, it was coming from AMR's personnel
15 or --

16 A. Oh, yes. AMR's 911 dispatch dispatched us to the call, yes.

17 Q. Okay. And you were called because somebody was already on
18 scene, and they needed help?

19 A. Yes, we already had a sprint medic on scene who had a patient
20 who wanted to be transported. So, they asked us to go ahead and
21 come.

22 Q. Okay. So, can you walk us through what happens? You arrive
23 on the scene and what do you see and how that progresses?

24 A. Well, it was raining, so we already expected to be -- there
25 was already heavy traffic that day anyway due to intense rain, but

1 when we got there, there were cars lined up, news vans already
2 there. It was just both sides of the street were really backed
3 up, so we had to get as close as we could get to where all the
4 other fire trucks were. And our sprint medic was already posted
5 outside of where everything was going on, so that made it really
6 easy.

7 So, we just parked on the side. It was raining really bad,
8 so we just got -- pulled some extra sheets for the stretcher so he
9 wouldn't get wet. And that's when our medic on scene told us
10 that, hey, he is ambulatory so we can just help him over to the
11 stretcher.

12 But it was very quick just because, so we were out of the way
13 of the actual firefighters working on the fire, so it really
14 wasn't too much effort. And once we got him situated, got the
15 information we needed, got the firefighters who needed our
16 information, everything squared away, we just backed out and took
17 him to the hospital.

18 Q. Where you really close to the fire that was going, or was it
19 going at the time?

20 A. It was still going. So, we weren't particularly close,
21 close, because they had it roped off for safety reasons. Like I
22 said, there were a bunch of cars already there, including, as I
23 said, other fire trucks. Like I said, the sprint truck. Like I
24 said, news vans were already lined up, so it was pretty roped off
25 at the time we got there anyway. So, really the most difficult

1 part was just maneuvering around the vehicles that were already in
2 front of us. So, we didn't -- we weren't particularly close to
3 the scene.

4 Q. How long do you think you were at the location, roughly?

5 A. I would say at most 15 to 20 minutes, just between getting
6 all the information back and forth. Like I said, our patient was
7 having trouble communicating, so that did take longer, but it --
8 I can't say more than 20 minutes because it went pretty quickly.

9 Q. So, how did you communicate with him?

10 A. We wrote. We have some extra pieces of paper, and on our
11 four by fours, we used the packaging to write on sometimes. So,
12 my partner was just communicating with him via paperwork because
13 they were asking to verify a family member's address. So, we
14 asked about that. He continued to ask about his wife's
15 whereabouts. So, we just told them they're working on it, but we
16 do need the transport. And he agreed. So, that's how we
17 communicated.

18 Q. Do you keep those records that he wrote to you and back or --

19 A. We didn't, but we did keep them just to show the hospital,
20 like, that our patient was hard of hearing, so they would need to
21 write to communicate. But no, we -- anything related to our
22 patient when we're writing a note, usually just put it in the
23 shredder just to protect their privacy.

24 Q. Right. Gotcha. So, you arrive, you communicate with your
25 other colleague who is already on scene, and he navigates you to

1 where the patient is.

2 A. Yes. That's right. When we arrived on scene, he told us the
3 gist of how the patient went to sleep, woke up, ran out the house,
4 saw the fire and everything, and then -- he didn't sustain too
5 many injuries. Like I said, he was ambulatory, so he just helped
6 us get it on the truck and gave us initial vitals report. And we
7 were just, like I said, from there, was just communicating back
8 and forth because the patient was concerned about his spouse.

9 Q. And you mentioned that the patient was asleep?

10 A. Yeah, what we were told was that he was asleep, and he woke
11 up and it was fire everywhere. He just ran out of the house, and
12 then saw how bad it was. That's what we were told.

13 Q. And that -- do you recall who told you that?

14 A. It was regurgitated a few times by a few firefighters that
15 came back and wanted to speak with us as well as our sprint medic
16 on scene that told us that this is what the patient had told him.

17 Q. So, you would talk to firefighters as well?

18 A. Yes. They generally will come on scene and ask us for our
19 unit number of where we're transporting and any other information
20 they may need from the patient before we leave.

21 Q. Does it happen -- so there are two people on scene, right?
22 You and your partner, and the third person for the other vehicle.

