



**National Transportation Safety Board**  
Washington, D.C. 20594

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Name: Brad Jobe

Department Atmos Energy / Shared Services

Title: Supervisor of Training Delivery

Date of Interview: April 24, 2018

I have reviewed my transcript(s) from the above referenced accident and:

I have no comments to make.

My comments are submitted herewith.

My comments are marked on the attached copy.



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: \*

NATURAL GAS-FUELED EXPLOSION OF \*  
RESIDENCE, DALLAS, TEXAS \*  
FEBRUARY 23, 2018 \*

\* Accident No.: PLD18FR002

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: BRAD JOBE

Marriot Courtyard Hotel  
Plano, Texas

Tuesday,  
April 24, 2018

## APPEARANCES:

ROGER EVANS, Investigator in Charge  
National Transportation Safety Board

JIM COLLINS, Regional Manager  
Railroad Commission of Texas

JOHN MCDILL, Vice President of Pipeline Safety  
Atmos Energy

CHRIS McLAREN, Distribution Integrity Management  
Program Coordinator  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration  
(PHMSA)

THOMAS TOBIN, Attorney  
Wilson Elser  
(On behalf of Mr. Jobe)

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:17 p.m.)

MR. EVANS: On the record with Brad Jobe, J-O-B-E of Atmos. Good afternoon. Today is April 24th, 2018. It is now 1:17 p.m.

My name is Roger Evans. I'm with the National Transportation Safety Board. I'm a senior pipeline investigator with Pipeline Accident Investigation Group out of Washington, D.C. For this accident I'm the investigator in charge.

We are at the Marriot Courtyard Hotel in Plano, Texas. This interview is being conducted as part of the investigation into the fatality home explosion that occurred on February 23rd, 2018 in a West Dallas suburb situated just north of Love Field.

The NTSB case number for this accident is PLD as in dog-18FR002. The purpose of the investigation is to increase safety, not to assign fault, blame or liability.

This interview is being recorded and may be transcribed at a later date. A copy of the transcript will be provided to the interviewee for review prior to being entered into the public docket.

Mr. Brad Jobe, please provide the spelling of your name, the company you work for and your job title?

MR. JOBE: Brad Jobe, B-R-A-D, J-O-B-E, and I work for Atmos Energy and I am the supervisor of training delivery.

MR. EVANS: Okay. Thank you. You are permitted to have one person present during the interview. This is a person of your

1 choice -- a supervisor, friend, family member or nobody at all.  
2 Please state for the record who you have selected?

3 MR. JOBE: I assume that would be Tom.

4 MR. EVANS: Yeah. And can you as his representative please  
5 state for the record your name, spelling and affiliation?

6 MR. TOBIN: My name is Tom Tobin, T-O-B-I-N. I'm an attorney  
7 with the Wilson Elser law firm in New York.

8 MR. EVANS: Okay. I'd like to go around the room now and  
9 have each person state their name with their spelling and title  
10 and the agency or organization you're representing. We'll start  
11 from my left.

12 MR. COLLINS: Jim Collins, J-I-M, C-O-L-L-I-N-S, regional  
13 manager for the Railroad Commission of Texas, Dallas-Fort Worth.

14 MR. MCDILL: John McDill, Vice President of Pipeline Safety  
15 for Atmos Energy, 5430 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, Texas 75240.

16 MR. McLAREN: Chris McLaren, PHMSA, DIMP coordinator. That's  
17 C-H-R-I-S, M-C-L-A-R-E-N, from Houston, Texas. My address is 3618  
18 Overbrook Lane. Thank you.

19 INTERVIEW OF BRAD JOBE

20 BY MR. EVANS:

21 Q. Well, thank you Brad for coming in today. Appreciate that.  
22 Before we get into the questioning we'd like to ask a little bit  
23 about your background. Could you first start with your  
24 educational background?

25 A. I'm a high school graduate.

1 Q. Okay. Any military experience?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. Okay. And how many years have you been at the Atmos?

4 A. I've been with the company 16 years.

5 Q. Okay. And prior to that what did you do?

6 A. I worked for Kansas City Southern Railroad.

7 Q. Okay. And what was your job there?

8 A. I was a crew lead out on a terminal.

9 Q. Okay. And 16 years at the firm now. What were your previous  
10 assignments to your present assignment?

11 A. I started out with the company as a meter reader. I moved  
12 into service after about a year and half of reading meters. Moved  
13 to construction in 2004. Worked my way through the ranks of  
14 construction, senior construction operator to crew lead, and I  
15 would have to go back and look at those, those times.

16 In December of '11 I transitioned into training. I was an  
17 instructor for a couple of years. I want to say around December  
18 of ~~'11~~<sup>'13</sup> I was promoted to a senior instructor and then June of last  
19 year I was promoted to the supervisor of training delivery.

20 Q. Okay. So that's your official title, supervisor --

21 A. Training delivery, yes, sir.

22 Q. Training D-E-L-I-V-E-R-Y, like that?

23 A. Delivery.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Long title.

1 Q. Okay. And how many reports do you have?

2 A. I have 10.

3 Q. Okay. What are, what are the basics? Could you go through  
4 those 10 people's job titles what are they?

5 A. I have instructors. There could be an entry level or they've  
6 been an instructor for a few years to a senior instructor and  
7 those are my -- they're more of an advanced instructor, I guess,  
8 is the way you would put it. That would be their background. I  
9 have -- they teach from measurement to ~~surface~~ <sup>service</sup> to construction and  
10 on.

11 Q. Okay. So all of your reports are instructors though? That's  
12 -- there's some sort of trainer?

13 A. Yeah, yes. Yes, sir, yes, sir.

14 Q. Okay. Okay, good. And if you were to combine your entire  
15 group then, these gentlemen or ladies they don't have reports to  
16 them; is that correct?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Okay, okay. And what different organizations have you worked  
19 in? Which different states have you worked in with this company?

20 A. I've actually only worked in Texas.

21 Q. So Mid-Texas your entire career?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Okay. Okay. I have to say I have -- in this business I am,  
24 I'm amazed at how many people start out in the meter reading  
25 world. I've seen them at vice president level and they started



1 out -- it's an interesting job flow actually. It's interesting.  
2 Okay.

3 Let's go through a typical day that you might have. I guess,  
4 you must have -- you have to come up with a curriculum or does  
5 someone do that for you?

6 A. That's actually come up within teams. If I was to take a  
7 course now. If we were a group and we were going to develop a  
8 course, we would have a calling for it, what is needed, and then  
9 we would reach out.

10 My manager would reach out to Atmos Energy as a whole and we  
11 would pull together a team and that team would be a group from  
12 operation supervisors to safety, to our culture and pull that team  
13 together, and then we would go from there -- what is the subject.  
14 And then that team would work together and build that course  
15 content and obviously compliance would be involved in that.

16 But that is how. It wouldn't be just Brad Jobe pulling  
17 together and building a course. We also have curriculum  
18 designers. They understand the adult education and then that's --  
19 that team would actually design -- excuse me, design that course.

20 Q. So with you said -- with you saying you started, I guess,  
21 2011 you've been in this position. But have all the courses out  
22 of -- actually that are taught today, are they all team generated  
23 like that?

24 A. If you take gas essentials advanced, the courses that we have  
25 today, yes, they would have been built together as a team, 100

1 percent.

2 Q. Okay. And then once you train someone, what is your mode to  
3 determine that they understood the materials?

4 A. Okay. So in the course itself we have -- it's a -- if you  
5 looked at it, it would be a three-stage process. Obviously the  
6 course and I won't even count that as a stage. That's just  
7 teaching them the content.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. Then we have a written test and then at the end of your  
10 course you would take a KSA, knowledge, skills and ability test.  
11 They have to perform the tasks that they've learned. And then,  
12 from that point, looking at our plan you would be qualified in  
13 that OQ, but then there's a second stage of it.

14 Now they're going to go back home and they're going to work  
15 with an OJT ~~code~~<sup>coach</sup>, on-the-job training coach, and that could be  
16 somebody that is their supervisor or an experienced person in that  
17 subject, whatever that subject they're studying on.

18 And then that person would evaluate them and that is field  
19 evaluation. What we train in training is the procedure, our Gas  
20 City, I'm not saying it's limited but I can't put you in Ms.  
21 Johnson's house. That's what the OJT program does.

22 Q. All right.

23 A. It's in the field training. They would fill out an OJT  
24 checklist, they hit all these topics, they understand it.  
25 Basically they can teach it back to the OJT coach.

