



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Name: Joshua Wallis

Department Atmos Energy / Mid-Tex Operations

Title: Distribution Operator

Date of Interview: February 28, 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

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

NATURAL GAS-FUELED EXPLOSION OF *

RESIDENCE, DALLAS, TEXAS * Accident No.: PLD18FR002

FEBRUARY 23, 2018 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: JOSHUA WALLIS

Hampton Inn and Suites

Dallas, Texas

~~Saturday,~~ Wednesday,

~~March 3, 2018~~ February 28, 2018

APPEARANCES:

RAVI CHHATRE, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

STEPHEN JENNER, Ph.D., Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

DARREN LEMMERMAN, Senior Investigator
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
(PHMSA)

ALEX COLLETTI, Accident Investigation
PHMSA

JIM COLLINS, Regional Manager
Railroad Commission of Texas

JOHN McDILL, Vice President of Pipeline Safety
Atmos Energy

NICK HOFMANN, Associate General Counsel
Atmos Energy

I N D E X

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Joshua Wallis:	
By Mr. Chhatre	6
By Dr. Jenner	9
By Mr. Chhatre	13
By Dr. Jenner	32
By Ms. Colletti	36
By Mr. Collins	46
By Mr. McDill	47
By Mr. Chhatre	49
By Dr. Jenner	55
By Ms. Colletti	56
By Mr. Collins	59
By Mr. Chhatre	61

I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. CHHATRE: On the record.

3 Good afternoon. Today is Wednesday, February 28, 2018. We
4 are currently at Hampton Inn and Suites, located at 3551 North
5 Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, Texas. We are meeting regarding the
6 investigation of explosion of a house located at 3534 Espanola
7 Drive in Dallas, Texas, that occurred on February 23, 2018.

8 My name is Ravi Chhatre. I am with the National
9 Transportation Safety Board located in Washington, D.C., and I am
10 investigator in charge of this accident. The NTSB investigation
11 number for this accident is PLD18FR002.

12 I would like to start by notifying everyone present in this
13 room that we are recording this interview and we may transcribe it
14 at a later date. Transcripts will be provided directly to the
15 interviewee for review and identifying any typographical errors.
16 The transcripts may be posted in the NTSB public docket.

17 Also, I would like to inform Mr. Josh -- Wallis?

18 MR. WALLIS: Wallis.

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

23 Please state for the record, your full name, spelling of your
24 name, organization you work for and your title, business contact
25 information such as mailing address, email, and whom you have

1 chosen to be present with you during your interview.

2 MR. WALLIS: Okay. Josh Wallis, J-O-S-H, W-A-L-L-I-S. What
3 else did you need?

4 MR. CHHATRE: Whom you have chosen to be with you today.

5 MR. WALLIS: Mr. Nick Hofmann.

6 MR. CHHATRE: And your office address --

7 MR. WALLIS: [REDACTED].

8 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. And your office email? Not a
9 personal -- don't give me anything personal. No personal --

10 MR. WALLIS: [REDACTED].

11 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Now I would like to go around and have
12 each person introduce themselves. Please state your name,
13 spelling of your name, your title, and the organization that you
14 represent, and your business contact information, starting from my
15 left.

16 MR. McDILL: John McDill, M-C-D-I-L-L, with Atmos Energy here
17 in Dallas, Vice President of Pipeline Safety. My address --

18 MR. CHHATRE: Office contact information.

19 MR. McDILL: [REDACTED].

20 MR. CHHATRE: And share the email address.

21 MR McDILL: [REDACTED].

22 MR. COLLINS: Jim Collins, J-I-M, C-O-L-L-I-N-S, regional
23 manager for the Railroad Commission of Texas. Business contact
24 information is provided on the card.

25 MR. HOFMANN: Nick Hofmann, H-O-F-M-A-N-N, Associate General

1 Counsel for Atmos Energy. Contact information as provided in
2 business card.

3 MR. LEMMERMAN: Darren Lemmerman, D-A-R-R-E-N, L-E-M-M-E-R-M-
4 A-N, federal office of pipeline safety.

5 MS. COLLETTI: Alex Colletti, A-L-E-X, C-O-L-L-E-T-T-I, PHMSA
6 Accident Investigation. Contact on the card.

7 DR. JENNER: Stephen Jenner, S-T-E-P-H-E-N, J-E-N-N-E-R,
8 human performance investigator, NTSB.

9 MR. CHHATRE: Thank you very much for that.

10 INTERVIEW OF JOSHUA WALLIS

11 BY MR. CHHATRE:

12 Q. Mr. Wallis, for the record, give me your background, your
13 formal/informal education, how long you have been working with the
14 company, your current title, any training, education, that's
15 offered to you through company or outside.

16 A. Been with the company 11 years, distribution operator.
17 Multiple trainings, too many to list, emergency response -- it
18 goes on.

19 Q. Okay. And you said 11 years with the company?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And you started as a distribution operator, or a --

22 A. Meter reader.

23 Q. Meter reader. Okay. And long you have been distribution
24 operator?

25 A. Four years, 5 years.

1 Q. Four?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. About. So what it takes for meter reader to distribution
4 operator? What kind of training or education you need to make
5 that change?

6 A. You need a background of a service technician and also a
7 construction operator.

8 Q. Okay. So you were a service technician at some time?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. So tell me as a distribution operator, what are your
11 responsibilities?

12 A. My responsibilities is watch after contractors or --
13 basically at any department of the company I'm needed, I go assist
14 -- meter reading, service technician, construction, FCC.

15 Q. Okay. And so, you supervise contractors, or what do you do?

16 A. I have been.

17 Q. You have been supervising contractors?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. Is that part of your responsibilities or --

20 A. Yes, sir.

21 Q. Okay. What other tasks you have to do as a distribution
22 operator?

23 A. That's about it.

24 Q. That's about it. Okay. And what are your duty hours?

25 A. Duty -- what do you mean by that?

1 Q. Well, Monday through Friday, weekends, morning shift, evening
2 shift? How many hours per week?

3 A. I typically work 8 to 4:30, and I'm on emergency call-out
4 just whenever I'm needed.

5 Q. Okay. Emergency call-out, is it routine days, fixed days
6 assigned, or just kind of 24/7?

7 A. Typically, it's just in rotation.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. So how often you do that, and on the weekends only or --

11 A. It goes Friday to Friday.

12 Q. Okay. So you are on call 1 week?

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. And is that once a month, two times a month?

15 A. Maybe once every 2 months. If that.

16 Q. Okay. So initially we'll just focus on three incidences:
17 21st, 22nd and 23rd.

18 A. Um-hum.

19 Q. And just tell us which incident you are involved?

20 A. I was at the, I guess, 3515.

21 Q. 3515. And that will be on?

22 A. Durango.

23 Q. Okay. And what day was that, do you remember?

24 A. Thursday. Last Thursday.

25 Q. Thursday -- 22nd?

1 A. I don't remember the date.

2 Q. Okay. That's fine.

3 MR. CHHATRE: It was 22nd, right?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Um-hum.

5 BY MR. CHHATRE:

6 Q. Okay. Just walk us through as to what you did that day and
7 how you got involved with 3515.

8 A. Supervisor called me and -- service technician, you know, he
9 said he's going to need some help, and I went out there to assist.

10 Q. Okay. So let me back up, then. Supervisor called you. Who
11 is the supervisor?

12 A. Salvador.

13 Q. How do you spell it?

14 A. I don't know how -- Sal, S-A-L. He goes by Sal. Sanchez.
15 (Phone interruption.)

16 MR. CHHATRE: I'm sorry. Go ahead. I (indiscernible) --

17 BY DR. JENNER:

18 Q. Okay. This is Steve Jenner. Sal Sanchez, Salvador Sanchez
19 is your supervisor?

20 A. No, he's not my supervisor.

21 Q. I'm sorry. The supervisor called -- the supervisor who
22 called you was Salvador Sanchez?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Okay. And he said a service tech needs help?

25 A. Um-hum.

1 Q. Okay. And continue on, please.

2 A. He needs help, and I was just doing my daily routine -- I
3 mean, routine of a fire.

4 Q. Okay. Where were you at the time?

5 A. Where was I at the time?

6 Q. Where were you?

7 A. When?

8 Q. When you received the call.

9 A. I was actually about to eat lunch. I had (indiscernible). I
10 was like, ah, man. I don't know where it was. It was on ~~30th~~ **Interstate 30** and
11 Carroll somewhere.

12 Q. So about what time of day was the call?

13 A. Around lunchtime.

14 Q. Okay. So around noonish, perhaps?

15 A. Yeah, somewhere around there, 12 or so.

16 Q. Okay. And your instructions were to do what?

17 A. To head out there and assist Juan.

18 Q. Okay. So you just tell the story about how you got out there
19 and when you arrived.

20 A. Okay. Drove out there, and got out and, you know, I go and
21 start bar testing and making sure that the area's safe, and all
22 that good stuff. Just doing my -- doing what I do on every one of
23 them.

24 Q. Okay. When you -- how did you get into the accident area or
25 the street?

1 A. How did I get in there?

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. I drove and got out and walked.

4 Q. Okay. And, who did you see first? Did you see--

5 A. I don't recall. You know, I wasn't looking at nobody. I
6 mean, saw houses, I saw people. I don't know their name or
7 nothing.

8 Q. Right. I'm sorry. When you first arrived at the location
9 that you called for, did you see a fire department official or did
10 you see a --

11 A. I saw a police department, and as I got closer, you know,
12 there's a fire engine.

13 Q. Do you know if the police department was responding to this
14 fire, or were they --

15 A. I didn't ask them. I don't -- I'm ^{not} sure.

16 Q. Okay. And so you saw the fire department there?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Did you speak to any fire department officials?

19 A. No, I did not.

20 Q. Okay. So who was the first person that you spoke to that's
21 responding to this?

22 A. I spoke to Juan.

23 Q. Okay. And what information did you exchange?

24 A. I was like, hey, I'm going to go over here and start my
25 investigation. He said, all right.

1 Q. Okay. What did he tell you about what was going on and why
2 you were called down there?

3 A. I already knew what was going on.

4 Q. Okay. What's the extent of the information that you knew?

5 A. Like what do you mean that?

6 Q. Did you -- did you know that there was a fire at the house?

7 A. Yeah, yeah.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Yeah, I remember Sal called and said there's a house fire and
10 Juan needs your assistance.

11 Q. Okay. You know, in as much detail as you can, what else did
12 Juan tell you?

13 A. Typically, you know, when I got there, you know I kind of,
14 you know, I kind of took charge of Juan and he didn't really tell
15 me much.

16 Q. Do you recall approximately what time you arrived on scene?

17 A. 12:15, 12:20, something like that.

18 Q. Okay. Okay, so you sort of took charge of Juan, and did you
19 give him instructions about what to do?

20 A. Yeah. We -- I was like, let's start bar testing this main.
21 ~~area.~~

22 Q. Okay.

23 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Ravi Chhatre again. And I'm sorry if I
24 asked you questions again, I apologize, but I don't know what
25 happened in the last few minutes.

1 MR. WALLIS: Right.

2 MR. CHHATRE: But I'm going to pick up with my chain of
3 thoughts, and if you already answered, just tell me that, hey, I
4 just talked about it and we'll (indiscernible), but --

5 BY MR. CHHATRE:

6 Q. So 3515, you said your supervisor, Sal, called and told you
7 go at this address. And he told you that somebody needs help
8 there, right? Who that somebody is?