23 A. We had an orientation student with us. Not a student, but a
24 new hire. So, we did have one more person on the truck with us
25 who was assisting as well. But it was us three, our sprint medic,

1 and the patient himself.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Like I said, a couple of firefighters came back and forth
4 every now and again just to verify our unit number and where we
5 were taking the patient.

6 Q. Do you recall -- I don't know. Can you describe what you
7 saw, like, fire-wise? Was it small, big, out at the time that you
8 arrived?

9 A. It was still pretty big when we got there. Like I said, I
10 wasn't paying attention to that too much, because our patient was
11 already taken care of. And like I said, it was raining, so we
12 were trying to get him out. But from what I, what I did see, it
13 was still pretty big. And like I said, they were just working
14 hard, trying to get it controlled. And then even as we were
15 leaving, more fire trucks were coming to help.

16 Q. Okay. All right. Do you recall if -- anything else that
17 patient might have communicated to you, about anything that he saw
18 or wanted to share.

19 A. No, the only thing he kept consistently repeating was that he
20 didn't want to leave his wife. And did they find my wife? Is she
21 okay? Like I said, he just woke up and there was fire everywhere,
22 and he ran out of the house.

23 Q. All right.

24 MS. BOZHKO: Any questions you want to follow up with?

25 BY MR. GIBSON:

1 Q. I mean, was there any more accounts given from the patient
2 that you could recall?

3 A. No, except his main concern was that he couldn't get to his
4 wife. He was -- he really didn't want to leave until he knew that
5 she was okay. But we expressed to him that the firefighters were
6 still working as hard as they could, and that we did need to get
7 him checked out and evaluated at the hospital. That was his main
8 concern. And then he just kept telling us that he couldn't hear.
9 So, that's why we figured out we needed to write.

10 BY MR. SMITH:

11 Q. He couldn't hear because --

12 A. He felt he was already hard of hearing. But we couldn't tell
13 initially. Like was it because of the incident -- of the incident
14 with the fire, or if this was a previous condition and we figured
15 out later it was a previous condition as to why he couldn't hear.

16 Q. Your unit number is 408 -- just to --

17 A. Yes, that's right.

18 Q. -- just to confirm. And on that unit, did you drive or are
19 you in the back or --

20 A. I drove.

21 Q. You're the driver?

22 A. Mm-hmm.

23 Q. Okay. While you were on scene, you said you really weren't
24 paying attention to the fire too much. But do you remember
25 smelling natural gas?

1 A. I didn't, but my -- I'd say my senses aren't really that
2 reliable because I instinctively block my nostrils whenever I'm on
3 scene, because of everything we run into on a regular basis. So,
4 we had a patient located, I was mainly just thinking about how I
5 was going to maneuver the truck, that there were a lot of
6 vehicles. And fortunately, our sprint medic had a free moment to
7 back us out. But that was my main focus, on where the patient
8 was.

9 Q. Did you have any interaction with Atmos Energy personnel on
10 the scene?

11 A. No, not at all. The only slight interaction was just when
12 they were moving their vehicles so we could leave the scene.

13 Q. Get in and out.

14 BY MR. GIBSON:

15 Q. Do you recall anyone else mentioning anything about natural
16 gas being involved or the suspicion of?

17 A. Not while I was there. Like I said, our concern was, like,
18 how -- what kind of issues we were looking at with our patient.
19 Like I said, my focus is figuring out how we were going to get out
20 of there.

21 BY MR. SMITH:

22 Q. And then you briefly mentioned the kind of injuries the
23 patient had, that you all were dealing with. Can you recap that
24 for me again?

25 A. Yes. Like I said, well, I didn't deal with him directly, so

1 my partner was in the back with him. Just from what I saw, just
2 getting him onto the truck, he had a few cuts on his face.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But no soot was noticed in his throat or anything like that.
5 They had already done that initial evaluation, our sprint medic.

6 Q. Anything else that you --

7 A. No. Like I said, it was --

8 Q. -- think would be of interest to us to --

9 A. Like I said, it was very quick. So, like I said, that's all
10 I have for you. Unfortunately, like I said, it was raining. My
11 main concern was how are we going to get out of here. There's a
12 lot of cars.