1           And then the OJT coach along with the employee and their  
2 supervisor will meet. If the supervisor feels they are 100  
3 percent, that the OJT coach is successful or they could actually  
4 do a ride along and verification of that themselves and then  
5 they're able to actually perform their job.

6           Just because they finished the OQ does not mean that they're  
7 able to go out and do whatever task that they're assigned to.

8 Q.    Okay. And how long is the OJT?

9 A.    It can be -- well, it actually depends on the employee, to be  
10 honest with you. It could be -- we're looking at 3 to 4 months as  
11 an OJT program but it could be quicker. We have students that  
12 roll through our 5-week -- you know, if we just took that basic  
13 class and they grasp it. They may have come from another industry  
14 where everything makes -- they're talking the same language, so to  
15 speak.

16 Q.    Right.

17 A.    They'll grasp it a little faster than somebody that may have  
18 worked in the retail industry and they're having to learn gas for  
19 the first time. But through our 5-week program we learned that  
20 when you develop -- when you hire for culture, that's a big piece,  
21 and then you develop that culture within the training and the  
22 leadership and the understanding of how the OQ process goes --  
23 operator qualification process, and you perform 80 percent hands  
24 on in our training, that OJT part of it happens a lot faster now.

25 Q.    Okay. So how do you -- I mean, let's say an accident happens

1 out in the field like -- well, not an accident. Let's just say  
2 someone must be auditing work as it's going on out there, I would  
3 imagine, is that a true statement, someone auditing what happens  
4 out in the field? Is there surprise audits to make sure someone's  
5 doing work the right way?

6 A. I would have to lean on the operations side of that. I'm  
7 just focused on the training part of what we do.

8 Q. Okay. Well, do you ever get feedback from operations that  
9 says we have a nonconformance to this kind of this task, let's  
10 say, and it doesn't look like our training covered this part and  
11 now you have to change the training? Does that happen?

12 A. That would be, that would be part of that development of  
13 training. That subject may come up. If we were just going to use  
14 pouring this water out of a glass, our employees are not grasping  
15 pouring water out of a glass.

16 That's what they would come to the training team and say, we  
17 need to enhance this training. That's when we pull it together,  
18 what information have we gotten. Is there something we're missing  
19 in class? Or if it's not, now we've advanced, now we may need to  
20 have an advanced class on that or we need to do a specific class  
21 on that.

22 There's where we pull that team together, decide how we're  
23 going to train it. What is missing, what do we need to add to  
24 this class from safety, culture, compliance, the whole, the whole  
25 gamut. And then that's how we would develop that class.

1 Q. I see.

2 A. But that, that would be the only answer I'd be able to give  
3 you on something like that. As far as operations side of it, I'm  
4 not part of that; I'm part of the employee development part.

5 Q. So let's just say that we want to have gas readings done,  
6 right. All the skills that these technicians would have would  
7 have come through your school for a gas reading, for like fire  
8 hole testing?

9 A. They would have gotten a portion of --

10 Q. CGI?

11 A. It would be a portion of that training.

12 Q. Do they get the hands-on CGI with you?

13 A. Yes, they use the hands on CGI in our class. They would get  
14 an introduction in gas essentials and then they would use it in  
15 the advanced service class.

16 Q. Okay. So a question about the CGI class. Do you know  
17 whether or not testing for gas -- the presence of gas in a wet  
18 environment is covered?

19 A. It's covered. It's in the content, yes, sir, and it's -- I  
20 would be honest with you, to flood Gas City and make it a rainy  
21 condition is very difficult.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. So it's more of a -- we explain to them that you don't stop,  
24 you put multiple bar ~~hose~~ <sup>holes</sup> down. It's more of a discussion in our  
25 gas -- in our training department because of being able to have,

1 you know, work in the rain in gas city we -- you know, we may have  
2 a class that's beautiful for 6 months.

3 So that's more of explaining multiple bar hose -- you know,  
4 they're not actually working in a wet environment, if that's what  
5 you're asking?

6 Q. Well, well, okay. How about the ~~Sensa~~ <sup>Sensit</sup> people, the people  
7 that make your CGI meters that you were using in the neighborhood  
8 where the child was killed, do you have those manufacturers come  
9 and see you?

10 Do they ever come in and say, hey, tips, tricks, the new  
11 enhancements, good, bad and different on this piece of equipment?  
12 Have they ever talked to you?

13 A. Occasionally. We actually have gone through EGWs, come out  
14 and I don't -- I couldn't tell you their exact name, what their  
15 symbols are for. But they have come out and assisted when we've  
16 had questions with our CGI, we do reach out to manufacturers on a  
17 number of different things.

18 Q. What is your understanding of doing bar hole testing in rain?

19 A. Bar hole testing in rain? My understanding would be it's  
20 multiple bar holes. In wet conditions, unless I'm out there, it's  
21 hard for me to -- you know, I've always in our training we have to  
22 touch, taste and feel it. I have to be there. I have to see what  
23 type of wet conditions you're talking about.

24 Is it sprinkler system or is it, you know, we've had a flood?  
25 At that -- there's where it -- when you run into bar hole testing

1 you have to be there and that's part of our training is I have to  
2 be there. I can give you recommendations over the phone but I  
3 can't, I can't do it for you, you have to be there and that's  
4 where that on-the-job training goes into effect.

5 Q. Do you teach that the ~~Sensa~~<sup>Sensit</sup> machines can be rendered useless  
6 if they -- if the filament gets wet?

7 A. We teach that you need to have caution on getting your -- in  
8 ~~Sensa~~<sup>Sensit</sup> but that could be with any tool that we use in the field.  
9 Water, you know, can affect it, so that's the reason we teach the  
10 caution of putting multiple bar holes. We see it fill up  
11 immediately then we're going to survey above that bar hole.  
12 There's part of our communication with them at that time entering.

13 Q. Okay. So what you teach though today, do you teach that it's  
14 okay to take bar hole tests in rain?

15 A. You have to put multiple, multiple bar holes. You have to  
16 attempt it.

17 Q. Okay. But the answer to that question is you teach that they  
18 can test in the rain, yes?

19 A. Yes, yes.

20 Q. Okay. I just wanted to --

21 A. Don't give up.

22 Q. I want that for the record. That's okay.

23 A. Okay, okay.

24 Q. No problem. Okay. So what about, you know, when the  
25 individuals talk about they're at a grade 1 leak, right?

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. They found a grade 1 leak and they know they have to fix it  
3 and the fact that they have something -- they have some  
4 responsibility to get that information out to home office or to  
5 the mothership, whatever you want to call it.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. So that data gets recorded, correct?

8 A. Yes, we have documentation if that's what you're --

9 Q. Yeah. So is that part of the training that process of how  
10 that data makes its way back to the mothership?

11 A. No. I will -- no. We did not teach documentation and that -  
12 - the reason that we don't teach because we teach from Virginia to  
13 Western Colorado. There may be little nuances in every area due  
14 to different regulations or codes or whatever their supervisor has  
15 -- I like this piece, I need to know this piece.

16 That is part of the OJT program, getting back in their  
17 office, meeting with their supervisors and being taught on that  
18 because of that. It would be too difficult in our office to try  
19 to -- okay, I'm going to teach Colorado guy this and Kansas guy  
20 this so --

21 Q. Okay. So --

22 A. We do say everything needs to be documented, yes.

23 Q. Right. As far as the data getting back, I mean, are you  
24 aware of how that happens in a general sense?

25 A. I would have to -- can you explain?



1 Q. In the bar hole data from a grade 1 leak how that -- you  
2 know, for every one of the -- you know, according to PHMSA, you  
3 know, every, you know, bar hole -- I mean, excuse me, grade 1  
4 leaks have to be addressed immediately; 2 have to be scheduled; 3  
5 you can fix them later and all this good stuff.

6 But the information that says I found the bar hole -- with a  
7 bar hole I found a grade 1 leak or a grade 2 leak or what have you  
8 -- how that record of that instance leaves the field and goes to  
9 the mothership or whomever it goes to, that is not part of your  
10 training at all?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Do you talk about GIS being on this -- or is it on the units  
13 you have, is GIS on the device when you take a bar hole, does it  
14 automatically grab the GIS?

15 A. No, sir. No, sir, not that I know of. I would have to say  
16 it that way.

17 Q. Okay, okay. How about is there any sort of a QC that's done  
18 on the performance of an individual who's like a rookie, let's  
19 say. He's only been there 6 months and someone says, hey, okay,  
20 let's, let's go out and check old Joe and see how he's doing.  
21 He's only been here 6 months and he's out on his own now.