9 A. Juan.

10 Q. Juan? Okay.

11 A. Is it going to be the same questions again?

12 DR. JENNER: Yeah. What happened, this was about -- he was
13 eating lunch, about to eat lunch, drove, went to the scene, saw
14 police, didn't talk them. First person he spoke to was Juan, the
15 other Juan.

16 MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

17 DR. JENNER: Arrived on scene about 12:15, 12:20, and he
18 started to do --

19 MR. CHHATRE: That is p.m., right? Or a.m.?

20 DR. JENNER: This is just after lunch.

21 MR. WALLIS: Yeah.

22 DR. JENNER: Okay. So we're at where he's meeting Juan and
23 started to take over.

24 MR. WALLIS: Right. Yeah, correct.

25 BY MR. CHHATRE:

1 Q. And the only thing you are told, there is a fire and people
2 need help?

3 A. I didn't hear nothing about people needs help.

4 Q. Okay. But -- well, not people, but maybe other employees
5 need help. Why you are --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Yeah, okay. Is it common for you to do that or it's kind of
8 unusual?

9 A. Yeah, it just makes the job go smoother, instead of one
10 individual out there doing it all himself. You know, kind of --
11 you know, it's bar holing. It speeds it up.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Just like anything else, you paint a house, you know, you
14 need help.

15 Q. Okay. So tell me what did you do after -- after you arrived,
16 talked to police and --

17 A. I didn't talk to police. I just start -- I went in the alley
18 and started bar testing and making sure everything's good.

19 Q. So -- that's good, but I need a little more details. Like
20 went to the alley and started to bar holing, I just need to know
21 which alley you went, what kind of equipment you use, how -- what
22 distances you took and what the readings --

23 A. You all have my sketch. There's a paper sketch, I had --

24 Q. Well, we have this sketch, and you can --

25 A. I had a --

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Jim's got it here.

2 MR. CHHATRE: Yeah, go ahead.

3 MR. WALLIS: There it is. Right here. I did -- I kind of
4 took over -- where -- does it continue on in there?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Um-hum.

6 MR. WALLIS: You know, I started behind the house -- where is
7 it?

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: This right here.

9 MR. WALLIS: Where was the house? 35 -- I started at -- what
10 is the address of the first fire, 3515? Yeah, I started in,
11 started bar testing. And right up here it says, each check
12 represents about 5 foot apart and an X equals a bar hole.

13 BY MR. CHHATRE:

14 Q. Okay. When you arrive, do you smell any gas odor?

15 A. I don't recall, really. You know, I'm around it all the
16 time. I mean, sometimes I -- you know, you smell it, you think --
17 you smell it and you think you don't. So --

18 Q. So you are not sure if you smell or not smell?

19 A. I wasn't trying to smell. I just got my equipment and
20 started bar holing it.

21 Q. Right. But I mean --

22 A. I don't remember, no.

23 Q. That's what I'm saying, so you don't remember whether you
24 smell or you did not smell?

25 A. Yeah. I'm not sure. You know, I don't want to tell you yes

1 or no, you know --

2 Q. No, I understand. I understand. You're not sure.

3 Now were the fire department folks there, police department
4 folks were there at that location when you arrived?

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. Okay. Did you talk to any of the -- anybody, any of the --
7 no. So you just walked straight in.

8 A. I met Juan. Juan was first one of the scene. So, you
9 know --

10 Q. Right. So did you go to the gas meter at that time when you
11 arrived?

12 A. I did.

13 Q. Okay. So what exchange you had with Juan? When you
14 arrive --

15 A. What exchange?

16 Q. Yeah, what information exchange you had with Juan. I mean --

17 A. I was like, hey, we're going to start bar testing. He said
18 okay.

19 Q. Okay. So, seniority-wise, are you above him or he's above
20 you, or how does that work?

21 A. I don't place myself above anybody. I've been with the
22 company longer than him.

23 Q. Well, but responsibility-wise, whether you want to or not,
24 somebody has to be a boss, somebody has to be a subordinate and --

25 A. Typically it's the first person on the scene that's going to

1 be --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. So he is leading the investigation at that point?

5 A. Well, when you say -- we kind of both are. Both on the same
6 team. What do you mean by leading?

7 Q. Well, who makes the decision? Somebody has to make the
8 decision, right? I mean, two people cannot be making the same
9 decision at the same time.

10 A. We just -- no, we kind of put out heads together and agree
11 upon things together.

12 Q. Okay. So what -- that's what I'm asking. So what did you
13 agree upon?

14 A. I don't know. We're going to agree to start bar testing.

15 Q. Okay. Was there a reason for that?

16 A. That's just company procedures, you bar test on any fire
17 you're on or any leak investigation.

18 Q. Okay. So you started bar hole testing. Was it raining at
19 that time, was it drizzling --

20 A. I don't recall. I mean, it's been raining through -- it's
21 rained a lot, so -- I mean, I don't know. It was raining off and
22 on that day.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I don't know. I didn't write it down or anything.

25 Q. But if it's raining then, you know, your bar hole test, from

1 what I understand, cannot be done. So I'm trying --

2 A. I mean, the ground's saturated so it's tough to do it
3 anyways.

4 Q. Okay. But you still went ahead --

5 A. If it's raining or not.

6 Q. Okay. But you still went ahead and you, so --

7 A. Yeah. Did the best we could.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. With the, with the weather Mother Nature's provided us.

10 Q. Okay. But did you see any water seeping in, into your bar
11 hole test? When you are doing bar hole --

12 A. All night long. It was doing it all night long.

13 Q. No, did any water seep into the hole before you stuck the
14 probe into the bar --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. So water was --

17 A. You know, sometimes, you know, typically -- I mean, sometimes
18 you do a hole and it takes a little bit for the hole to fill up
19 with water. Sometimes you do a bar hole and it fills up right
20 then.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Some of them --

23 Q. So, confidence-wise, which reading you have more confidence:
24 The hole is dry, hole has some water, hole is filled with water?

25 A. I feel more confident when it's completely dry outside.

1 Q. Okay. So the reading when water is in, will they be higher,
2 lower, or just completely erroneous?

3 A. I have no idea.

4 Q. So how much confidence you have in those readings? If --

5 A. When it got a reading, I'm very confident.

6 Q. Well, you got the reading, but how --

7 A. Yeah. Whenever the scale registered, I'm very confident
8 that, you know --

9 Q. I'm sorry. You've got to help me out. Now I'm really
10 confused. I thought you said when there is water and moisture in
11 there, you do the best, but it will impact your reading.

12 A. You said what readings I get?

13 Q. No, no. In bar hole test, if it's filled with water, right,
14 it's half-filled with water, you say it's going to be difficult to
15 do the bar hole test and --

16 A. Well, if it fills with water, you're not going to get a
17 reading because it going to suck water into the probe.

18 Q. So if the hole is half-filled with water, is the reading
19 going to be accurate compared to --

20 A. Well, you stick -- you're going to go right above the water.
21 You're not going to go all the way down, you're going to --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. -- you know, you're going to kind of compensate where the
24 water's going to to be at.

25 Q. But then the surface area of the hole through which the gas

1 can seep in, has decreased, if the hole is one-third full versus
2 half-full; is it not? Or I'm losing something here?

3 A. I don't understand what you're saying.

4 Q. Okay. Let me draw you a sketch. You stuck your bar -- you
5 created a hole in the soil.

6 A. Um-hum.

7 Q. In normal circumstances you're going to stick a probe in and
8 draw some gas sample, and the machine will tell you the reading.
9 Right?

10 A. Um-hum.

11 Q. And, of course, you calibrate the machine and reasonable
12 confidence in the reading then.

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. Say I want to draw a certain amount of sample as a
15 (indiscernible) certain all of the gas get's in, whatever depth
16 you stick this bar in.

17 A. Right.

18 Q. Like if I am full with water, there is not much gas that's
19 coming in for your -- for you to draw the sample.

20 A. The we **bar hole** right next to it and see if it fills up with water
21 too. Some of them did; some of them don't.

22 Q. So I if the hole is half filled, not enough gas is going to
23 get in the hole for you to suck up and take the reading. So my
24 question is, if I have two holes next to each other, one is half
25 full with water and one is completely empty, do you expect to get

1 the same reading next to each other or do you expect to get
2 different readings?

3 A. I'm not sure. I mean, I didn't get no migration that day,
4 so, I mean -- I don't know which ones had water in them or don't.

5 Q. No, I understand that. I mean, I'm -- I guess what I'm
6 looking at is --

7 A. Am I going to get the same readings in that hole as another
8 hole?

9 Q. No, no. If I have two holes -- just imagine a situation, I
10 have two holes right next to each other. One hole is half full
11 with water, for whatever reason; other is completely empty. You
12 draw your tube in there, you suck the gas out and you take the
13 reading. Do you expect, with your experience, that these two
14 holes, which are reasonably next to each other, will give you the
15 same gas readings or they will give you different gas readings?

16 A. Sometimes they do; sometimes they don't. It's just -- in
17 multiple holes, you just got to go out there and -- based on
18 experience, I mean, sometimes you get the same reading and
19 sometimes you don't, just based off my experience.

20 Q. Okay. All right. So you started getting readings. So do
21 you remember what kind of readings you got?

22 A. Right there at 3519, 52 percent on the tap.

23 Q. Fifty-two percent gas or 52 percent LEL, what the meter was
24 saying?

25 A. Gas, 52 percent gas.

1 Q. Okay. That is near the meters?

2 A. I don't know how long the service was, but it was -- it
3 wasn't near the meter. I mean, probably 10 foot away, 12 foot. I
4 don't know.

5 Q. Ten foot away toward the customer side or 10 foot away
6 towards the company side?

7 A. Towards your company -- to the --

8 Q. Customer side?

9 A. Yeah, customer side. Yeah, towards the meter.

10 Q. Okay. And that is the highest you saw? That is the highest
11 reading you saw in your group of readings or --

12 A. Let me look. Yes.

13 Q. Under 3515, I'm seeing -- all these circles mean zero reading
14 or they are just locations?

15 A. Zero readings.

16 Q. Zero readings. I don't see 52 percent. That's what I'm
17 trying to find out, where it is.

18 A. That's going to be right behind 3519.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is there another --

20 MR. WALLIS: That's going to be --

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There's another --

22 MS. COLLETTI: What about the other page --

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There's another page.

24 MR. CHHATRE: Oh, right here. Okay, I see.

25 MR. WALLIS: It's kind of small.

1 BY MR. CHHATRE:

2 Q. Yeah. Okay. So that is on the main.

3 A. I didn't look at it when they dug it up, so -- it was close
4 to it. I put the bar hole as close to the main as I could.

5 Q. Right. But the bar hole are being done on the main. So on
6 one main location you are seeing 52 percent?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Right. Probably at the service tap.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I'm guessing where the leak at.

12 Q. Sure. Okay. You will know if the bar is going in, right?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Okay. And what happened next? You do the bar hole --

15 A. I continued bar holing until it zeroed out.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Me and Juan both. We -- I wasn't the only one doing all
18 that. Me and Juan and David Cruz.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. So you guys -- and so did you (indiscernible) somebody, or
22 what are the next step? What happened after you took the
23 readings?

24 A. I kept going.

25 Q. Okay. And when did you stop?

1 A. I stopped -- all the way till 3539.

2 Q. Okay. And after that is done, what are the next step? What
3 you guys did as a group?

4 A. What I was doing, mostly I was making this sketch, and Juan
5 was doing most of the bar testing. Juan and Dave.

6 Q. Okay. And what happened after that? Sketch is done, bar
7 holing is done --

8 A. Well, they were still monitoring. I mean, I wasn't really
9 eye-balling them. And I went and helped the survey go drill out
10 holes in other alleys.