13 Q. Sure. (Indiscernible).

14 A. So, that that's all I have.

15 BY MS. BOZHKO:

16 Q. Was there anything -- so you talked to the -- you evaluated
17 the patient, and then you, I guess, get in the driver's seat.

18 A. Yes. I just made sure that my partner didn't need any
19 assistance with anything else in the back of the truck. So, we
20 did have an orientation rider with us. So, he rode in the back at
21 that moment. But, after that, I got in the front seat and our
22 sprint medic helped me back out of the neighborhood.

23 MS. BOZHKO: So, it's you and the trainee? That's the two
24 people?

25 A. Like I said, my partner, the paramedic, she was in the back

1 with the patient, and our trainee was in the back with her, with
2 the patient.

3 Q. So, there were three people and a patient --

4 A. Mm-hmm.

5 Q. -- and the (indiscernible). Okay.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And the patient is laying down, and they're -- like, how does
8 it work?

9 A. So. Yes. So, once we got him on a stretcher, he was laid
10 back, legs and feet up, and we put seatbelts on him. And so, once
11 we got him on the truck, like I said, he was expressing concern
12 for his wife. So, that's why we just communicated via writing.
13 And then once everyone got the information needed from us, we
14 left.

15 Q. And then you back out of the scene and then you go to the
16 hospital.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What happens next?

19 A. So, once we left, I saw more firetrucks headed that way. So,
20 I knew, I was like, okay, this is the big fire because they're
21 having to pull more people in, and since drove on to the hospital.

22 Q. And then you just get to the emergency --

23 A. Yes, when we get to the emergency room my partner calls in a
24 report five minutes out. Get there, get the patient off the
25 truck, and go inside. And so, it was pretty busy already, but one

1 of the EMS nurses came over and asked us about the details. So,
2 we told her, like, hey, this patient is hard of hearing. He has
3 expressed concern for his wife. We don't have any more
4 information, but he's going to ask you all repeatedly about his
5 wife, and I just communicate via writing because, like I said, he
6 can't hear. And so, once we got the patient transferred care,
7 that was it.

8 Q. So, you just leave? Basically, you're done? You don't wait
9 for him to be transported back or --

10 A. Oh no. So, once we've arrived at the hospital, we've given a
11 report, and they've accepted the patient, we'll unload them,
12 whether that's to another bed, to a room or what have you,
13 depending on how busy the ER is. And then we you go back in
14 service.

15 Q. And then you just wait for another call? You don't go back
16 to the scene at all?

17 A. Oh, no, we don't go back to the scene at all.

18 Q. Okay. Gotcha. And did your partners relate to you if they
19 were able to talk to him about -- if he shared any extra
20 information while they were with him?

21 A. Not that I can recall. Like I said, the main thing, like I
22 said, that I kept hearing him say was like, where is my wife?
23 Where is my wife?

24 Q. Okay. All right.

25 MR. SMITH: I don't have anything.

1 MS. BOZHKO: Anything else that you can think of?

2 MS. WILLIAMS: No.

3 MS. BOZHKO: All right. Thank you for your time. Let me
4 stop the recording.

5 (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: NATURAL GAS LEAKS RESULTING IN FATAL
 HOME EXPLOSION ON JANUARY 24, 2024 &
 SECOND HOME EXPLOSION ON
 JANUARY 27, 2024 IN JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI
 Interview of Kyara Williams

ACCIDENT NO.: PLD24FR003

PLACE: Jackson, Mississippi

DATE: January 31, 2024

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.



Melissa Bousquette
Transcriber

Elena Bozhko

From: Kyara Williams [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 27, 2024 2:42 PM
To: Elena Bozhko
Subject: Re: Transcript Review Request: Jackson Mississippi Home Explosions and Fires - NTSB PLD24FR003

[CAUTION] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon! No changes or corrections are needed. Everything is correct. Thank you so much for your patience! I apologize for the delay.

Kyara Williams

On Thu, Jun 27, 2024, 1:38 PM Elena Bozhko [REDACTED] wrote:

Kyara,

Thank you so much for returning my phone call. As we discussed, attached is the transcript of the interview we recorded back in January. Please let me know if you have any corrections, otherwise please respond to this email stating that no changes are needed or use the provided form.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

- Elena



Elena Bozhko, Pipeline Accident Investigator

Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations

National Transportation Safety Board

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