22 Is there any sort of a -- you know, a check that's done like  
23 a QC or a surprise visit, you know, like an audit or some sort  
24 that's done by a surprise?

25 A. I would have to look at operations but I do know there's

1 follow-ups on our leak program and that would be something you  
2 would need to reach out to operations. And within 6 months  
3 they're still in a training program unless they're one of those  
4 individuals that may have come from another industry or something.

5 Q. Okay, okay.

6 A. They're still in training.

7 Q. Okay, okay. Different area question around bar holing. But  
8 let's say, for instance, that I am going to send someone to  
9 school, at your school there at Gas City and I want them to learn  
10 bar holing.

11 Do they not only get the training on how to bar hole but how  
12 far apart bar holing is supposed to be done, how it gets mapped,  
13 why you're doing this in this type of an area? I guess they get  
14 some real life experiences and they probably do smell gas or gas  
15 released in your city?

16 A. Absolutely, yes.

17 Q. So you can detect it, right --

18 A. Yes, absolutely.

19 Q. -- in a controlled environment?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. So do they get that type of training?

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. Okay. So what does a -- if you know, I mean, what's the  
24 standard distance that they teach between bar holes?

25 A. We suggest around 5 foot unless there is something that would

1 impede that 5-foot rule.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. That's just a good round number. And the reason we say  
4 around that is because if there happened to be, you know, a tree  
5 sitting there within 5 foot, it's hard to get that exact 5 foot  
6 measurement.

7 Q. And what happens if they find gas -- what is taught as far  
8 as, what's their next step?

9 A. They continue to bar test until they reach zero and then  
10 that's -- you asked about documentation, that would be really  
11 reinforced in our training. You go to zero and then you draw your  
12 migration pattern. It's a basic drawing of that migration  
13 pattern.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. And zero is zero.

16 Q. Okay. Zero is zero. Okay, good. Okay. So what about the  
17 car that drives around and says, okay, let's sample this  
18 neighborhood and is that part of your training as well? Do you  
19 teach that?

20 A. No, sir. Well, that's in the survey class. That would be in  
21 your survey leak detection class. I am not as familiar with that  
22 class and I've never taught that class.

23 MR. EVANS: Okay. That's all I have for right now.

24 BY MR. McLAREN:

25 Q. Thank you. Chris McLaren from PHMSA. Thanks for being here

1 today.

2 A. Thank you.

3 Q. So you mentioned a number of classes. We've got the leak  
4 survey class and it sounds like you're teaching. Would you train  
5 the individual that's going to drive around in the automatic leak  
6 detection car or are we going to call that Picarro, or what do you  
7 call it?

8 A. Picarro is a different class.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. We do not teach the Picarro unit at the Vaughan Center and I  
11 am, I am not the person to ask about that course.

12 Q. And how does, how does -- so the leak survey class though,  
13 the trainees would understand how to take that information and go  
14 find those leaks and grade them?

15 A. The leak survey class is for our leak survey technicians and  
16 I understand the Picarro unit probably falls within that.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. But that is -- that's a totally different unit. These are  
19 survey technicians that survey our lines and there's DOT rules  
20 around periodic surveys. That's what, that's what this class is  
21 about.

22 Q. And that would be to become -- and so that's a general class  
23 and then within that you're going to have your, you're going to  
24 have your OQ qualifications that you've identified that you need?

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 Q. And could you name those off for leak surveying and  
2 detection?

3 A. Actually right now I'm going to have to just guess unless I'm  
4 full in --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- but you would have your I10, which is atmospheric  
7 corrosion, M15 leak classification. M13 is not in that course.  
8 That is a separate course which would be emergency response. M1,  
9 which would be surveying for leaks; and M2 which would be  
10 patrolling and surveying; and then I want to say M16 which is  
11 abnormal operating conditions.

12 But, for the record, I'm going to have to guess at that. I'm  
13 not a part of that class.

14 Q. Okay. You also mentioned measurement, so these are OQ  
15 courses almost and this is going to fit into your OQ model pending  
16 in the KSA test?

17 A. It does fit in the OQ model but there is an understanding  
18 about the way our courses work. Our courses are more than just,  
19 here, come for 2 or 3 days and I'm going to teach you an OQ or 2  
20 or 3 weeks or 5 weeks; however, long the course is.

21 Our courses are leadership courses. They talk about -- they  
22 addressing a customer, yes, ma'am, no, sir. From the basics of  
23 tucking in your shirt and presenting yourself in a professional  
24 manner, parking your vehicle properly.

25 To just call them an OQ course would even be a disservice to

1 our courses. They are so much more. We, I've had to help a guy  
2 through his HR process and help him get his benefits through our  
3 courses. They learn expense reports.

4 I mean, so what I'm getting at is, yes, the ~~OG~~<sup>OQ</sup> falls within  
5 our course but it's so much more than just an OQ course.

6 Q. Yeah. It seems like when you -- when we, when we started off  
7 talking about the center it really was an onboarding and culture  
8 development experience.

9 A. 100 percent, yes.

10 Q. Okay. You also mentioned measurement. When you talk about  
11 measurement, are you talking about metering, are you talking about  
12 surveying, leak surveying?

13 A. It's your measurement technicians when you label a  
14 measurement course, that's your measurement technicians dealing  
15 with regulator manifolds and what have you.

16 Q. So he's have a curriculum, a series of the I's and M's that  
17 he would do while there -- while he was there?

18 A. Absolutely, yes, sir.

19 Q. And that would be the same for a service? When you said  
20 service you meant like service technician --

21 A. Service technician.

22 Q. -- and when you said construction you meant like construction  
23 team?

24 A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir, yes, sir.

25 Q. Okay. All right. In the grading of leaks, how do they --

1 I'm sure there's a procedure in the leak management program you  
2 have a procedure for how you're going to grade them and they're  
3 taught that based on percentage or parts per million?

4 A. That's part of the minimum basics of it, yes.

5 Q. And what constitutes a hazardous leak -- what are the  
6 criteria that you all train to? Is it similar to GPTC or --

7 A. If it's going to affect life or property and in the judgment  
8 or in the judgment of the technician being in the field, then it  
9 would be graded a grade 1 leak. That's how it's classified if  
10 you're focusing on a grade or a classification of a 1, yes.

11 Q. Okay. Is there some -- are there some -- above some minimum  
12 amount of gas defined by measurement that has to be a hazardous?

13 A. Yeah. She would have to refer to the manual, yes, but --

14 Q. Okay. All right.

15 MR. TOBIN: I didn't mean not to give this to you. It might  
16 be helpful.

17 MR. McLAREN: No, that's okay. It had --

18 MR. JOBE: It's giving you a list of our courses.

19 MR. TOBIN: Maybe if you can identify that for the record  
20 that would be good.

21 MR. McLAREN: Yeah, what I'm looking at now is I was handed  
22 by Tom is the -- it's Tom, right, Tom?

23 MR. TOBIN: Yeah, Tobin.

24 MR. McLAREN: Tobin. I was handed the list of course work  
25 provided at the Vaughan Training Center. And it is extensive and

1 looks like it would cover a wide breadth of the different job  
2 classifications.

3 MR. TOBIN: And then it's cross-referenced to all the OQ's  
4 per course in a big matrix.

5 BY MR. McLAREN:

6 Q. Some of the -- you touched on trying to train, to teach, you  
7 know, the leadership and the conduct of one's selves and I'm kind  
8 of -- a course a lot of the questions are around leak surveying  
9 and leak identification.

10 We've touched on the bar holing and if an individual is going  
11 to identify these leaks and this migration pattern at these levels  
12 of measurement, how are they trained to make decisions from  
13 integrating that data and/or bringing in supervision and support?

14 A. When a technician leaves the Vaughan Center one of the things  
15 that they'll walk away from our Vaughan Center and it is spoken a  
16 thousand times, if you need help call somebody.

17 They have the freedom to call. But with the note of -- even  
18 to the point our instructors hand out their business cards for  
19 every class, it doesn't mean if -- you know, we have students that  
20 will come for multiple classes, they'll still get one of, one of  
21 my instructors but he may have five of them. Let's just say that.

22 With the understanding that if you call me and you're out  
23 classifying a leak that I can give you some guidance but I cannot  
24 grade that leak from my office.

25 If you were to call me, if I'm the instructor in the



1 classroom and you call me and say, what should I grade this, it's  
2 going to be a grade 1 leak. Why? I'm not there. You have to be  
3 onsite. And that's where the OJT program rolls into that.