11 Q. Okay. So then you left that location and went somewhere
12 else.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Okay. So then after you meet Juan and others who were
15 helping him, after you left that day, did you ever have any
16 meeting after that?

17 A. Did I come back?

18 Q. No, I'm just trying to find -- you left that and you were in
19 a different alley.

20 A. Yes, yes.

21 Q. And then what happened to you? Did you able to come back to
22 the original location to discuss what happened?

23 A. Um-hum. Yeah.

24 Q. Just walk me through --

25 A. Yeah, it was about -- you know, we spent probably an hour or

1 two. I mean, I don't know how long we went. You know, they were
2 surveying all the alleys. I helped them drill it out, and I got
3 back and it was -- my relief showed up about 11:30, I don't know,
4 midnight, and I left about 12:30 and went home.

5 Q. So you had been there for 12 hours pretty much. Twelve hours
6 and -- you started in the afternoon --

7 A. Yes. Pretty much, yeah.

8 Q. -- and then you went home at midnight. So you are doing
9 survey for 12 hours.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Okay. And what happened to all those readings? Were those
12 readings conveyed to somebody? I'm just trying to kind of
13 visualize through your eyes.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. So you come in there, you were in a different alley, you took
16 your readings. These guys are taking their readings, drawing
17 sketches. So where did that lead to after that? After that is
18 done and you went home, what happened to those readings? Was
19 anything discussed? Was any conclusions reached?

20 A. No, the next day -- what did I do? -- service department was
21 needing help. I went and did a no gas/low pressure at a location
22 and -- what did I do? I did that -- oh, I went to go help -- no,
23 no, no. After that, I was -- after the no gas, I went and got
24 drug tested. And then I went back to another location where a
25 crew was, and I was over there barring and doing my job over

1 there.

2 Q. So you are addressing different now, a different --

3 A. Yeah. I went to a different location. It was, I believe, on
4 the west side of Marsh.

5 (Phone interruption.)

6 MR. CHHATRE: I'm sorry.

7 MR. WALLIS: I went on the -- I forget which street it was.

8 It was on the west side of Marsh, and I talked to a crew out there
9 that was repairing a leak. And we were getting some bubbles in
10 the alley out there --

11 BY MR. CHHATRE:

12 Q. So that will be the next day?

13 A. Yeah, the next day. This is going to be Friday.

14 Q. But then this is you are really addressing different calls
15 (indiscernible) --

16 A. Yeah, this is totally different.

17 Q. Different. Okay. Now, let me go back again. So on that
18 day, on this particular call when you guys did all this bar hole
19 testing, do you guys ever huddle together and exchange results,
20 discuss what happened --

21 A. We always discuss stuff. But I don't --

22 Q. So what was discussed? I mean, I'm curious of that. What
23 was being discussed and --

24 A. We all get together, was like, hey, you know there's a leak
25 here, and I drew it up. You know, just typical daily

1 conversations we have. I mean, I don't --

2 Q. You don't -- so what happened to those readings? You took
3 the readings. Does anybody look at those readings?

4 A. Yeah, there was other people that came and relieved us that
5 was monitoring.

6 Q. Okay. So, as a procedure, you guys were dispatched to a
7 location to look into it.

8 A. Um-hum.

9 Q. By a dispatcher.

10 A. No. Salvador called me.

11 Q. Salvador.

12 A. He's not a dispatcher.

13 Q. Okay. So you guys did your job, what you are supposed to be
14 doing.

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. You guys took readings. And I'm still a little bit -- bear
17 with me because --

18 A. Yeah, yeah. Go ahead.

19 Q. So what happens after that? Who does what? I mean, somebody
20 dispatching you, does that person ask for the information? Does
21 that person say, hey, what did you guys find? What happens to
22 that valuable information you collect?

23 A. When I collect it, I enter the -- I draw the leak up on CM+
24 in the system and --

25 Q. Okay. So do you know what happens with that information

1 after you enter that?

2 A. Do I know what happens to it?

3 Q. Yeah. I mean, this is not the only call. Every call you go
4 and do --

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Let's say (indiscernible) --

7 A. Yeah. I mean, I don't know what happens. You go on there --
8 whoever goes out there and repairs the leak, enters their
9 information on there, what they did.

10 Q. Okay. So you really do not know what happens after you
11 submit your data?

12 A. Yeah, I didn't go over -- when they repaired the leak, I
13 didn't -- I went back by there, you know, but I didn't glance at
14 the hole, whether it's filled with water --

15 Q. I understand. So basically when you are -- you submit your
16 information, you are done? You really -- thereafter, you really
17 are not --

18 A. I mean, I was still there. I was, you know -- I think Juan
19 and David were still bar testing and, and you know --

20 Q. I mean, just like a very typical operation for any odor calls
21 or leak survey, or whatever you guys do, these are typically how
22 it works, that you guys do the bar-holing, submit a report --

23 A. Yeah. Every time there's a fire --

24 Q. -- and then somebody else takes over --

25 A. Every time there's a fire, I'd go there and, you know, I bar

1 test and -- I go above and beyond. I do -- I call it Josh
2 standards. So --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. I kind of like to go the extra mile on things.

5 Q. Okay. So did Sal or whoever dispatch you, did they ever tell
6 you, hey, you know, this happened on that particular day, or there
7 was a leak, there was a fire, or we fixed it? I mean, you really
8 have no input thereafter, after you leave. Am I correct?

9 A. Did he what? I mean --

10 Q. Okay. Now you submit your readings, right, into the system?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And then you really have no knowledge after that as to what
13 happened to your data or what actions are taken by somebody?

14 A. I'm having a hard time understanding.

15 Q. No, no problem. Remember I told you, ask 10 times. It's
16 okay. I mean, when you submit the data, whatever data you got --
17 bar hole testing, odor testing, whatever it may be -- that goes
18 into your system.

19 A. Correct.

20 Q. What happens to that data afterward? Do you know that, or
21 you don't?

22 A. Oh, I don't know. I know that once they're -- when I used to
23 clear off leaks on the system, I would enter it and hit submit.
24 And, you know, it still stays in the system for how many years,
25 and --

1 Q. Sure.

2 A. -- you know, you do your 1533 and -- I don't know. I mean, I
3 don't know. It just stays in the system.

4 Q. Sure.

5 A. After that, I guess --

6 Q. Yeah, I'm just trying to understand --

7 A. -- if you ever want to look at it, you could look at it and
8 see what people done at that address, you know --

9 Q. Right. No, I'm just trying to understand how the process
10 works. Because you are familiar with your process, I am not. So
11 once --

12 A. Right.

13 Q. -- you submit the data, you are done and what happens with
14 it, you really do not know.

15 A. Yeah. I submitted the data. I put it in the system and --

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. -- basically after that, I'm complete with my leak sketch
18 and, you know, I can go on down the road and --

19 Q. That's fair enough. Yeah.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay. Any other involvement after you did the bar hole test?
22 Did you -- in regard (indiscernible) do anything at 3531? I'm
23 sorry, 3515? Whatever that first --

24 A. Did I go to 3515?

25 Q. Okay. You were sent at 3527, right, to do the --

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

2 MR. CHHATRE: Am I getting the number wrong here?

3 MS. COLLETTI: He's 35.

4 MR. CHHATRE: 35?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 3515.

6 BY MR. CHHATRE:

7 Q. 15. Yeah, that is where you were sent?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. That's the start area of your bar hole.

10 A. Um-hum. I started there and -- I started at that address and
11 I know -- I don't know which way I --

12 Q. Sure.

13 A. -- I went thataway, Juan went thataway, then we went the
14 other way.

15 Q. So with that reading, did you see any -- did you feel it's
16 unusual to see that kind of gas on the main?

17 A. Is it unusual? No, it's just everyday day. You don't ever
18 know what kind of readings you're going to get. I mean,
19 typically, you know the stronger concentration of gas means you're
20 really close to the leak.

21 Q. But was that reading a concern, a safety concern to you?
22 That is on your main --

23 A. No.

24 Q. How often you see readings like that, that high and -- 52
25 percent gas?

1 A. I don't do many leaks like that. So, I mean, I could go
2 on -- it just depends. You can go on 50 and not find nothing, and
3 then you can go on 10 and find something. I mean, I don't really
4 typically, you know, do a lot of (indiscernible) like that.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. Leak investigations.

7 Q. But that is not unusually high, it's not -- I guess what I'm
8 saying --

9 A. No, it's just -- you know, not really. I mean --

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. Yeah. It's no concern or nothing.

12 Q. Okay, it's no concern. Okay. And you said you don't do that
13 many leaks or like bar hole testing on the main, so, again,
14 (indiscernible)?

15 A. When I'm needed, yeah. I don't do it day -- I don't do it
16 every day, no.

17 Q. That's what I'm saying. So that's not part of your job?

18 A. It's part of my job, but I just don't do it every day.

19 Q. Oh, okay. Okay. I'm sorry. I --

20 A. You know, whenever service department needs help, of course,
21 I go out and help them, and I may do a leak or two there.

22 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. All right, that's all I have. Steve.

23 BY DR. JENNER:

24 Q. Okay, Steve Jenner, NTSB. You guys had a question and answer
25 that didn't quite get resolved, but I'm going to try a different

1 way to get it.

2 A. Okay. Absolutely.

3 Q. When you bar hole on a dry day, how far you push down?

4 A. Typically as far as you can. Sometimes you may hit a rock
5 or --

6 Q. Okay. What's --

7 A. That's as far as you go.

8 Q. What's an ideal depth?

9 A. Probably is that long.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I think that's --

12 Q. Is that 2 feet maybe?

13 A. Maybe 2½.

14 Q. Maybe 2½ feet.

15 A. Three, yeah.

16 Q. Okay. Let's say --

17 A. I mean, I've never measured the rod or anything.

18 Q. Okay. Let's say, let's just for example, you go down 3 feet.

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. And hypothetically, let's say you get a positive reading of
21 20 percent.

22 A. Um-hum.

23 Q. Okay. Now, if I were to take that same 3-foot hole and fill
24 it up halfway with water, and you did another reading just a
25 minute later, just above the waterline, would you expect to get

1 the exact same 20 percent reading? Would you expect to get a
2 higher or lower or the same?

3 A. Let me think about that. You expect to get something, maybe.
4 I mean --

5 Q. Right. What I'm trying to understand is what influence does
6 water have on your reading?

7 A. It does some. I mean, it just depends what kind of situation
8 you -- if you're right on top of the leak, then, yeah, of course
9 you're going to get some kind of gas.-

10 Q. Right.

11 A. But if you're not on it, you know, maybe have a little
12 migration over at the migration part, it may -- you may not get
13 nothing.

14 Q. Right. But just that same hole, from your experience --

15 A. Oh, if you put it in the same hole?

16 Q. In the same exact --

17 A. I thought you were right next to it.

18 Q. No, no. In that same exact hole.

19 A. Yeah, I would expect you'd get something.

20 Q. Right. Would you think that number would be lower than the
21 20 percent?

22 A. Yeah, I do. Yes, yes.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Because, you know, typically, you put a bar hole there and,
25 you know, after an hour later, it's going to bleed down.

