

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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

* Accident No.: PLD18FR002

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Interview of: MARK COMBS, Captain
Dallas Fire-Rescue

Dallas Fire-Rescue 35
Dallas, Texas

Monday,
February 26, 2018

APPEARANCES:

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I N T E R V I E W

(8:54 a.m.)

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2
3 DR. JENNER: Good morning. My name is Stephen Jenner and I'm
4 an investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board out
5 of Washington, D.C. Today is February 26, 2018 and the time is
6 8:54 a.m., Central Daylight Time. We are currently at the Dallas
7 Fire and Rescue Station 35. The address is 3839 Walnut Hill Lane
8 in Dallas. And we are here in response to the house explosion on
9 Espanola Drive in Dallas that occurred on February 23rd, 2018.

10 And we will be talking this morning with Mr. Mark Combs.
11 Before that, I'd like to go around the room and have everyone here
12 introduce themselves and, if you would, just state your name,
13 spelling, your title and who you're with.

14 So, we'll start to the right. And again, my name is Stephen
15 Jenner, S-T-E-P-H-E-N, J-E-N-N-E-R. I'm a human performance
16 investigator with the NTSB.

17 I'm Rachael Gunaratnam, R-A-C-H-A-E-L, G-U-N-A-R-A-T-N-A-M.
18 I am a hazmat investigator with the NTSB.

19 MR. PADGETT: My name is Ted Padgett, chief of staff, Dallas
20 Fire and Rescue, Ted, T-E-D, Padgett, P-A-D-G-E-T-T.

21 MR. COLLINS: Jim Collins with the Railroad Commission of
22 Texas.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you spell your name, please?

24 MR. COLLINS: J-I-M, C-O-L-L-I-N-S.

25 MR. MURDOCK: I'm Phillip Murdock. I'm Director of

1 Engineering and Compliance for Atmos Energy. P-H-I-L-L-I-P,
2 M-U-R-D-O-C-K.

3 MS. COLLETTI: Alex Colletti, A-L-E-X, C-O-L-L-E-T-T-I. I'm
4 an accident investigator at Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
5 Safety Administration, part of the USDOT.

6 MR. COMBS: Mark Combs, M-A-R-K, C-O-M-B-S. I'm a captain
7 with Dallas Fire-Rescue.

8 INTERVIEW OF MARK COMBS

9 BY DR. JENNER:

10 Q. We explained earlier that we're here in response to a fire
11 and explosion incident of a residential house. I understand that
12 you were involved in that and some other incidents that occurred
13 prior to that, other houses.

14 A. I was on scene at two out of the three incidents in question.
15 The initial one that came in on the 21st, approximately 11 minutes
16 before 0600 hours, respond as the first-arriving truck captain.
17 And then, the third incident, on the 23rd, that came in at
18 approximately 6:30 and I was the incident commander for the first
19 12-hour operational period on that one.

20 Q. Terrific. Okay. Great. We were -- we'll ask you about
21 those two incidents. Beforehand, if you could just tell us about
22 what you do and a little bit about your background. When did you
23 first get started in this line of work and walk us through your
24 current position.

25 A. Sure. Was hanging out at the fire station as a kid. It was

1 a combination, part paid, part volunteer department. And I found
2 I had an interest in the profession. I got on with Dallas Fire-
3 Rescue in 2000, and currently I'm a captain with Truck 43 on C
4 shift. And I'm also involved in our officer development program
5 providing education for officers in the department. And then,
6 occasionally, like most members, I ride up at a higher rank
7 capacity from time to time. And so, I was performing the role of
8 battalion chief on the third incident.

9 Q. Can you tell me a little about -- have you had any formal
10 classwork or training in some of the areas that you're responsible
11 for covering now?

12 A. Oh, absolutely.

13 Q. If you can hit some of the high nails for that.

14 A. As far as being a company officer, all of us are trained to a
15 certain operational level for state requirements. When it comes
16 to things like hazardous materials, most of us are only operating
17 on awareness level, you know, because our specialty teams will
18 have higher level of certification. Essentially, when it comes to
19 some of those elements, our job is to make sure to request the
20 appropriate specialties when we come across those things and get
21 them on scene.

22 As far as incident command, you know, I've taken, gosh, a ton
23 of those classes. And I probably couldn't name half of them for
24 you right now, but, you know, ICS-300, 400, 500, 900, things of
25 that nature that would allow us to manage these type of incidents

1 that are multiagency, multijurisdictional, and try to work with
2 them in a, you know, a unified command structure.

3 Q. And how long have you been in your current position?

4 A. Going on 5 years.

5 Q. Okay. If you can tell me about your day as best as you
6 remember on the 21st. I guess you were at the station and you
7 received some notification.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. I'll just have you walk me through that.

10 A. The call came in close to relief time. It would have been
11 towards the end of our tour. And we got dispatched for a
12 structure fire. It didn't come in as an explosion. It came in as
13 a structure fire. And the address was 3527 Durango Drive.

14 And we were the first-arriving truck on the scene. There was
15 at least one room fully involved in the back of the house with
16 fire extension through the attic and coming out of the roof. It
17 presented a little bit out of the ordinary, because typically for
18 fire to come through the roof, usually, you would expect much more
19 structural involvement before that occurred. When we got there,
20 it didn't take long for us to realize that it probably had been
21 some sort of -- we leaned towards gas explosion, because it looked
22 like the roof was actually blown off, not burnt through. It had
23 broken out most of the glass in the house and had knocked down the
24 sheetrock, blown the sheetrock down from the interior of the house
25 down into the floors. So, cutting off the gas became one of the

1 primary initiatives of the truck on that fire, to make sure that
2 we had gas cut off to the structure.