4 I can -- you know, you can see the Vaughan Center. I have a  
5 small area and we can put them through as many scenarios as we can  
6 but until you're in the field and you're in the environment you  
7 cannot grade that leak. Basically you can't grade it from the  
8 office and they know that when they walk out of the room, but  
9 we're there for them.

10 Their OJT coach is there for them; their supervisor is there  
11 for them. They can call and get assistance if it means I've got  
12 to get in a truck and drive out there. Then they know that it's  
13 there. So they're not -- they're never alone, they've always got  
14 somebody with them in essence so --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I hope I answered your question.

17 Q. Well, yeah, you really can pull out -- this isn't appropriate  
18 to try to go pull out curriculum and understand how they're  
19 taught. You'd have to do the whole course to understand how to  
20 integrate the data. But so -- but, yeah, the -- if I'm not there  
21 it's a 1 -- reasonable enough.

22 On soils. You know it's been talked about the clay and the  
23 hydration of it from this flood of it. We've talked about water  
24 and bar holes and whatnot. What's been your experience with the  
25 Bentonite clay on leaks surveying and is that a topic that's

1 discussed at the training facility?

2 A. That one is a hard topic to discuss at the training facility  
3 because we deal with so many different soil types from, like I  
4 said, Virginia into Western Colorado, you know, soil in Colorado  
5 it's all rock, you know.

6 So that one is a very difficult one to cover to be accurate  
7 and say this one's going to do this and this one's going to do  
8 this one. That one falls back into your, your OJT coaching and  
9 knowing your soil types.

10 And that's the -- there's where that OJT coaching comes in is  
11 because they get to go back home and do it back home. So they  
12 learn their -- you know, their soil types. They understand plus  
13 that student is from that area.

14 I know my soil types. I know and he should know his. So and  
15 that's -- it goes back to being there. You've got to be there  
16 and, you know, recognize what the soil is doing while you're  
17 onsite. I can't help you from the office. I would need to come  
18 out and see what's going on.

19 Q. Okay. I'd like to one more time discuss again the  
20 methodology and so I'm just going to say what my perception of how  
21 -- of what I've heard is, is that the automated vehicle is going  
22 to drive.

23 It is going to see leak events and identify areas that need  
24 to be graded and investigated and then it's going to provide this  
25 information back about the ~~wear~~<sup>where</sup> to a team that is going to go out

1 and grade and locate or investigate, locate and grade as  
2 appropriate. Is that accurate?

3 A. If you're talking about the Picarro unit, is that what we're  
4 talking about or are we talking --

5 Q. Are we, are we doing, are we doing -- yeah, is it being  
6 utilized to do our leaks, our regulatory in Texas required leak  
7 surveys?

8 A. You're going to have to refer to that team. I'm not familiar  
9 with the Picarro unit much.

10 Q. Okay. So your -- are you -- so your teams are trying to go  
11 out and, and perform a leak survey and some sort of whatever you  
12 want to use, class location, depending on what buildings or  
13 whatnot and then to find those leaks and grade them?

14 A. Yes. Yes, sir, that -- yes, that's what they're doing.

15 Q. Are they trained to be given a GPS point and go investigate a  
16 leak?

17 A. Well, if you're asking about like say a customer calls in and  
18 says I'm smelling gas at my front yard or if you're talking about  
19 the Picarro unit, I'm really --

20 Q. The latter?

21 A. Really and truly I am not familiar at all with the Picarro  
22 unit, how that process goes. That is taught in a totally  
23 different class.

24 Q. Do the CGI machines have GPS devices on them that can, that  
25 can automatically plug in, here's a leak, here's it's percentage

1 and record it as a location?

2 A. Not that, not that I know of and I would need to do some more  
3 research on that.

4 Q. What other gas detector, gas measurement machines do you use?

5 A. In our training in the leak survey class we have ~~heat~~ <sup>Heath</sup>  
6 consultants come in and teach a DPIR, and please don't ask me to  
7 give you those, and then the RMLD.

8 And so the first part of that class -- it's actually a 2-week  
9 class -- you get your OQ's and understanding of how we grade leaks  
10 and the culture part of it and then ~~heat~~ <sup>Heath</sup> consultants comes in and  
11 teaches their equipment, the ins and outs, the calibration, any  
12 maintenance and what have you.

13 Q. Okay. Hang on one -- let me go back. I thought I saw the --  
14 okay.

15 A. You're all over it right there.

16 Q. Yeah, yes. Yeah, CGI. And for -- and so for leak detection  
17 you use the infrared handheld laser equipment?

18 A. Uh-huh, your leak survey technicians, not a standard service  
19 technician wouldn't have one of those on his truck but a leak  
20 survey tech would.

21 Q. And then once he located it, if he located one, he'd then  
22 have to get one of the CGI or other machines to go quantify it?

23 A. Yeah. Then it moves into bar hole testing.

24 Q. And then into bar hole test?

25 A. Yes, sir.

1 MR. McLAREN: Okay. That's all for now. Thank you.

2 MR. COLLINS: Jim Collins, Railroad Commission, no questions.

3 BY MR. MCDILL:

4 Q. John McDill, Atmos Energy. Brad, a few questions to follow-  
5 up and you've passed a lot -- kind of an inventory of classes that  
6 are available. But just at a very high level, can you talk about  
7 -- you talk about one class being 5 weeks in length.

8 But if I'm a service technician joining the Atmos Energy  
9 today just high level, how does this work, the training, OJT,  
10 another training? Just high level kind of overall curriculum for  
11 that and the number of maybe weeks that they may go to the Vaughan  
12 Center for training?

13 A. Okay. A service technician if they get hired on today, their  
14 first class would be Atmos essentials and that's introduction into  
15 our company. And then they would -- they could either go back to  
16 the field for a month or two, depending on when their scheduled  
17 for their class and that is a -- I get hired today I may be behind  
18 a guy that got hired yesterday.

19 So then they will come to Gas essentials. That will be an  
20 introduction in to their first core class, OQ class, if you want  
21 to call it that. That's when they'll start being introduced to  
22 OQ's.

23 Those are -- that's not just given to a service technician,  
24 that's given to construction operators as well. That's an  
25 integrative class. You'll have a mix of construction and service.

1           So they start out on the same foot, so to speak. That 5-week  
2 course is an understanding of natural gas. It's basically a turn  
3 on, turn off class. They learn how to turn gas on to a customer.  
4 A customer calls in needing service or they didn't pay their bill  
5 or a reasonable turn off, they'll learn how to do those and  
6 understand turn off.

7           They go back to the field for 3 to 4 months and work on their  
8 OJT program and that's where they -- Ms. Johnson talking,  
9 understanding our customers. I use Ms. Johnson as an example --  
10 you know, understanding her, her questions and dealing with real  
11 life scenarios.

12           Then they will come back for an advanced service class,  
13 construction and service will take that course as well. Now, if  
14 we focus on a service technician, they will come back to that 4-  
15 week class.

16           If you take the meat of that class that is understanding  
17 leaks. That's where they will get leak classification, maximum  
18 allowable operating pressures, and emergency response, and then  
19 that is treated the same way as the other class.

20           They'll go back for 3 to 4 months with an OJT coach before  
21 they are released to do any of that leak being called out in an  
22 item, so to speak, and get a leak. If you want me to -- do you  
23 want me to go into a construction operator or --

24 Q. No, that's fine. I think that kind of helps give me a better  
25 perspective of the time and the training. And you said most of

1 the time there at the Vaughan Center there's a hands-on portion  
2 and practicing?

3 A. Yes. We are at 80 percent hands on, 20 percent classroom.  
4 So we have -- they have iPads and they also have a book. They're  
5 able to take the iPads out to Gas City so if there is a question  
6 of what do I do here, how do I do this, we immediately refer them  
7 to the procedures. Let's pull it up and look at it.

8 And then there's where my instructors come in in helping them  
9 understand what that procedure is saying and through experience  
10 tying it back to real world as best we can in Gas City.

11 And then if we need to, when a student leaves class, if  
12 they're struggling understanding this, we also can get in touch  
13 with their supervisor.

14 My instructors have freedom to call the supervisors and say,  
15 Jim Smith is struggling in this area, I think we need to focus on  
16 this area so -- but, yes, it's 20 percent classroom, 80 percent  
17 hands-on.

18 Q. And the content on that -- tell us a little bit just high  
19 level kind of that is interactive, is it just --

20 A. Yes. Obviously you have your -- just your Word document, so  
21 to speak in there, but there's videos that they can go into. And,  
22 say we're teaching emergency response. We have a number of videos  
23 of like fire department explaining where they ran into a leak and  
24 how they reacted to it.