1 Q. But if it were just a minute later? So again the example, if
2 it's 3 feet and you get a 20 percent reading, then we fill it up
3 with water halfway, and a minute later you do another reading,
4 would you expect that reading to be less or the same or more
5 because of the influence --

6 A. It just depends what kind of situation it is. I mean, how
7 much rain you got or, you know -- there's a lot of stuff that goes
8 into that --

9 Q. Okay. Thank you.

10 A. -- I would think.

11 Q. Okay. Do you have any idea what -- when the relief showed
12 up, what information did you, at 11 -- about 11:30 that night --

13 A. I went and showed him what I was been doing, and I kind of
14 told him what the other service technician's been doing. I was
15 like, hey, we bar-holed all the way down the alley. I told him
16 where we was picking up gas at and -- then the crew came over and
17 I showed them where I was picking up the -- got the other leak
18 over there. And basically after that, I left.

19 Q. Did you give them any instructions about, we need to keep on
20 bar holing farther or --

21 A. No. I said I barred -- we barred all this and -- barred
22 everything. I was like we zeroed out.

23 Q. Okay. Was this the biggest event that you've ever responded
24 to?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Okay. If you can reflect on another big event that you
2 responded to and how it was handled, was it --

3 A. Been the two tornadoes. Yeah.

4 Q. Did the tornado result in gas being leaked at those places?

5 A. Yeah, yeah. I didn't go the night of, but, you know, you can
6 just imagine what a house will do if it falls on top of a gas
7 meter.

8 Q. Okay. Yeah. For this incident, were you surprised by the
9 number of positive readings that you were receiving, going left
10 and right, up and down the main, and around --

11 A. Was I surprised? No.

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. Just daily -- I mean, nothing -- didn't like, oh, wow or
14 nothing. It's just found it and just getting, you know --

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. -- (indiscernible).

17 Q. So nothing about your discovery said there may be something
18 even much bigger going on here than we all know?

19 A. No. I didn't think that.

20 DR. JENNER: Okay. Great, thank you.

21 MR. WALLIS: Yeah.

22 BY MS. COLLETTI:

23 Q. Alex Colletti. Hey, I got a couple questions for you.

24 A. All right.

25 Q. So be patient with me.

1 A. Okay.

2 MR. WALLIS: Can I take a bathroom break right here?

3 MR. CHHATRE: Sure.

4 MS. COLLETTI: Oh, absolutely. Thank you for asking.

5 MR. CHHATRE: Off the record.

6 (Off the record.)

7 (On the record.)

8 MR. CHHATRE: Back on the record. Go ahead.

9 MS. COLLETTI: Ready to go?

10 MR. WALLIS: Um-hum.

11 BY MS. COLLETTI:

12 Q. This is Alex Colletti. Okay. So, wanted to talk to you a
13 little bit about just like general procedures, and then I'll get
14 into some of the nitty-gritty.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. So when you're doing -- you get called out for one of these,
17 or just any leak, and you decide you need to survey along the
18 main, do you normally locate that before?

19 A. Locate the main?

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. We don't use -- I don't have the instruments to locate it.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. I just go based off of -- you may see a patch where they were
24 in a service in the concrete. You know, that gives you an idea
25 where the main's located at.

1 Q. Yeah. Okay. So you're pretty much going off line markers
2 and line of sight and --

3 A. Yeah, line -- yeah.

4 Q. Okay. You know, we talked a little bit about -- or I guess a
5 lot, about bar holing with water, when there's water in there.
6 What do you do -- are there -- is there anything else you can do
7 testing wise, if you're putting everyone in and it's like a
8 monsoon out there?

9 A. Yeah, I was taught by, you know, a older gentleman, whenever
10 I was training leaks, you know, get a safety cone, you know, like
11 a regular safety cone, and I put that over the bar hole and cover
12 it up. You know, maybe put a glove on top of the hole. And try
13 and take your reading that way, so you can trap some kind of gas
14 in there or something.

15 Q. Okay. Did you have to use that at all, that technique, at
16 all?

17 A. I didn't over there because, you know, I was -- some of the
18 bar holes were, and some of them they wasn't. I didn't use it
19 over there. Usually I -- typically I do that on like bubbles or
20 something.

21 Q. Okay. Okay. So you --

22 A. Yeah, if you find bubbles sometimes.

23 Q. You felt like you're getting enough from what you had?

24 A. Right. You know, we was just going, you know, making --
25 like, you know, if we was 5 feet, maybe if this one would fill up,

1 I'd go to -- I'd go right next to it, maybe that one wouldn't, you
2 know, and so on. We weren't getting no migration pattern or
3 nothing, so felt like everything was --

4 Q. Okay. Okay. That makes sense.

5 You talked about a 52 percent reading, but I don't think
6 anybody asked you if there was any other spots where you had
7 readings?

8 A. Yes, there's -- absolutely. There was a 19 percent I got --
9 where is at? Bear with me one second.

10 Q. That's fine. Take your time.

11 A. Nineteen -- where's it at? Oh, right here, behind 3531.

12 Q. 3531?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. And so, is that what prompted Juan and David to start
15 doing all the pressure testing of the customer line and all that,
16 is because you found that --

17 A. Um-hum. We're trying here to determine the migration
18 pattern. They found the -- at that time I was in my truck doing
19 these sketches, you know.

20 Q. Just trying to get everything organized. Yeah, yeah.

21 A. Yeah, I was doing all that, and they said, hey, we found a
22 leak. And I was like, okay, knock on doors, see if the customer's
23 home, and perform your pressure test.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. I mean, they found that leak right there.

1 Q. Okay. And it looks like, from what I've seen here, and
2 forgive me because I don't have a copy, but it looks like -- oh,
3 that's okay -- you guys, because of the previous fire at 3527, you
4 went ahead and preemptively --

5 A. Yeah, we always do that. Yeah, all the around the house.

6 Q. Okay, okay. And then there something here. Why did you do a
7 couple in the yard at 3535?

8 A. They --

9 Q. Do you know why?

10 A. They just -- I think they put them there.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. They just --

13 Q. Okay. So --

14 A. I think -- I don't know. That's what they did. And they
15 told me that, and I just went ahead and put them there. So, I
16 guess, since later they found one there, then maybe that's why
17 (indiscernible) --

18 Q. They just went ahead and checked the next yard too?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Because they had already checked the one side, same as --

21 A. Um-hum.

22 Q. Yeah. Okay. So it looks like, let's see, 19, 10, 8, and
23 then 24 --

24 A. That's 2.4.

25 Q. 2.4. Okay. So it was highest, not quite -- is this where

1 the meter is? Like where --

2 A. Yeah, that's where the meter is. You see the little line?
3 That's basically the service line representing that.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. And there is a property line, like a fence, right there.

6 Q. Okay. Okay.

7 A. And this fence kind of went in a little bit. There is, I
8 guess, more of an easement, you could say, right there.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. And it was right in that general area right there.

11 Q. Right in that general area. Okay.

12 When you're walking -- when you guys were walking along the
13 alley, was this a -- from what I recall, the main's closest to
14 Durango? So you just kind of hugging that fence and walking --

15 A. Absolutely. Yeah.

16 Q. Okay. Okay. That's what --

17 A. The main was right there between the -- I'd say on the edge
18 of the concrete. Was it concrete? Is it -- I don't know.

19 Q. I don't know.

20 A. It's right on the edge there. I guess under the --

21 Q. Yeah, right there.

22 A. Yeah, right there on the edge of the alley.

23 Q. Okay. All right. And then --

24 A. I think it's actually rock.

25 Q. Rock. Okay. Yeah, and then -- so for like this case where

1 it went to zero to 19, would you -- would it be interesting for
2 you to do like more tests in between those two points or --

3 A. What, like in between them?

4 Q. Yeah, yeah. I was just curious because it looks like it's
5 like dropping off towards that house.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And then you went and tested at the house.

8 A. I think maybe we did. I mean, I would.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. I just --

11 Q. But there's nothing -- there's nothing that was recorded
12 there?

13 A. No. No, no, no. This -- I mean, you found 19, you know, you
14 go your 5 feet. You know, if it'd got -- if it was dropping down,
15 you know, I guess, the leak's -- you know, more of the leak's over
16 there.

17 Q. Yeah. I was just trying to figure out the thought process,
18 because like --

19 A. I mean, sometimes, you know, when I'm trying to really
20 pinpoint a leak, you know, I maybe split the difference --

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. -- you know.

23 Q. That's kind of what I was thinking, is like my gut would be
24 like, what's going down that way?

25 A. You know, I just make a -- you know, I make a big leap, you

1 know, if maybe the migration -- it'll just saved me a little bit
2 of time. I go here and it drops down to zero, I was like, okay,
3 you know, it's going to be more a thataway.

4 Q. Yeah. Did you do any testing to like -- so let's say like
5 here, you know, there's these service lines running off to
6 Espanola on this side too. Would you have maybe like just -- you
7 know, 20/20 hindsight, right? If you got a reading between zero
8 and 19, let's say there was a service line here -- in theory. I
9 don't really know, right?

10 A. I remember putting holes over there.

11 Q. Would you have gone -- you had gone over to the other side
12 too?

13 A. Yeah. I remember I put a couple holes in the other side,
14 like over there, but never did -- I forgot to put it on there.

15 Q. Okay. But forgot to put it on there. Do you -- you don't
16 remember seeing any readings?

17 A. No. There wasn't nothing over there.

18 Q. Okay. Okay, that's what I've got about that, but now I've
19 got a bunch of random questions for you.

20 A. Okay

21 Q. So if it seems a little out of left field. I believe you
22 said something about being drug tested?

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. When was that, and why?

25 A. It was Friday.

1 Q. It was Friday?

2 A. It was for post-accident.

3 Q. So it was Friday after the Espanola?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. That makes more sense. Because somehow in my mind it
6 was right after you had finished Thursday, not Friday.

7 A. Sorry.

8 Q. Why would they have sent you out Thursday? No, it's okay.
9 I'm sure you mentioned that. That's why I want to clear it up.

10 Okay. So that was post-accident, and that was just anybody
11 that had been there in the last --

12 A. Yes, everybody that was there, I guess, basically was there
13 on -- in the alley. That's my understanding.

14 Q. Okay. That makes sense.

15 Do you know if -- so you guys did bar hole testing on here.
16 Did you do any other kind of tests, like drive a -- correct me on
17 terminology -- sniffer truck? You know the trucks with the bells,
18 with the (indiscernible) up front.

19 A. Right. I think -- my understanding, they didn't drive the
20 truck because it was so wet. I'm not too familiar with the job,
21 but they said it wouldn't really --

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. -- pick up a right reading. But they came out with the RMLD
24 and they were --

25 Q. RMLD. Okay.

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. It that typically what you guys would use when it's wet, or
3 do you just use them all the time?

4 A. I don't know. I'm not familiar with that department.

5 Q. Okay. Who are the folks that do, do that work? Is that
6 what --

7 A. You want their names?

8 Q. No, like just what group is it? Is it --

9 A. Oh, it's a survey and corrosion.

10 Q. Survey, survey. Survey and corrosion. Okay.

11 A. Survey corrosion, that's that side, and then they got MIC
12 too.

13 Q. Okay. So, they walked this line. Do you know if that was
14 like while you guys were out bar holing, or was that Friday after
15 the incident? Or do you not know?

16 A. That was that night of. That was --

17 Q. Thursday night?

18 A. Yeah, it was Thursday night.

19 Q. Thursday night they came through, too. So you guys -- while
20 you guys were doing your work, they were also doing some type of
21 work too?

22 A. I didn't see them, but that's just what I heard. I know me
23 and Joel -- I know what me and Joel did, so I wasn't really
24 keeping track of what everybody else was doing.

25 Q. Yeah, you had things to do. Yeah.

1 A. Right. Absolutely.

2 Q. No, that's understood.

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. That's understood. Okay. Let's see. Oh, last question for
5 you --

6 A. Yes, ma'am.

7 Q. -- unless I can think of something else in the meantime.

8 Let's flip back to the other -- oops, sorry, other way -- to 3515.

9 Did you guys test the regulator here?

10 A. No, we didn't.

11 Q. No, didn't perform an testing? Is that something you
12 typically do?

13 A. We only do that if you turn the gas back on. But, you know,
14 we wasn't turning the gas back on to the house.

15 Q. Okay. So you wouldn't do that -- that's not something you
16 normally would do.

17 A. No, just, to me, it seemed -- we could, but --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. Juan had that and, you know -- I wouldn't do it. I'll only
20 do it if I was, you know, turning the gas back on for the
21 customer.

22 MS. COLLETTI: Okay. All right. I think that's what I got.
23 Yeah, that's what I've got. Thank you very much.

24 MR. WALLIS: Oh, you bet.

25 BY MR. COLLINS:

1 Q. Jim Collins, Railroad Commission of Texas.

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Q. Quick question about your bar hole testing.

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. When you report a reading, is it a sustained 52 percent?

6 A. It's sustained.

7 Q. Sustained, not the peak?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. Thank you. Let's see.

10 MR. COLLINS: That's the only question I had. Thank you.

11 MR. WALLIS: Awesome.

12 BY MR. McDILL:

13 Q. Josh, John McDill of Atmos Energy. Can you talk a little bit
14 more around when you conduct leak investigations and you begin to
15 detect readings. So the information is loaded -- you enter it
16 through a computer system. In your typical work activities when
17 you find those, tell us a little bit about what you may know about
18 how people -- how that information is responded to for others?
19 Does someone go back out there based on the information you have?

20 A. Like if I was just on a typical leak call? Like say I got,
21 went to --

22 Q. All right, let's start with that. Yes, please.

23 A. Okay. Let's go with like an odor in the inside, and
24 customer's smelling gas inside. I would go out, respond, you
25 know, turn my CGI on, get it ready. Then I enter the house with

1 my CGI, and, you know, go around. I typically try to pinpoint the
2 leak. Most of the time, it's really like a ~~flexon~~ ^{flexline} going towards a
3 -- that connects -- you know, a ~~flexon~~ ^{flexline} from the piping, goes to
4 the appliance. Most of the time that's what's leaking. And I
5 find that and typically I try to fix the leak for the customer,
6 just tighten it up.

7 Q. Yeah. Maybe I need to clarify my question for a minute. But
8 if you find the leak that's outside the house that needs follow-up
9 action, do people follow up on that?

10 A. What do you mean by follow up?

11 Q. Well, needs a construction crew --

12 A. Like immediately or --

13 Q. Either immediately or at some point in time.

14 A. Yes, yes. They come, yes.

15 Q. So the information you gathered gets passed along to
16 others --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- for follow-up actions?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay. And depending on what that may be, that may be a
21 construction-related activity?

22 A. Yes. You know, they -- say, I wrote up a grade 2, 30-day, or
23 a grade 2, 180, they'll see that in the system and -- you know,
24 and they'll go out there and get that repaired.

25 Q. Okay, based on your evaluation of the leak will help schedule

1 the follow-up actions that goes to other departments for response
2 and repairs, correct?

3 A. Yes. Yes.

4 MR. CHHATRE: You done?

5 MR. McDILL: Yes, sir.

6 BY MR. CHHATRE:

7 Q. Ravi Chhatre, NTSB. I want to get one thing. You used a
8 term, zeroed out. Please explain for the record what that means.

9 A. Zero out, typically -- I mean, what I do, I go the -- I go an
10 extra 20 feet or so, just to make sure everything is --

11 Q. Beyond what?

12 A. There's no -- beyond the original leak. You know, I just go
13 maybe to the adjacent house site. Say, for instance, the 19
14 percent I found right here, I told them -- I told the guys to go
15 over two more properties, just to make sure there's, you know,
16 nothing else. You know, there could be --

17 Q. Okay. So you stop after roughly --

18 A. You know, you find something and you might want to go, maybe
19 want to go all the way -- keep on going.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. You know, and maybe -- you know, typically not raining, not
22 like that, you never -- you never know, I mean. I seen it do some
23 crazy stuff. Maybe leaking here, and we pop a hole there and --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- (indiscernible) right there.

1 Q. So now what does your company procedures says to do?

2 A. Company procedures? In what kind of case?

3 Q. Exactly like you said.

4 A. Oh, when you're bar holing?

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. I believe it's 25 feet.

7 Q. From?

8 A. Where the leak is. Twenty-five feet, say, east and west of
9 the -- where the sustained reading is.

10 Q. Up to that point, you are to take the readings?

11 A. Yes. Yes, and I found one, you know, right here. You know,
12 at 19, I went 25 feet that way.

13 Q. So, in this case, you're reading -- let us say, 3531 you are
14 reading 2.4 percent.

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. So procedure will say you should go 20 feet on either side?

17 A. Yes, 25.

18 Q. Now what happens on -- you are going 25 feet later, say, and
19 50 feet from 2.4 you see another reading of 1 percent or 10
20 percent, and then next two readings show zero. Do you continue or
21 do you stop? Because you have met the company procedure
22 requirement. So --

23 A. Yes. I -- you know, like I said earlier, I like to go Josh's
24 standards.

25 Q. No, no, I understand. I'm not asking what you do. You may

1 be a more dedicated employee or more conscientious or more
2 experienced, right?

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. I'm just saying, if I'm a new employee and I'm given
5 document, I'm training to your facility, wherever the training
6 facility is.

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 A. And I'm -- and am I wrong that they give you operating
9 procedures for different tasks you are responsible for?

10 A. Whenever they're training you?

11 Q. No, in normal --

12 A. Oh, it's all -- that's all on the computer. You can pull
13 that up --

14 Q. Yes. But you have a standard operating procedure for each of
15 these activities, right?

16 A. Yeah. Yes, sir. Yes.

17 Q. If I'm a new employee and I'm looking at your standard
18 operating procedures, and does it say that go 20 feet on either
19 side? I'm just trying to understand what the standard operating
20 procedure says --

21 A. Yeah. Does it say that in the manual?

22 Q. Yeah. Which you are supposed to follow.

23 A. I'd have to look it, I'd have to look it up. But -- yeah.

24 Q. Okay. But I mean, in a situation like you are called in, do
25 you have that written procedure on your truck, or how do you -- I

1 mean, you are already taking the readings, right?

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. So I would like to find out do they like carry the procedure
4 with them or they remember or they look up the procedure?

5 A. Yes, every time they have -- every time they have -- you
6 know, if there are questions, they can reach out to another
7 employee and ask them, or they have the option to pull the
8 procedures up on the computer.

9 Q. So, I guess, to kind of put it a little bit differently, you
10 really don't know what the distance is in the procedure? Am I
11 correct?

12 A. Twenty-five feet.

13 Q. It is 25 feet?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. From that location.

16 A. It's 25 feet to my knowledge.

17 Q. So the procedure doesn't say that (indiscernible) you get a
18 reading, you still go 25 feet and stop, correct?

19 A. Past the sustained reading?

20 Q. Well, I mean, you tell me. I'm just trying to understand the
21 procedure.

22 A. I'm having the hardest time, you know, understanding you, I
23 mean.

24 Q. Okay. Now, if you find a leak -- let me back up. You are
25 saying that 3531, we got a leak call. You go in, you start your

1 bar hole testing --

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. --right? And from what I understand, your procedures says,
4 from that location, go 25 feet on either side?

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. Irrespective of the reading?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. You are taking bar hole readings, right? But does the
9 procedure tell you that you are going 25 feet on -- now at a
10 distance of 20 feet from that location, you take another gas
11 reading. Let's take hypothetical, you started at 10 percent. You
12 are seeing 5, 3, zero, zero, zero, 8 percent. Then you see zero,
13 zero. You still continue or you stop? What is the --

14 A. I'm still going, yeah, till it's a consistent zero.

15 Q. So that's what the procedure says?

16 A. I'm not sure.

17 Q. Okay. Because you may be doing it as your belief, but I'm
18 just trying -- so let me ask you a differently then. When was the
19 last time you looked at the procedures?

20 A. Yesterday.

21 Q. So do you remember what the procedure says now? You said you
22 looked at yesterday, so --

23 A. Do I remember what it -- no, I have a terrible memory.

24 Q. Okay. All right.

25 MR. CHHATRE: I think I want to request that, if it wasn't

1 previously submitted already. That's why I'm not repeating the
2 (indiscernible) --

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

4 MR. CHHATRE: -- about the procedures.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The leak investigation?

6 MR. CHHATRE: Just for our (indiscernible), will you
7 highlight that procedure for --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We sure will.

9 MR. CHHATRE: -- what is like, you know, like 20 feet, 25
10 feet, whatever that thing is.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sure will.

12 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. That'll be great.

13 BY MR. CHHATRE:

14 Q. And you did a bar hole test, company -- in company procedure,
15 how far you go, what you do, is it there?

16 A. In the procedures?

17 Q. To your knowledge. Yeah.

18 A. I'm sure it is.

19 Q. Do you remember what distance the procedure recommends?

20 A. What's in the procedures? I don't, I don't -- no.

21 Q. Okay. Does the procedure cover what to do on a rainy day or
22 if the ground is saturated with water? Does the procedures say do
23 the bar hole, don't do bar hole?

24 A. You always want to do bar hole.

25 Q. Okay. So irrespective what the weather condition, you always

1 to the bar holes?

2 A. Yeah. I'd want to, yes.

3 Q. No, no. I'm saying procedure, what the procedures says, is
4 what I'm looking for. See, you are experienced --

5 A. I'm sure that's what it says. I mean --

6 Q. Okay. Okay.

7 A. Yeah.

8 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. And really, that's all I have. I really
9 appreciate your time.

10 MR. WALLIS: Oh, yeah, yeah.

11 BY DR. JENNER:

12 Q. Okay. This is Steve Jenner. Just when we were starting to
13 ask that line of questions of zero out, I thought I heard you say
14 -- I may have heard it wrong -- that you go the extra 20 feet,
15 then two more properties. I may have heard it wrong.

16 A. Maybe so. I can't say --

17 Q. So, if you can just restate what zero out means to you?

18 A. Zero out means to me, say, you find a leak right there, you
19 know, I'm going to go maybe an extra 20 feet till it's zero.

20 Q. Okay. An extra -- is that in addition to the 25?

21 A. I'm going to -- if I (indiscernible) them, I go another 25
22 feet that way.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Till it's zeroed out.

25 Q. Okay. So you want 25 feet of zeros?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. So, if it -- if you go 24 feet and see a positive reading,
3 are you going to try to go another 25 feet so you get consecutive
4 zeros?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Is that correct?

7 A. Yes, sir. Yes.

8 DR. JENNER: Great. Thank you.

9 MR. WALLIS: Oh, you bet.

10 BY MS. COLLETTI:

11 Q. Alex Colletti. I forgot to ask about this.

12 A. Okay.

13 Q. So I'm assuming when you -- which way did you approach? Did
14 you approach from the Larga side or the El Centro side?