25 Not only can they watch those in class as a group, they can

1 actually go back to their room and watch it again and maybe get a  
2 little bit more. Come back in and ask questions the next day. We  
3 have widgets within our course content to where if I've explained  
4 A,B,C, they may not have understood and they were scared to ask or  
5 whatever, then they can go back to their room and they can go  
6 through, oh, okay, now I can see what he's getting at. I've read  
7 it one more time.

8 Not only that, it's we have those interactions but our  
9 students have access to our instructors all the time. My  
10 instructors understand that at lunchtime we may have a student  
11 that needs to come to them and they may be at the wall. That's  
12 what we call it, using Gas City at the wall, teaching at the wall  
13 during lunchtime.

14 They could be back at home and call one of my instructors and  
15 say, I know you talked about this in here and we did it in class  
16 but I haven't seen this since I got back home. What do I do here,  
17 how do I do this?

18 Now back to a leak obviously it would a grade 1 leak. But if  
19 it's understanding how to do a turn on, I missed this part, I know  
20 I'm supposed to do something here, now they can walk them through  
21 it.

22 Greatness of Smartphones now, if you had to can face time  
23 them and they'll be right there on a video.

24 Q. Did you or your team have -- you talked about an OJT program  
25 which is follow-up support for -- other than, do you or your team



1 members have involvement with other OJT coaches that are in the  
2 divisions?

3 A. Yeah. Well, we talked to them a lot. They're also -- the  
4 way that our program works is, you know, we teach them the  
5 content, we do the written test. We also perform the KSA.

6 Well, a lot of what we've started doing and I say started --  
7 we've been doing this for years now -- we'll reach out to the  
8 field and have those OQ evaluators come in.

9 A lot of your OQ evaluators, KSA evaluators are OJT coaches.  
10 So now they come in and they have interaction with our  
11 instructors. They see what the students are learning in class.  
12 They also have access to our classrooms. Our classroom doors are  
13 open all the time.

14 If we have an OJT coach in Kansas, so to speak, and he wants  
15 to come in and see what we're teaching so when he's riding it out  
16 with a student and they're speaking the same language, you know.  
17 They have access to our classrooms.

18 Q. So that after they go through the training then they get the  
19 KSA. So tell a little bit about the OQ. How do, how do you  
20 perform their OQ to the initial OQ process?

21 A. Okay. So they did the written test. That's their knowledge  
22 piece of that KSA, not a skills and ability. And then at the end  
23 of -- it's the last week of class; they will actually go out and  
24 perform.

25 If we had an OJ -- I mean, if we had an OQ on pouring water

1 out of this glass, they're going to have to do more than just take  
2 a glass and turn it over. They're going to have to explain why  
3 they take the glass and turn it over.

4 They, back to -- I would teach the OQ, if you're my whatever,  
5 I'm going to teach it back to you. So not only have they got it,  
6 they can teach it and that's the expectation in the Vaughan Center  
7 is it's not just sitting across a table or it's not just, okay,  
8 I'll do it this way and I don't say anything.

9 They need to explain how the water is being poured out of  
10 that glass so they do the test. It's also, do they have the  
11 ability to do that test down to -- oh, my knees hurt today; I  
12 don't know if I can do this, he would not be successful. He can't  
13 -- he doesn't have the ability to do it.

14 So there -- it's -- there's where that 80 percent comes into.  
15 They have to be able to do it and it does put pressure on your, on  
16 your instructors. They have to make sure these guys know what  
17 they're doing to the simplest thing.

18 Q. Okay. Like said, also tell me a little bit, if you could,  
19 about just how kind of the relationship and the experience you  
20 have with fire departments?

21 A. Okay. So we developed a natural gas one on one workshop. I  
22 would say it's probably pushing 6 to 7 years. We had a fire  
23 department reach out to us and as a part of our relationship with  
24 the public, we developed a course and we had been doing it for  
25 years but we wanted a standard, a consistent message to our fire

1 departments.

2       So we had a fire department reach out to us and needs some  
3 training around natural gas. We took -- we had a few classes, got  
4 some advice from them, what do you need, how do you need this? We  
5 reached out to other divisions, what are some of your fire  
6 departments asking about?

7       So what we've done is we've taken a basics in natural gas, if  
8 you want to call it Natural Gas 101 and we've taken a course that  
9 gives them a little bit about the properties in natural gas.  
10 We've opened up our manuals to them from explaining a turn on to  
11 them, if you just want to get down to that. How gas migrates  
12 under the ground. That was one of our biggest a has to use.

13       Through these courses of training we discovered that the fire  
14 departments tend to worry about what's going on up here and not at  
15 their feet. And if you watched, there's a video that we have in  
16 one of our courses, that's in Lafayette, Indiana. They say we  
17 never thought about what was going on at our feet. That's not the  
18 only fire department that has said that.

19       So now they get an understanding that natural gas follows a  
20 path of least resistance, whether it be whatever's under the  
21 ground. And we've also explained to them how we need their help  
22 when it goes to evacuations or blocking off streets, and then who  
23 is actually in command, that we teach in class that the fire  
24 department is in command.

25       If they tell our employees to go sit next to the truck that -

1 - they're waiting on your, you know, release, so to speak. Most  
2 of the fire departments that come on in here to do what you need  
3 to do.

4 But what it's done now is -- the kind of the way we approach  
5 is it, it's better to meet in that setting or at the barbecue than  
6 we do on an incident. So now our fire departments know Atmos  
7 Energy, they know our policies are open for them and if they need  
8 help with anything that we're there for them. We work on this as  
9 a team. It's not two individuals trying to figure out a common.

10 So basically it's a Natural Gas 101 workshop and  
11 understanding the properties of natural gas, understanding what  
12 our CGI's are used for. We've had a number of fire departments  
13 who have bought CGI's because of this class and understanding how  
14 they can help us and how we can help them.

15 Q. But just to be clear, so do they have to come to the Vaughan  
16 Center for that?

17 A. No. That can be, that can be -- they can come to the Vaughan  
18 Center obviously. But what we've done is we have trained a number  
19 of employees, a lot of our safety specialists, and a few  
20 compliance managers to reach out to every fire department in their  
21 area.

22 And that's, that's what the common goal was. It wasn't for a  
23 fire department to know who the instructors are. What they need  
24 to know is who they're working with in their area, so when they  
25 walk up to an incident and they say, hi, Joe, not, well, there's

1 the gas company.

2 So now that's how that course is delivered. Yes, they  
3 obviously can come to the Vaughan Center and we could do it or  
4 have them at Gas City. But within that course we've created  
5 videos of Gas City and properties of natural gas stuff that we  
6 could do at the Vaughan Center right in front of you.

7 We have it in a video setting or we have an instructor guide  
8 for them, hey, you would need a Bunsen burner to explain, you  
9 know, flame or, you know, gas in a can scenarios or some of the  
10 things that we do.

11 Now safety specialists in Colorado can reach out to their  
12 fire departments and now they have that interaction with each  
13 other.

14 Q. Okay. Thank you. I think that's all I have for the time  
15 being. One other thing just real quick. You brought this and  
16 maybe not appropriate, we have the iPad, you know, the course  
17 content that you would know how to work it better than I would.

18 A. Okay.

19 MR. MCDILL: But, anyway, just, that would be available, I  
20 guess, for --

21 MR. TOBIN: And that's to be loaned to you?

22 MR. MCDILL: Yes.

23 MR. JOBE: Yes.

24 MR. EVANS: Okay.

25 BY MR. EVANS:

1 Q. Okay. This is Roger Evans. The areas I want to talk about  
2 next are evacuations.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. Okay? So in this incident we have a home that catches fire  
5 on the 21st, we have a home that catches fire on the 22nd of  
6 February, we have a home that catches fire on the 23rd with a  
7 fatality, and these happened one right after the other.

8 So what I'd like to understand is, when you heard about this  
9 -- these three fires, what was your reaction when you heard that  
10 the residents were not evacuated?

11 A. All I've seen is what's on TV so unless I'm out there it's  
12 hard for me to answer what was going on. That's back to that, I'm  
13 at the office and I want to know what's going on.

14 Q. Okay. Wait a minute. I don't want to interrupt you. But  
15 you teach this class, you teach evacuations, correct?

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. Okay. Go through what you teach in evacuations for us.