15 A. Larga side.

16 Q. Okay. Did you -- well, when you guys did the bar holes
17 around 3527, did you notice like it kind of looked like it
18 exploded, or at least odd, right? The walls had -- did you notice
19 anything about the building?

20 A. 3527?

21 Q. Uh-huh.

22 A. I just saw that it was on -- that it caught fire.

23 Q. Okay. Well, my real question is, so that house, at least
24 visually to me, shows a little -- some oddities that might or
25 might not be an explosion, in one way or another. So that was

1 kind of my thought. Was there anything about it that to you maybe
2 said, is that an explosion or was it not an explosion?

3 A. Well, you know, yeah, there was stuff in the yard like maybe
4 something may have happened and --

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. But you don't know if that was the fire department that
7 squirted the water hose or --

8 Q. Right. Right.

9 A. -- glass went out, windows went out.

10 Q. Or where they ventilated windows or -- yeah, throwing couches
11 out the window.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Right, right, that kind of thing.

14 A. Yes, ma'am.

15 Q. Okay. So that's not, it's not I guess recognizing explosions
16 and that's not something that they've taught you or that you've
17 had a lot of focus on?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. And I'm assuming, if that's the case, there's probably
20 not something like -- no specific procedure that says if you see a
21 house explosion, you know, you need to bar hole these 25 things,
22 and X, Y and Z? There's nothing like that?

23 A. If I knew it had explosion?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. No.

1 Q. Nothing that you know of?

2 A. I mean, I think it's like a fire call, is basically what it's
3 called.

4 Q. Okay, okay. So you would just treat it like a fire
5 essentially? They don't -- you guys don't distinguish between an
6 explosion --

7 A. Yes. Yes, you know, we go all the way around the house, just
8 like a fire, you know.

9 Q. Okay. So, for example, like the Espanola house -- just
10 hypothetical, not the actual Espanola house -- but that house was
11 definitely the explosion with no fire.

12 A. Right.

13 Q. Would you bar hole that the same way you bar hole a fire
14 house?

15 A. Um-hum. I would, yes.

16 Q. Okay. And do you know if that's in the procedures or if
17 that's just Josh standards, or--

18 A. I'm not sure if it's in the procedures.

19 Q. Not sure, okay. Awesome. Thank you, Josh.

20 A. I mean, I just, you know, just treat it, you know --

21 Q. Yeah.

22 A. -- just make sure that there's no gas registering.

23 Q. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

24 MS. COLLETTI: Thank you.

25 MR. WALLIS: Uh-huh.

1 BY MR. COLLINS:

2 Q. Jim Collins, Railroad Commission of Texas. Can you maybe
3 remember back to your training at the Plano Center on leak
4 assessments, leak grading.

5 A. I never did go to the training center in Plano.

6 Q. Okay. Where did you --

7 A. I went in Fort Worth when the training center was out there.

8 Q. Okay. So it was in Fort Worth, but you did go to a training
9 center --

10 A. Yes, just for --

11 Q. -- for that training? Okay. When you were in the classroom
12 part, you had an instructor, you went through notes and all that
13 stuff, paper handouts. Now when you conducted your initial test,
14 was it computer based at that time or was it written?

15 A. I think it was written.

16 Q. Written?

17 A. I think so.

18 Q. Okay. Do you recall if your material was made available to
19 you for the written test, kind of like an open-book test? Or
20 was -- were you able to --

21 A. We had -- you know, we had I guess reviews, you can call it.
22 We did reviews, then we take the test right afterwards.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. It wasn't an open-book test, though.

25 Q. It was not?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Okay. So you would -- but you would review right before the
3 test and take the test?

4 A. Yeah. You know, it'd be fresher in your mind.

5 Q. Got you. I understand. Perfect. That's all the questions I
6 have. Well, hold on. Sorry. One last one.

7 Do you remember the approximate date of your first training
8 for the leak grading? A year maybe?

9 A. Let me tell you -- I think maybe --

10 Q. Because you said in --

11 A. 2008 maybe or --

12 Q. 2008?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Thank you.

15 A. It's probably -- maybe 2009. It's somewhere in that time
16 period.

17 Q. Okay. Have you gone -- since that time, have you gone back
18 through the --

19 A. Leak trainings?

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. Oh, you know we go --

22 Q. A refresher course.

23 A. Yes. We go to refresher courses, yeah.

24 Q. Okay. Is that --

25 A. That's every year.

1 Q. Once a year?

2 A. Yeah. You know, we get -- we go through all kinds of
3 refreshers.

4 Q. And are those conducted just on the computer, like a web-
5 based training?

6 A. Sometimes it's computer, sometimes we have an instructor.

7 Q. Okay. And there's a test at the end of it as well? On the
8 refresher part?

9 A. Some of them there is, yes.

10 Q. Some of there is. Okay.

11 MR. COLLINS: Thank you.

12 MR. WALLIS: Oh, you're welcome.

13 MR. COLLINS: Appreciate it.

14 MR. CHHATRE: Your turn.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Pass.

16 MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Ravi Chhatre. I'll break my own rule of
17 going third time. NTSB.

18 BY MR. CHHATRE:

19 Q. With a refresher training, you said you are -- you do that
20 once a year for leak detection, bar hole --

21 A. We do, you know, the OQ qualifications. I believe that's
22 yearly, we do that to --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. You got to renew -- you go through online testing now. Then
25 you do a KSA in person. You just kind of go to that person and --

1 Q. That is what I was really leading at. So you at OQ
2 qualified?

3 A. Sir?

4 Q. You are OQ qualified?

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. Okay, (indiscernible), correct?

7 A. Yes, sir.

8 Q. That's why I was really getting at. Okay.

9 A. Okay.

10 MR. CHHATRE: Thanks. That's all I have.

11 If not, thank you so much for stopping by. Appreciate your
12 time.

13 MR. WALLIS: You bet. Okay. Yeah.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thanks.

15 MR. CHHATRE: Off the record.

16 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

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 Joshua Wallis

ACCIDENT NO.: PLD18FR002

PLACE: Dallas, Texas

DATE: March 3, 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.



Deborah Dowling Sweigart
Transcriber



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Name: Joshua Wallis

Department Atmos Energy / Mid-Tex Operations

Title: Distribution Operator

Date of Interview: June 6, 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

* * * * *

Investigation of: *

*

NATURAL GAS-FUELED EXPLOSION OF *

RESIDENCE, DALLAS, TEXAS * Accident No.: PLD18FR002

FEBRUARY 23, 2018 *

*

* * * * *

Interview of: JOSHUA WALLIS

Atmos Energy Offices
Dallas, Texas

Wednesday,
June 6, 2018

APPEARANCES:

ROGER EVANS, Investigator in Charge
National Transportation Safety Board

RACHAEL GUNARATNAM, Hazardous Materials Accident
Investigator
Emergency Response Group
National Transportation Safety Board

DARREN LEMMERMAN, Accident Investigator
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
(PHMSA)

MICHAEL PARKER, Engineering Specialist
Railroad Commission of Texas

JIM COLLINS, Manager, Region 6
Railroad Commission of Texas

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

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>I N D E X</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Josh Wallis:		
By Mr. Evans		5
By Mr. Parker		12
By Mr. Collins		17
By Mr. Lemmerman		18
By Mr. Evans		19
By Mr. Parker		24
By Mr. Lemmerman		25
By Mr. Evans		26
By Mr. Lemmerman		28

I N T E R V I E W

(9:57 a.m.)

1
2
3 MR. EVANS: This is Roger Evans. We're on the record with
4 Josh Wallis, Atmos Energy.

5 Good morning, Josh. Appreciate you coming to talk to us
6 today.

7 MR. WALLIS: Good morning.

8 MR. EVANS: Today is June 6, 2018. It is now 9:57 a.m. My
9 name is Roger Evans. I'm the investigator in charge for this case
10 with the National Transportation Safety Board out of Washington,
11 D.C. We're at the Atmos offices in Dallas, Texas. This interview
12 is being conducted as part of the investigation into the Atmos
13 fatality accident that occurred on February 23, 2018. This is
14 case number PLD18FR002.

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

19 Josh, do we have your permission to record this interview?

20 MR. WALLIS: Yes.

21 MR. EVANS: Thank you. Josh, you're allowed to have one
22 person present in this interview. It's a person of your choice --
23 supervisor, friend, family member or nobody at all. Please state
24 for the record who you have selected to be present during this
25 interview.

1 MR. WALLIS: Thomas Tobin.

2 MR. EVANS: Mr. Tobin, can you please introduce yourself?

3 MR. TOBIN: Yes. My name is Tom Tobin. I'm a partner in the
4 Wilson Elser law firm in New York.

5 MR. EVANS: Okay. I'd like to go around the room and have
6 each person state their name, title, agency/organization who you
7 represent. We'll start to my left.

8 MR. PARKER: All right, this is Michael Parker. I work for
9 the Railroad Commission of Texas.

10 MR. COLLINS: Jim Collins, Railroad Commission of Texas.

11 MR. EVANS: Rachael?

12 MS. GUNARATNAM: Rachael Gunaratnam, NTSB hazmat
13 investigator.

14 MR. EVANS: Mr. Lemmerman?

15 MR. LEMMERMAN: Darren Lemmerman, PHMSA accident
16 investigator.

17 MR. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

18 INTERVIEW OF JOSH WALLIS

19 BY MR. EVANS:

20 Q. We'd like to get some, just some brief things about your
21 background really quickly. First off, please spell your name,
22 give us your job title, how long you've been with the firm, and we
23 can go from there.

24 A. Josh Wallis, Atmos Energy, 11 years. Distribution operator.

25 Q. And spell your name please.

1 A. J-O-S-H, W-A-double L-I-S.

2 Q. And how long have you been in this current position?

3 A. Five, 6 years.

4 Q. Okay. Thank you. Okay, so we're going to be using this
5 drawing here.

6 A. This one here?

7 Q. Yeah. I just want to put a mark on it really quick. Just a
8 second.

9 A. Yeah.

10 MR. EVANS: Okay, we've just handed Josh Exhibit 1 that shows
11 a layout of the area, with the yellow building being the building
12 that -- where the fatality occurred, and two green buildings where
13 there were fires.

14 BY MR. EVANS:

15 Q. So just to begin, we'd like to kind of know the date that you
16 were first on-site and what time you arrived, roughly.

17 A. I don't know the date before. What was the date before? The
18 date before the fatality.

19 Q. February 23rd was the date of the fatality accident.

20 A. Okay. I was there the 22nd. I got there around lunchtime.

21 Q. Okay. And your task at hand when you arrived was?

22 A. ~~My supervisor~~ **Salvador Sanchez** called me to assist Juan Cruz.

23 Q. Okay. And when you say assist Juan Cruz, Juan Cruz was doing
24 what?

25 A. I just helped him bar test.

1 Q. Okay. And when you were bar testing, was it raining during
2 your visit?

3 A. I can't remember. It was wet. It rained before, I know
4 that, but I don't know if it was raining during -- yeah, it was --
5 yeah, it was raining. Yeah, it --

6 Q. And again, the time you arrived was roughly? The time of
7 day?

8 A. Around 12.

9 Q. Okay. And how long were you on scene?

10 A. From about 12 to 1 a.m.

11 Q. Okay. And as far as -- if you can just kind of give us a
12 rundown of what you discovered that night with regard to leaks?