18 A. If there is gas migrating near the structure there would be  
19 an evacuation or if it was in the sewer of that structure there  
20 would be an evacuation.

21 Q. And what type of readings would you be looking at to  
22 evacuate?

23 A. Any readings next to a structure. That would be any gas  
24 ratings next to that structure would be an evacuation. Any gas,  
25 natural gas readings.

1 Q. Okay. So when you say there would be an evacuation -- so  
2 before we, before we have you answer that, let's go back to when  
3 you have a crew on scene, right?

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. Maybe there's one person that goes who's a service tech and  
6 all of a sudden he might call for help or something like this.  
7 What is the structure that you have on a scene with regard if you  
8 need more than one person or you need several people or 15 guys, I  
9 don't care, what it is in that -- on that particular scene there  
10 was a lot of testing going on eventually, right?

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. Very quickly even before the explosion?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. In fact, I don't know if you knew it but the one explosion  
15 had occurred while they were doing bar hole testing down the  
16 street. So the way that transpired, as far as how that all, you  
17 know, shook out with all that, explain your organizational  
18 structure you would have on a scene like that where you have  
19 multiple houses and you interfaced with the fire department, and  
20 who was going to make the call to evacuate?

21 A. Well, every employee that we've got has the authority to  
22 evacuate that structure and that's where -- I know you're not  
23 going to like this but me being -- happened to be out there, if I  
24 just used this gas as -- this glass as an example, that's my  
25 structure and I'm a service technician that was called to a gas

1 leak, whether inside or outside of that structure.

2 And I'm bar testing around that structure or ~~servicing~~ <sup>surveying</sup> around  
3 that structure and I find natural gas, I have the authority to  
4 evacuate that customer there. But I'm not stopping there. That's  
5 not our culture, that's not the way we look at it.

6 I'm going to these two structures here and we're going to do  
7 some investigating around them. And then if I have to evacuate  
8 them I'm going to tell you at this point, I'm calling for help  
9 because I have multiple structures.

10 I've already called for help here because it's a grade 1  
11 leak, depending on if it's an inside leak investigation and I've  
12 determined it's not coming from outside.

13 But if it's a gas leak that I can't control, I can't just go  
14 to a valve and shut it off at the meter. And I start evacuating  
15 these two structures. Now, I've already called for help here  
16 because it's a grade 1 leak.

17 I'm going to call for additional help or I'm calling that  
18 crew lead and saying, hey, I've had to evacuate additional  
19 structures because that crew lead is kind of the next rank and  
20 file. And we're going to work together and by this time we would  
21 -- you know, without being out there, I'm talking Brad Jobe  
22 investigating this leak.

23 That maybe where we could call our supervisor or the fire  
24 department should already be onsite. We would consult with the  
25 fire department and maybe they've helped us out with this.



1 Q. So what's the pecking order? So you have a service tech on  
2 scene and if he needs help who does he call, another service tech  
3 or does he call a --

4 A. He has the opportunity to call another service tech. He can  
5 if he knows who else was on call at that time and he should.  
6 There's a call schedule.

7 Q. Okay.

8 A. But that would have to be back to that office specific.  
9 There's where training would go into it. We would say you need to  
10 follow your guidelines of your office. That would be a question  
11 for operations how they've got that pecking order so to speak in  
12 line.

13 They may have them call dispatch and dispatch will order all  
14 these people out. That would be where training is limited on  
15 that. If I -- the pecking order would be or leadership order that  
16 would be determined by the office.

17 Q. What are your -- what's the training say about when -- I  
18 mean, we could have had mercaptan scrub on this line. I'm sure  
19 you teach that in your class.

20 A. You're going to have to explain mercaptan cap and scrub to  
21 me.

22 Q. Organization degradation on the gas itself. You know, we  
23 could have had the gas odor and not odorized anymore because it's  
24 going through the soil.

25 A. I would have to -- you would have to show me the evidence of

1 that. I've never, never witnessed any evidence of that.

2 Q. Do you teach that?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Gas scrubbing is not taught in your class?

5 A. No, it's not.

6 Q. Okay. As far as when the fire department arrives and you  
7 were just saying earlier that you have -- you work closely with  
8 the fire department.

9 Whose decision is it when there's obviously a need to  
10 evacuate someone in a situation? Let's not talk about this  
11 particular accident, let's just say any situation --

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. -- where there's a need to evacuate is -- who is the prime  
14 person responsible for that act to evacuate?

15 A. The service technician, if that's the first. It's whoever  
16 the emergency responder is, whether it be the first responders,  
17 which would be your fire department, or our employee.

18 That employee can knock on the front door and say, Ms.  
19 Johnson, we need to evacuate, I have gas in under your structure.  
20 And that, it may be simple that they evacuate and they take them  
21 across the street and set them in the truck or it could be they  
22 have the right to call and ask for permission to put them in a  
23 hotel. Every employee has that right.

24 Q. So you don't rely on the fire department and the fire  
25 department doesn't rely on you?

1 A. No. No, I mean, we --

2 Q. That's basically how it is, is that?

3 A. -- rely on each other for a huge evacuation and obviously  
4 even a single evacuation I may -- help, ask for the fire  
5 department's help, you know, can you help me take care of Ms.  
6 Johnson; I have to make this area safe.

7 You know, there's multiple firemen this time until my crew  
8 can get there to help me. But we rely on each other both but if  
9 the fire department gets there first we will accommodate our  
10 customers, or if we get there first we're going to accommodate our  
11 customers.

12 Q. But if your technicians learn of two gas problems next door  
13 to one another a day apart, could that have been a decision to be  
14 made by your guys to evacuate homes around because something's  
15 going on?

16 A. I'm not there. I go back to that. I can't and  
17 hypothetically I don't know how the situation was, I mean.

18 Q. But do you teach that? Do you teach the fact that if you  
19 have multiple homes with gas problems that you would, you would  
20 start an evacuation, is that part of your --

21 A. If there's multiple homes with gas problems they have the  
22 right to evacuate depending on what the situation is going on out  
23 there.

24 Q. The right. I don't mean the right. I mean, do you teach it  
25 -- do you actually say --

1 A. If there is a leak --

2 Q. If you have a situation where there's two homes next to each  
3 other, there's gas in these homes and there's problems in these  
4 two homes, do you evacuate neighborhoods?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. You should evacuate neighborhoods. We're going to teach you  
7 to do that. That's what I'm trying to get it.

8 A. That's what I'm getting at. I can't teach evacuate a  
9 neighborhood. It may be contained at those two homes.

10 Q. No. I'm not saying neighborhood. I'm just saying maybe  
11 three or four homes away from those two homes that's not part of -  
12 -

13 A. We teach right at that structure and you need to be there.  
14 Now it is hard for me to see. There could be -- it could be  
15 contained to those two structures or it could give -- the  
16 technician may have the feeling or his experience or bar testing  
17 is showing that you could have multiple structures out there.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Then that's, then that's when they've got to come with --  
20 together with the fire department and themselves and say, I need  
21 to evacuate multiple structures. And then that's the reason we  
22 teach the incident command system and the ranking system and  
23 understanding how this situation will work.

24 You start evacuating multiple customers you're going to have  
25 multiple people out there. There's where you call in for help.

1 Q. Okay. Let's go back to -- thank you for that. I'm just  
2 trying to find out if there's something taught in your class that  
3 says this type of situation where you have two homes sitting next  
4 to each other with gas problems, that when you address this think  
5 in your mind evacuation. That's what I'm wondering.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. That's the --

8 A. It is taught, yes.

9 Q. Okay. Thank you. Okay. So the other, the other issue that  
10 came up about this house, I mean, this neighborhood that we  
11 learned early on, was that here we have a 300 home neighborhood,  
12 correct, and we have grade 1 leaks on the southwest corner, on the  
13 northwest corner.

14 We have a grade 1 on the northeast corner. And these are  
15 before the little girl dies, right? This is way before this  
16 happens. So what is taught with regard to a technician when they  
17 see an area, a large neighborhood and there's trucks everywhere  
18 and there's a grade 1 leak here, grade 1 leak here, grade 1 here,  
19 two fires here, that's not part of the whole training picture to  
20 say, there's something wrong with this neighborhood?

21 I mean, I know it's a difficult question to even ask and have  
22 you answer but, I mean, trying to figure out, is there something  
23 that -- you know, (indiscernible) in how you teach evacuation that  
24 we can perhaps make a recommendation about, you know, that it  
25 wasn't covered in this -- you know, in this instance.

1           You know, we have, we have gas pretty much all over this  
2 neighborhood. While your guys are there we have an explosion so  
3 we know we have gas. And you have a wonderful training program.  
4 I'm telling you you have one of the best I've ever seen. It's a  
5 great training program but there seems like a fundamental message  
6 that's not being delivered to -- kind of like the big picture when  
7 you have -- when you're entering your neighborhood where there's  
8 multiple problems.

9           A. We teach them to speak freely. We teach them they have a  
10 right from basic shutting the job down to evacuation. They have  
11 the freedom to evacuate. If that's the answer you're wanting,  
12 they have the freedom to start at Apartment Number 1 and knock on  
13 every door to apartments, last one until, you know, relief gets  
14 there and they get, you know, help.

15           But they have the freedom with our company to evacuate.  
16 That's the best answer I can give you.

17           Q. Okay, okay. Well, we'll leave that subject. It's an  
18 interesting point about the whole situation, the whole case. The  
19 next thing I want to know about.

20           If you have, if you have a technician who goes to the same  
21 neighborhood because he works that area, right, and he gets to --  
22 he may even get to know the neighbors. I know of other gas  
23 companies I've talked to service technicians that say, oh, that's  
24 Molly Jones' house. I know here and they've known this lady for  
25 years because they go in and out of that neighborhood. They

1 service that neighborhood, right.

2 So is there any sort of a notification that's made? Like  
3 does the employee, a service tech, does that person have training  
4 that says if I keep going back to the same neighborhood and I have  
5 this many grade 1 leaks and we know you have a risk management  
6 plan and we know all about your DIMP program and how you look at  
7 things.

8 But, you know, sometimes the granular level of what you have  
9 is not enough. It's not like what a human may say, you know. If  
10 a young kid walks out there and he says -- he's a young technician  
11 and he says, man, I've been in this neighborhood five times in the  
12 last month and I've fixed nothing but grade 1 leaks.

13 Is there a statement that you folks in training make to this  
14 guy and say, hey, if you see a rapid involvement of leaks in a  
15 neighborhood you need to report that with this blah, blah, blah?  
16 Is there something like that, a vehicle in your system?

17 A. There's not documented but that's back to that freedom of  
18 talking to your supervisor. It's communication. It's talking to  
19 your -- you know, maybe back to your OJT coach and asking for  
20 advice. I've been on multiple leaks in this neighborhood, let's  
21 go talk to the supervisor or whoever's leading your office at that  
22 time, you know.

23 So I will tell you in training that is taught. Being open,  
24 honest, talking to people, you know. Tailgate meetings, we talk  
25 about tailgate meetings. Even for like a construction doing a

1 simple just we're going to install a main today.

2 Set down, have a tailgate meeting, the safety precautions of  
3 it, how we're going to do this job. Yes, that's talked about in  
4 class.

5 Q. Okay. But, but specifically you do not teach a person after  
6 they've gone five times in 4 weeks and they've done grade 1 leaks,  
7 that that's a flag and you have to raise your opinion and let  
8 somebody know? You do not teach that?

9 A. No. I would say, no.

10 Q. Okay. You talked earlier about a 4-week class. Is that 4  
11 calendar weeks and the person's full-time for 4 weeks, you know?

12 A. They were, they were at the Vaughan Center. They get there,  
13 they have the ability to go home on weekends but they're at the  
14 Vaughan Center.

15 Q. Okay. Okay, good. So as far as the information that's  
16 available to a technician. Let's say a technician is out and  
17 about, what does he have to his person for -- can he, can he  
18 download procedures, can he download previous leak surveys that  
19 were done in that area?

20 Could he download what the frequency of leaks were in this  
21 neighborhood? Is that information available to the tech when he  
22 goes out to something?

23 A. I would have to investigate a little bit about that. I do  
24 know the procedures and if I answered the other pieces of their  
25 computer systems I would have to be reaching back from when I was



1 in the field which is a while back.

2 So I do know they've had -- they have access to maps. They  
3 have access to procedures. They're a phone call away from anybody  
4 if they needed to look at -- if you're asking about a leak history  
5 or any -- they're a phone call away if they do not have it in  
6 their truck.

7 But I do know they have access to our procedures. They have  
8 access to the procedures on their Smartphones now.

9 Q. Okay. So if I wanted to know, if I were going to that  
10 neighborhood and I'm those four -- the three corners of that  
11 neighborhood, and I have grade 1 leaks, I could call somebody and  
12 say, I want the leak history of this area, I'm thinking about  
13 doing an evacuation, I want to know what you've got. Would  
14 someone get that to him very quickly?

15 A. I would --

16 Q. And say is that information --

17 A. It's me, Brad Jobe, yes; I would say he could call his  
18 supervisor or somebody in leadership in their group and say --

19 Q. And get that --

20 A. -- can somebody look at, can somebody look at the leak  
21 history of this area. Everything is documented.

22 Q. Okay. I wasn't quite clear. I want to make sure I have this  
23 for sure. On the, on the fire department, police and Atmos the --  
24 it sounds like -- I mean, there's a lot of other companies I've  
25 been around with this kind of work.

1           They, you know, the fire department says, this is our scene;  
2 we're not giving it up to the gas company. If we're going to  
3 evacuate people we're going to do it. And other people say, we're  
4 the gas company, if we're going to evacuate people we're going to  
5 do it.

6           So at your place it's cooperative, it might be the gas  
7 company, maybe the fire department; it just depends on how the  
8 discussion goes? There's not a delineation finely written that  
9 says we will be the people to evacuate?

10          A.    The fire department has control of the scene. If I have a  
11 service technician that has reported before the fire department,  
12 if we just use that as an example, he has the right.

13           We don't, we don't sit in our truck basically and wait on the  
14 fire department to help us evacuate. If I have a service  
15 technician or a construction operator that shows up before the  
16 fire department and he deems that area or that structure needs to  
17 be evacuated, he has the right.

18           And if the fire department beats him there and they've  
19 evacuated we're going to assist with that evacuation. So it's --  
20 our employees do not sit and wait on a fire department to make  
21 that decision for them, but we have had fire departments that say,  
22 you go standby your truck I'm handling this.

23           And they understand that that's where we, we can only do so  
24 much, you know.

25          Q.    Okay.

1 A. They do have control of the scene. But they have the right  
2 to evacuate if they beat the fire department there.

3 Q. Okay. One of the other items that is interesting in this  
4 particular accident, more so than a lot of others I've looked at  
5 is, you know, the lack of odor, of people smelling gas.

6 You know, in the three homes where we had the issues, right,  
7 none of these parties in these homes smelled gas. Do you teach  
8 some special segment of your training about why, what to do if --  
9 you know, if there's gas outside, you can smell it, you get a  
10 reading outside but there's gas inside.

11 Or perhaps you get gas inside but you get no reading outside.  
12 What the process is to do to kind of solve that?

13 A. Okay. You're going to have to break that down just a little  
14 bit because you went about four different directions so --

15 Q. Well, all I'm trying to figure out, all I'm trying to figure  
16 out is when you have -- like in these homes, we have a stove that  
17 flairs up and then the flame flares up over this pan and burns  
18 this guy second degree burns.

19 But when you talk to that guy he's not smelled any gas odors  
20 in his house. The other two parties never smell gas odors.  
21 People smell gas odors several hundred feet away. There was  
22 bubbling gas coming out of a pond, a little pool of water, and  
23 they smelled gas.

24 But when you have the gas issues, fires and you have -- I'm  
25 sure you must have talked to the people that were in the home when

1 this --

2 A. I haven't been able to talk to anybody.

3 Q. Oh, okay.

4 A. I haven't been out there.

5 Q. No, I mean, your people talked to --

6 A. I haven't talked to any of my employees.

7 Q. Okay. That's not a fair question then for you. I'm sorry.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I was fixing to say would have to be there and talk to the  
11 people.

12 Q. We won't, we won't go, we won't go there because I keep on  
13 forgetting you and I are the same.

14 A. Okay. I haven't been --

15 Q. You teach the stuff, you don't -- you're not there, okay?

16 A. I haven't been out there, no, sir.

17 MR. EVANS: Okay. Okay. Let's see if I have everything.

18 Okay.

19 BY MR. McLAREN:

20 Q. Chris McLaren, I have one more follow-up question and maybe  
21 two, who knows. In discussions of -- you mentioned during our  
22 discussion earlier that the technician could turn off the service  
23 valve.

24 In this case what I've seen is a picture of a main line  
25 directly below a sewer lateral with some damage to it and in other

1 cases it's been the mains that were, that were damaged. And I  
2 think that my own personal view sometimes is that the main needs  
3 to be shutdown. Now that may require multiple valves to be closed  
4 to an isolated area might be back fed.