13 A. You all have the diagram? I just wrote up one leak --

14 MR. TOBIN: Do you mean this bigger diagram?

15 MR. WALLIS: No, that diagram that I drew up that had all the
16 X's on it.

17 MR. TOBIN: From the first interview, you mean?

18 MR. WALLIS: Yeah. Yes, sir. Well, I kind of remember.

19 There was a leak at 3519 I found. And there was one more I found.

20 I don't remember the address, but I found another one, so --

21 BY MR. EVANS:

22 Q. So 35- -- what was it again?

23 A. 3519.

24 Q. And where -- what was the nature of that leak?

25 A. Leak on the service.

1 Q. Leak on the service line?

2 A. Um-hum.

3 Q. Okay. And did you discover that -- at what -- I mean, what
4 part on the service line? Was it a fitting or what?

5 A. I didn't see them when they dug it up. I'm sure it was on
6 the fitting or something.

7 Q. Okay. So that -- 3519 service line leak. And what was the
8 prognosis? What did you do with it? Did you tell residents to
9 leave the building or what?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay. And where else? Anything else that night?

12 A. There was another one but I don't remember the address.

13 Q. Do you know the grade you would have given it?

14 A. It was a grade 2, 30-day, I believe.

15 Q. A grade 2?

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. And the first one at 3519, what was that one?

18 A. Grade 2, 30-day.

19 Q. Okay. As far as your training with regard to bar holing,
20 what is the -- what is told -- what is said about rain and water
21 in the bar hole? Can you kind of go over that with --

22 A. If there's water in the bar hole, I'm going to move over
23 until there's not water in that bar hole so I can get an accurate
24 test.

25 Q. As far as an accurate test and water, what is your

1 understanding of what affects -- why, if you have water in that
2 bar hole, are you not going to get a reading?

3 A. Because the --

4 Q. Just for the record.

5 A. Yeah, because the one you put in the hole is going to fill up
6 with water inside that and you're not going to get a test. It's
7 going to be flow blocked in there, so I'm going to go to a hole
8 that you don't have water.

9 Q. Do you make any -- are there any special adjustments you
10 would make to equipment when you detect that there's water in a
11 bar hole? Is there anything that you would do to your instrument,
12 any piece you would add to it?

13 A. You mean like mechanical-wise or --

14 Q. Yeah.

15 A. No. I just -- I don't know.

16 Q. Are -- do you know what a cone is?

17 A. A cone?

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Yeah. Like a safety cone?

20 Q. No. No, a cone on the bar hole test device.

21 A. Cone. I don't -- maybe we're -- two different meanings. I
22 don't --

23 Q. Is there any kind of apparatus that you would put on a -- on
24 your test device when it comes to moisture --

25 A. No.

1 Q. -- that you know of?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay. What happens if you had -- if you did a bar hole and
4 it filled up with water, and then -- have you had water come up
5 and get into the -- your device before?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What's the procedure to deal with that once that's happened?

8 A. Once it gets into the wand?

9 Q. Yeah.

10 A. I drain it out and redo another test.

11 Q. Okay. Have you ever had any time when you weren't getting --
12 it wasn't working properly after you got it wet?

13 A. Sometimes, yes.

14 Q. Describe that for us.

15 A. I put new filters on there. Typically when it's raining,
16 sometime the filters get wet and it still says flow blocked. So I
17 get a dry filter and dry the other one out.

18 Q. Okay. And is that part of training or is that -- the
19 filtering part, placing filters on the wand?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. When was your last OQ for the CGI?

22 A. What OQ is it? We have several OQs. You got to be more
23 specific.

24 Q. Oh. I was thinking you had a specific -- an OQ just for the
25 CGI.

1 A. Oh, just to use it?

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. I believe they're yearly. I think I just, I think I just
4 done it a month ago or so. Emergency responder, survey leaks. I
5 can't remember. There's several of them. But we do them yearly,
6 every year.

7 Q. And the -- are you trained in the other device? That was
8 RFLD or RLMD, whatever it is.

9 MR. TOBIN: RMLD.

10 MR. WALLIS: No, sir, I don't use that device.

11 BY MR. EVANS:

12 Q. Do you have any familiarity at all with that?

13 A. A little bit, just by watching other people use it. I know
14 it makes a sound, a specific sound, when it picks up vapor.
15 That's about all I know with it.

16 Q. Did you witness someone using one of those devices the night
17 you were -- or the day you were there, from noon until 1 in the
18 morning? And did you --

19 A. They had it on them. I don't remember if they was using it
20 or not.

21 Q. Okay. And who was the report that -- the direct report that
22 had asked you to go to that site? Who was that?

23 A. Who told me to go out there?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. Sal Sanchez.

1 Q. And can you spell that name please?

2 A. Sal, S-A-L, Sanchez, S-A-N-C-H-E-Z.

3 Q. And what's his title?

4 A. Operations supervisor.

5 Q. Okay.

6 MR. EVANS: That's all I have.

7 MR. PARKER: So this is Michael Parker with the Railroad
8 Commission.

9 BY MR. PARKER:

10 Q. So to go through and get started, when you all went through
11 and were conducting everything over at the site that you all were
12 originally called out for, did you all go into anything a little
13 bit after that? Like did you all go through and expand out the
14 area that you were going through and investigating?

15 A. Um-hum.

16 Q. Whereabouts did you go through and expand to?

17 A. We went all the way in the alley till we basically zeroed out
18 on the bar test.

19 Q. Do you happen to remember approximately where that was, where
20 you all went through and zeroed out?

21 A. It's on that piece of paper. I don't remember, unless I look
22 at that paper.

23 Q. So you just can't recall off of memory what --

24 A. No, we went -- no, I can't -- it's been 3 months ago.

25 Q. Okay. So you all didn't go through and bar hole the entire

1 alleyway?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. You went in and stopped eventually somewhere --

4 A. We didn't do the whole entire alleyway.

5 Q. You stopped somewhere; you just can't remember --

6 A. Yeah, I don't remember.

7 Q. Okay. And so for the leak survey technicians that were
8 called out onto the site, did you happen to go through and follow
9 one of them around while they were going through and doing their
10 survey?

11 A. Um-hum.

12 Q. And where -- do you remember whereabouts where you might have
13 gone?

14 A. I helped Joel. His drill went out, so I helped him. We used
15 my drill and we drilled out some more leaks that they found in the
16 alley. It wasn't on that alley, but it was like a street over and
17 the street down or something like that. We just made like a loop
18 around. We drilled some out and found a couple abovegrounds. We
19 went -- I think it was this alley behind Cortez. We went to
20 Marsh, went up between Durango -- no. North of Espanola and the
21 other street. We came here. Right there.

22 Q. Did you all happen to find -- you mentioned aboveground leaks
23 that you all went through and found. Did you all happen to find
24 any belowground leaks as well?

25 A. Um-hum. We found a few.

1 Q. Do you happen to remember what the grades of those might be
2 and, if you remember, the location?

3 A. I don't remember location. I think the belowgrounds were
4 grade 2, 30s or 180s.

5 Q. Okay. Do you happen to remember if the leak survey
6 technician that you were following used anything other than the
7 RMLD, if he may have used another piece of equipment potentially?

8 A. He was using CGIs.

9 Q. Okay. He was using a CGI --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- in addition to --

12 A. I guess he went out with his RMLD first, and then we came
13 back with the CGIs to bar test the leaks out.

14 Q. Okay. Did you all happen to be walking those alleyways that
15 you all went down or were you all in the trucks going through and
16 you were just following him in the truck?

17 A. We were in the trucks.

18 Q. You were in the trucks going through the alleyway? Okay.

19 A. With each location that he picked up fumes or whatever.

20 MR. TOBIN: I'm sorry, did you say you were in the trucks in
21 the alleys?

22 MR. WALLIS: Yes. I drove my truck and I followed him.

23 BY MR. PARKER:

24 Q. You followed him while he was --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- driving through and all? Okay. And just to go through
2 and just get clarification, the RMLD and the CGIs were the only
3 two pieces of equipment that you all were using?

4 A. I didn't see him use the RMLD. I'm sure he did, but --

5 Q. Oh, okay. All right.

6 A. Yeah, I didn't usually see him use it. But we went -- I went
7 back after him after he picked up, I guess, the hits or something,
8 he called it. We went and bar tested the leaks out.

9 Q. Okay. All right. So you weren't sure 100 percent what he
10 was using?

11 A. Yeah. I wasn't --

12 Q. So you only saw him using the CGI?

13 A. Um-hum. Yeah.

14 Q. Okay. So did you happen to go through and have anything that
15 required a crew to go through and be called out on?

16 A. While me and Joel were out?

17 Q. With wherever it was that you all were looking, did you all
18 have to go through and call in a crew --

19 A. No.

20 Q. -- to come and get anything fixed? No?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Nothing you all found was a big enough deal to go through and
23 require that?

24 A. No, sir.

25 Q. Okay. Did you all happen to go through and, in some way,

1 shape or form, while you all were walking -- or while you were
2 following the lead survey technician, go through and verify or
3 locate where the mains were for the alleyways that you all were
4 in?

5 A. Locate it with like a locator?

6 Q. In some sort of way figure out where the mains were?

7 A. No. No.

8 Q. No? You all --

9 A. We just went by the maps.

10 Q. Okay. So you went through and you verified the maps as to
11 where they might go through and be? Okay.

12 And how did you all go through and verify the maps? Did you
13 all have a paper copy of the maps with you all or did you all use
14 something on your computers?

15 A. Computer.

16 Q. Okay. What was the name of the program or whatever it is you
17 want to call it that you all used?

18 A. I don't know what -- he used FieldSmart, I guess, or if he
19 had -- the company makes their own computer.

20 Q. Okay. You're not sure exactly what --

21 A. No, sir.

22 Q. -- program he used? Okay.

23 A. It's either one or -- I mean, either one.

24 Q. So, and you called it -- was it FieldSmart?

25 A. FieldSmart or -- we have maps loaded on his computer too.

1 Q. Oh, okay. So he may have --

2 A. (Indiscernible) maps, yeah, basically.

3 Q. Okay. So pre-generated maps he already had or --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- using the program with FieldSmart?

6 A. Yeah.

7 MR. PARKER: I think that's all I have.

8 MR. COLLINS: Okay. Jim Collins, Railroad Commission of
9 Texas.

10 BY MR. COLLINS:

11 Q. Is it normal to follow a survey specialist like that and help
12 grade the leaks? Have you ever done that before?

13 A. Yeah, when they need help.

14 Q. When they need help?

15 A. Like, you know, I'm a distribution operator and sometimes,
16 you know, they're out -- somebody's not there and I help fill in.

17 Q. Okay. Were you present when all the leaks were drawn up?
18 Did you help draw those up with Joel?

19 A. No.

20 Q. No? You left by then? I mean --

21 A. No, I think he was going to go back to the office and draw
22 the leaks up.

23 Q. Okay. Okay. Let's see.

24 MR. COLLINS: I think that's all of the questions I have
25 right now. Thank you.

1 MR. WALLIS: Okay.

2 MR. EVANS: Mr. Lemmerman?

3 MR. LEMMERMAN: Yeah, I have one question.

4 BY MR. LEMMERMAN:

5 Q. Have you seen -- ever use, people use a safety cone? They'll
6 put it over like a bar hole and then stick the wand inside the
7 safety cone to check for gas?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. So that's -- so when we use the word cone, that
10 actually might be what we were referring to. We just actually
11 haven't seen what the word cone was, so --

12 A. Well, I didn't know if he was talking about a safety cone or
13 the little bitty sniffer, flexible sniffer cones. I wasn't too
14 sure what he was talking about.