5       What do you teach -- what awareness do the survey technicians  
6 have that when they end up in this evacuation discussion that they  
7 may need to cut off the mains?

8 A.   That, if you're, if you're asking about being able to shut  
9 down a system?

10 Q.   Yes.

11 A.   That's going to involve more people. Because when you think  
12 about shutting down a system you need to look at your maps and  
13 refer to those because you could, you could cause a lot of  
14 problems downstream. You could be shutting, God forbid,  
15 Presbyterian Hospital off and that maybe causes for a major  
16 malfunction.

17       So there's going to be where you would look at multiple  
18 people in that instance. But a construction crew to isolate an  
19 area is what we would call engineering controls so that they're  
20 not even working in a hazardous environment.

21       They have -- they can go in there and, you know, in sections  
22 and shut those areas down. If they have to bypass it they could  
23 bypass it, but they -- that would require a team of people looking  
24 at this and going, okay, how are we going to do this, so it is  
25 done in a safe way.

1           So as far as a survey technician, he's going to call for  
2 assistance on that, he's not just going to go turn valves and, you  
3 know.

4 Q.    Could I see the training list again? Does that sort of  
5 discussion take place in some of your construction job duty area  
6 training?

7 A.    Yeah, yes, sir, that's part of their bypassing and  
8 engineering controls is what it is part of.

9           MR. McLAREN: Okay. All right. Thank you. I'm done now.  
10 Thank you, sir.

11           MR. EVANS: Any questions?

12           BY MR. COLLINS:

13 Q.    Jim Collins, Railroad Commission Texas, maybe some softballs  
14 for you. What was the hardest course you had to teach?

15 A.    Corrosion.

16 Q.    Corrosion. Very good.

17 A.    Yes.

18 Q.    What is the normal class size for per instructor?

19 A.    We like to keep it around 12 employees.

20 Q.    12, okay.

21 A.    Occasionally we'll have one or two extra but 12 is our  
22 number.

23 Q.    You've been at the Vaughan Center for the last how many  
24 years?

25 A.    I've been -- I've technically been there since it opened.

1 Q. Since it opened.

2 A. Ten, we had grand openings -- 10.

3 Q. So about 10 years. Do you remember if it -- at any time that  
4 the Dallas Fire and Rescue got to attend out there or have you  
5 ever experienced any training with them?

6 A. Absolutely. I've been a part of those training sessions. We  
7 had their Hazmat Department out there.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. And they're actually out there this week. Last Monday, this  
10 Monday and next.

11 Q. Okay, for the day?

12 A. No, I'm sorry, it's Plano Fire Department.

13 Q. Oh, Plano, yeah.

14 A. But Dallas has been through, yes.

15 MR. COLLINS: Okay. That's all I have. Thank you, sir.

16 BY MR. MCDILL:

17 Q. Joe McDill, I'd like to ask Brad a few follow-up questions.  
18 With respect to the classes you teach, turn on gas, all that, do  
19 you -- is part of that, do you teach technicians to document  
20 whether they've detected odor during the turn on?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. So if they detect odor would that be what they indicate on  
23 their service turn on order?

24 A. Every, every turn on order there is did you smell gas and  
25 what we teach in -- you know, because we don't teach how to use

1 our computer system because there's a lot to that. But we explain  
2 to them guys if you do not smell gas that is -- buzzers go off, so  
3 to speak, you know, people need to know that.

4 So when you, when you check that box it's a serious box. If  
5 you check, no, there's somebody that's going to be asking about  
6 that. So they didn't understand the importance of detecting gas.

7 Q. Okay. Thank you. And just, you know, there's a lot of  
8 scenarios around safety concerns either personally or  
9 operationally that they may discover.

10 So how do you, how do you kind of address the broad issues  
11 that they have ever -- if any of the people that you ask, if they  
12 become of a safety concern, it might be something for, well, their  
13 personal being or something I see around the performance issue on  
14 the operating system.

15 In general, I mean, do you guys talk about that in training  
16 and their approach to safety issues?

17 A. Yes. Absolutely safety comes first and it's not just said,  
18 it's meant. We have an open floor. You can bring up safety  
19 concerns back to where I was saying, even down to the meter reader  
20 and sometimes the meter readers get labeled as the guy lower on  
21 the pole, but they have the right to stop a job.

22 They have a right to bring up safety concerns, whether within  
23 a structure or outside a structure, to the point of if John walked  
24 up out on our job and he didn't have his safety glasses on it's my  
25 responsibility to walk up to him and either hand him a pair of



1 safety glasses and put those on.

2 Inside structures we have caution notice tags to allow our  
3 customers to know if we're there for a lot of -- this is some  
4 safety concerns that I've seen. We wouldn't light that appliance  
5 and then we would tag that appliance.

6 So if that's, if that's what you're asking me. I mean, and  
7 that's taught day one all the way to the last day they walk out of  
8 class.

9 Q. Okay. And I think you said earlier but if it's a gas  
10 detected -- well, you tell me. If gas is detected at -- near a  
11 home, they're taught to --

12 A. Evacuate that structure. Make, to get themselves safe and  
13 the customer safe.

14 Q. Okay. All right. And so if someone went out on a leak  
15 investigation order they would also build a note whether they  
16 detected gas in those scenarios as well?

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. And if -- and part of the gas -- part of the classes you  
19 teach with respect to grading of leaks, it also -- do you talk  
20 about documenting? What do you talk about when you document when  
21 you grade a leak?

22 A. We, what we teach in class is basically drawing out the  
23 migration pattern of a leak. Brief detail of what you did in that  
24 leak. I, you know, bar tested here, there and these places and  
25 then drawing an accurate map of that leak if it's just classified.

1 Now, if it's a grade 1 leak I document time of arrival, I  
2 call Joe Bob, the crew lead, or if I couldn't get ahold of him,  
3 depending on how their order of operation goes.

4 I call my supervisor at this time. My supervisor dispatched  
5 a crew or dispatched, whoever you called, they dispatched. So we  
6 go down those steps of what they did, time of arrival. They  
7 showed up at this time. I evacuated, you know, it down to -- I  
8 evacuated Ms. Johnson. She went to her neighbor's house down the  
9 street, her phone number's this.

10 We, that goes into that reporting factor. We kind of really  
11 push that for that so that any reports that may come out of this  
12 we've got documentation from their going to the job and on sites  
13 handled in the computer, but we still tell them to -- it's okay to  
14 take a note of that, you know, headed to the job and I got there  
15 on this job.

16 So that -- if that's what you're asking on that form of  
17 documentation plus the mapping detail.

18 Q. And concentration gas readings?

19 A. Uh-huh, yes, sir. Yes, sir.

20 MR. MCDILL: Okay. All right. That may be all the questions  
21 I have Brad.

22 BY MR. EVANS:

23 Q. This is Roger Evans again. I know you have an eight state  
24 network for your company. Do you train fire departments from  
25 other states as well?

1 A. That's where I was talking about in that program where we've  
2 trained other employees to help with that training program. So,  
3 yeah, your safety specialist -- depending on who, you know, was  
4 deemed as a good leader and somebody could actually speak in  
5 public.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. They were -- they're trained to train that consistent program  
8 for those positions.

9 Q. Okay. So since the -- you know, it's been 2 months tomorrow  
10 or yesterday, 2 months yesterday, since the accident, correct?

11 A. (Non-verbal response.)

12 Q. And what I'm curious about, since you are the training guy,  
13 have you changed anything in your training system since this  
14 accident occurred? Have they come to you and said, hey, we have  
15 lessons learned here and this is, this is what we're going to  
16 change?

17 A. I haven't yet, no.

18 MR. EVANS: Okay. Just curious. That's all I have.

19 MR. McLAREN: Thank you.

20 MR. COLLINS: No questions. Thank you.

21 MR. MCDILL: I have no more questions.

22 MR. JOBE: Thank you.

23 MR. EVANS: Well, thank you very much for coming today.

24 Appreciate it. That's the end of the interview. Off the record.

25 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


IN THE MATTER OF:           NATURAL GAS-FUELED EXPLOSION OF  
RESIDENCE, DALLAS, TEXAS  
FEBRUARY 23, 2018  
Interview of Brad Jobe

ACCIDENT NO.:               PLD18FR002

PLACE:                       Plano, Texas

DATE:                        April 24, 2018

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.

  
Cheryl Farnier Donovan  
Transcriber