15 Q. Yeah. So what are the sniffer cones that you mentioned?

16 A. Safety cone?

17 Q. (Indiscernible). No, for the --

18 A. Oh, I seen the survey guys use a little flexible cone on the
19 end of their, end of their Flame Packs, I do believe. Flame Packs
20 are different unit that has a -- has like a little flexible cone
21 about the size of a soda cup.

22 Q. Okay. So that's a part of the Flame Pack. It's not really
23 part of a CGI?

24 A. Sorry?

25 Q. That cone isn't used on a CGI?

1 A. No, no.

2 Q. Okay, got you.

3 MR. LEMMERMAN: That was the only question I had. Thank you.

4 MR. WALLIS: Okay.

5 MR. EVANS: Rachael?

6 MS. GUNARATNAM: No questions.

7 MR. EVANS: So this is Roger Evans.

8 BY MR. EVANS:

9 Q. So did any of the leaks that you found that night, did they
10 result in evacuations?

11 A. No.

12 Q. No one was notified to leave their building or anything like
13 that?

14 A. Uh-uh.

15 Q. Okay. With regard to the training that you have on this, on
16 this device, the CGI training, how long does that last in a -- is
17 it a half a day? Is it a couple days? Is it -- you know, when
18 you have the OQ for that.

19 A. The OQ to use the device?

20 Q. Yeah.

21 A. I believe it's yearly.

22 Q. No, but I mean when you take the training, how long of a
23 session are you in there? Is it all -- is it open book? Is it
24 practical? Is it --

25 A. Oh, it's closed book. It's online for that test.

1 Q. Okay. So you take a -- you get an email or something that
2 says time to take this OQ again?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And then so it's all computer-based training?

5 A. Um-hum.

6 Q. You don't go out to the Gas City --

7 A. I already did that. We go out there before you get trained
8 on that. They train you out there, then you ride out with
9 somebody in the field and you get trained out in the field, real
10 life. And then after that you take the KSA and online testing.

11 Q. And what's the bust rate to -- for pass/fail for that? I
12 mean is it 70 percent or --

13 A. Eighty or above.

14 Q. Eighty or above. Okay. And if you fail the test, what's the
15 consequence of that? You just take it again?

16 A. You get disqualified for that for -- I think it's a week,
17 until you retake the test and pass it.

18 Q. But if you fail that test, do they send you back out to Gas
19 City to take some sort of a practical class or anything?

20 A. I don't know. I never failed.

21 Q. Congratulations.

22 A. Thank you.

23 (Laughter)

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Any other questions?

25 MR. WALLIS: I like the (indiscernible).

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Take that.

2 BY MR. EVANS:

3 Q. So let's go back to when you arrived on scene. You know, we
4 have a drawing that -- I'm just going to -- I can't show you. I
5 don't have it handy. But we have -- for the 3519 address, which
6 is this right here, we have a series of bar holes that were
7 done --

8 A. 3515, you mean? The green?

9 Q. Oh, that's right.

10 A. Yeah, that's 3515.

11 Q. I'm blind without my glasses. Yeah, 3515. Okay. We have a
12 series of -- we know that there were a series of bar hole tests
13 done in this area. Series means there's a bunch of them, like
14 eight or nine. Every one of them was like nothing, right?

15 A. Around the house?

16 Q. Yeah.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Yeah. So if there's -- if there was a fire and you know that
19 there was something perhaps related to gas -- I mean, if you've
20 done two or three tests and it comes up zero, you keep on going?
21 Is that your training?

22 A. It's company procedure we go perimeter of the house for a
23 fire.

24 Q. And every how many feet?

25 A. Every 5 feet.

1 Q. And if you came up with all zeroes on that, you know, with no
2 readings, did you kind of question your meter, perhaps, with there
3 being other leaks in the area?

4 A. No.

5 Q. So after this 3515 testing was done, did you do additional
6 testing with the same meter and actually find gas?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And where was that?

9 A. The leak at 3519.

10 Q. Okay. So you did the perimeter test of 3515, all zeroes.
11 And then when you went to 3519 with the same equipment, you were
12 able to find gas?

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. How about -- were you testing 3527 as well?

15 A. I can't remember.

16 Q. Okay. But just for the record, you're confident that after
17 the 3515 testing was done, your memory's --

18 A. Yeah, I remember, I remember writing up that leak right
19 there.

20 Q. And that was after you did --

21 A. Yeah, I found that, I found that leak, and I got in the truck
22 and started doing my sketches and writing leaks up, and Juan and
23 David went down the alley and bar tested and they were coming back
24 to me with the results and I was just putting it on the paper.

25 Q. Okay. So then we had, on 3527, we had another -- did you

1 test 3527, by chance? Did you do the testing for that at all?

2 A. I believe so. I can't remember. I know they went down the
3 alley. I didn't specifically -- I mean, I didn't -- I kind of
4 stopped after 3519. I stopped bar testing and the other guys used
5 their equipment.

6 Q. And do you know who was actually doing the bar hole on 3527?

7 A. That I don't know.

8 Q. Okay. And there are a series of finds of leaks along the
9 alleyway directly behind this house. Those are your finds? If
10 they were like right in here, would those be your discoveries?

11 A. The one that I found was 3519.

12 Q. Just -- that's all that you can recall?

13 A. And they came back with me. We found another leak on the
14 edge of the property line at some other house. I don't remember
15 which address, but we found a leak there too.

16 Q. Okay. As far as what was happening that night and with
17 leaks, let's just say in general in your experience, was this kind
18 of like, oh, this is a normal night, or this is crazy because this
19 is more than I've ever seen in one night, as far as leaks go? Or
20 was this extremely unusual or was it just routine?

21 A. Just routine. Every once in a while, we get called out to
22 help assist bar testing.

23 Q. But for that night, you didn't have any irregular quantity of
24 leaks compared to what you've seen in your career at Atmos?

25 A. No, sir.

1 MR. EVANS: Okay. That's all I have.

2 MR. PARKER: This is Michael Parker. I've got potentially
3 one or two follow-up questions.

4 BY MR. PARKER:

5 Q. To expand upon what Roger was saying, you all were going
6 through and bar hole testing, and you specifically found a leak at
7 3519. To go and talk about the actual bar probe that you all were
8 using, do you know roughly what the length of the bar probe is
9 that you had on you when you were going through and doing that?

10 A. I think 3 -- 3 or 4 foot.

11 Q. Three or 4 foot?

12 A. I didn't measure it, but it's about that long. Maybe that
13 long.

14 Q. About that long?

15 A. Maybe 3½ or 4.

16 Q. Does there happen to be potentially, if there's a need for
17 one that may go through and reach farther than the one you usually
18 have on you, is there one available for you all to go through and
19 use that may go through and reach to a greater depth that you all
20 could get?

21 A. Yes, I -- yes, I heard there is.

22 Q. You've heard there is? Do you know about how many there are?
23 Or you just heard in a rumor that you have one?

24 A. I heard of people using it.

25 Q. You've heard of people using it, but you never got it and

1 used it yourself?

2 A. No, sir.

3 Q. No? Okay. Were you able to go through and verify somehow --
4 because you mentioned that you were going through and you were
5 using the maps that you all had, either from the preloaded ones or
6 from the FieldSmart that you stated, where they were located at,
7 was there anywhere or any information that you all had to
8 determine what the depth of the main was?

9 A. No.

10 Q. You all had no information? You all had to figure that out?

11 A. Typically they're about 3 to 4 foot deep.

12 Q. Typically 3 to 4?

13 MR. PARKER: Those were the follow-up questions I had.

14 MR. EVANS: Okay.

15 MR. COLLINS: Jim Collins, Railroad Commission of Texas. No
16 questions.

17 MR. EVANS: Rachael? Darren?

18 MR. LEMMERMAN: Yeah, I have -- yeah, I have another
19 question.

20 BY MR. LEMMERMAN:

21 Q. You mentioned that you've seen Flame Packs being used. Was
22 there any Flame Packs out in this area being used at the time?

23 A. I don't know.

24 Q. Okay. When was the last time you seen one being used? Do
25 you remember?

1 A. Maybe 2 months ago, maybe? Month and a half.

2 Q. Okay. How about prior to the house explosion?

3 A. Maybe 4 days after. Before?

4 MR. TOBIN: Before.

5 MR. WALLIS: Oh, before? I don't know. Just see them every
6 once in a while.

7 BY MR. LEMMERMAN:

8 Q. Do you have any idea why they get used sometimes versus not
9 being used?

10 A. Just they pick up a smaller percentage of gas.

11 MR. LEMMERMAN: Okay. Thank you.

12 MR. EVANS: Ms. Rachael?

13 MS. GUNARATNAM: No. No questions.

14 MR. EVANS: This is Roger Evans.

15 BY MR. EVANS:

16 Q. In your training, do they discuss, with CGIs, the fact that
17 there are variable lengths of probes to be used?

18 A. Say that again?

19 Q. In your training, your online training you take for the CGI
20 operation, do they talk about the probe length, that there are
21 variable lengths of probes to be used?

22 A. You mean by the --

23 Q. The wand --

24 A. The CGI probe or the banger bar probe, the one that makes the
25 hole?

1 Q. No, the CGI probe.

2 A. Is there variable lengths? I can't recall. I don't know.

3 Q. Okay. So in this training when they give you, you know, this
4 basic stuff, how do they -- I mean, how do they explain the depth
5 of the pipe? I mean, I know that, you know, every -- most every
6 gas company in the country, they're going to say 3 or 4 feet is
7 where the main is. But that's not always the case, correct? It
8 could be much deeper --

9 A. Um-hum.

10 Q. -- or it could be --

11 A. More shallow, yeah.

12 Q. -- it could be more shallow, right?

13 A. Um-hum.

14 Q. Okay. So how do you know, if you don't know the depth of the
15 pipe exactly, that you're going to get a reading?

16 A. What do you mean a reading?

17 Q. You know, of --

18 A. A depth reading or --

19 Q. No, a gas reading. If the pipe is down here and it's 7 feet,
20 let's say, where the pipe is, and you're probing up here, you're
21 not going to get a reading, right?

22 A. I can.

23 Q. The likelihood would be lower, I would imagine.

24 A. I don't know. That's just hard to picture that.

25 Q. But as far as what -- when you go out there and you're

1 training, do they say determine the depth of the pipe first before
2 you even start? Is that part of the training?

3 A. I don't remember.

4 Q. Okay. Thank you.

5 MR. EVANS: Okay. That's all I have.

6 MR. LEMMERMAN: I have an additional question.

7 MR. EVANS: Okay.

8 BY MR. LEMMERMAN:

9 Q. This is Darren Lemmerman. When it comes to bar holing, do
10 you know if you're bar holing over the pipeline or within 2 feet
11 of the pipeline, does any part of your training tell you keep
12 yourself from driving the bar hole through the service line or
13 main by knowing its location?

14 A. That's just --

15 Q. Not to (indiscernible).

16 A. Just go down easy. Yeah, that's never happened to me. Just
17 typical training -- I mean, common sense, you don't -- if you feel
18 something down there, you're not going to keep on going through
19 it.

20 MR. LEMMERMAN: Okay. Thanks.

21 MR. EVANS: Anyone else, any questions?

22 Okay, that completes the interview. Thank you very much.

23 We're off the record.

24 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

25

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 Joshua Wallis

ACCIDENT NO.: PLD18FR002

PLACE: Dallas, Texas

DATE: June 6, 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.


Eileen Gonzalez
Transcriber