3 Engine 43 made entry. It did have, I believe -- and I'll
4 have to get someone else to confirm this, I believe we did have
5 burn victim on location that was transported with that fire.
6 Engine 43 made entry and was able to extinguish the fire at the
7 back of the structure, which looked like an add-on portion, and
8 then, in the attic. So, it's very -- that is not typical for
9 sheetrock to be knocked off the ceiling. That's something that
10 normally we have to pull down. And that had happened throughout
11 every room of the house, even rooms that didn't have fire
12 involvement. So, we felt like it was some sort of explosion that
13 would cause a concussive reaction throughout the structure. There
14 also was no indications of it being, like a drug lab or people
15 storing propane in the home or anything like that.

16 Now, on that incident, I had a previous obligation to teach
17 120 lieutenants the next morning, and so, I was relieved pretty
18 quickly on scene and cut loose. And so, when it comes to what
19 some of the other arson investigators' findings were on the
20 scene -- in normal circumstances, I would have been there for the
21 duration of the incident. I don't know what their findings were,
22 you know, after we made our initial conclusions.

23 Q. When you approach a house in this type of state and you make
24 a conclusion that it's gas, do you -- is your approach different
25 in how you put it out and --

1 A. From an operations standpoint --

2 Q. Yes.

3 A. -- and actually how we extinguish it?

4 Q. Yes.

5 A. Typically, if we have a ruptured gas line, we try not to --
6 we try to extinguish what's being exposed by that fire so that it
7 doesn't get worse, but we want to cut off the gas, not extinguish
8 it, because then we have a leak. And if it finds additional fire,
9 we could have a secondary explosion. So, it does change things
10 slightly, and that's why cutting off the gas was such a high
11 priority, you know, to get to the meter and get it cut off so the
12 guys can extinguish it and not have additional gas leaking into
13 the structure.

14 Q. Were you able to do that --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- without incident?

17 A. We were, yes. And on that fire, you know, particularly
18 because of the age of the neighborhood, the date of the structure,
19 you know, the initial fire didn't seem like anything remarkable.
20 It did seem accidental in nature, and, you know, just something
21 that wouldn't be uncommon for that age of a home, particularly the
22 fact that it had -- it looked like an add-on. You never know if
23 people, you know, filed permits or did stuff like that when
24 they --

25 Q. Right.

1 A. -- make structural changes. And so, sometimes we see those
2 type of things after people modified a home.

3 Q. Is that anything you noticed in this case?

4 A. It appeared to be. You know, some of these things we notate
5 or, you know, they're not conclusive. You know, as far as the
6 operations side of our fire department, for example, we can make
7 an educated guess that maybe it was gas. It certainly looked like
8 it was. But it's our arson investigator's job to confirm those
9 suspicions. We give them what we think happened and what we saw
10 and what we did much like I'm doing for you all right now.

11 Q. Sure.

12 A. And then, they perform an investigation to see if that's
13 correct.

14 Q. So, I think you mentioned earlier that a report was made, but
15 you're not familiar with the details of that report?

16 A. The arson investigator's report, correct. Yes.

17 Q. And who's in charge of doing that? Is there --

18 A. Their call signs are 684 and 685, and that's just an
19 assignment. Like, if you call up Battalion 7 that I'm riding
20 today, you're going to get whoever is riding that assignment. So,
21 I couldn't tell you definitively who those people were on that day
22 on that shift --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- but typically, they're captains in the Arson Division,
25 occasionally a lieutenant riding -- that are trained to perform

1 that job function.

2 Q. I'm sorry, if you may have mentioned any residents who were
3 at the house at the time? If you mentioned that, could you repeat
4 if you saw any residents or anyone you had talked to.

5 A. I didn't talk to the residents. I had specifically seen one,
6 I believe, and I may be able to find it in these run notes. I
7 believe that there was a person transported for burn injuries on
8 that initial fire. We'd have to confirm that, but I think that
9 occurred. We'll see here. Does that --

10 Q. Second degree burns --

11 A. Second degree burns on the hand. I thought so. And it looks
12 like that would have been Rescue 43.

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. And I apologize, some of my information, after I departed,
15 I'm not aware of exactly what occurred at that point. That's why
16 I can't tell you more about the arson investigator's findings.

17 Q. Do you know the name of the person, the arson investigator
18 who we could talk to and who would have those details?

19 A. I'm sure we can get that for you.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have that here.

21 DR. JENNER: You do, okay.

22 BY DR. JENNER:

23 Q. So, the beginning, your hunch was it was gas related and then
24 there's a period where you're taking action to turn off the gas --

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- and continue to fight the fire. Was there anything from
2 your time until you departed to make you think it was anything
3 else but gas?

4 A. No. You know, I was able to look inside the structure. I
5 mean, obviously, we understand that we're making educated guesses,
6 and so, it's our job -- you know, obviously, I cut off the gas.
7 That doesn't mean it couldn't have been something else. And so,
8 you know, we have to look through the house. You know, one, we
9 have processes of performing primary and secondary searches to
10 make sure all potential victims are out. Two, we have a process
11 to make sure that all the fire's been extinguished. Going through
12 the home, I didn't see anything that would indicate an incendiary
13 device, you know, like a propane tank or, like, you know, if
14 somebody, you know, spilled gas. Usually those type of things,
15 you would have other evidence. If there's an accelerant used, you
16 can almost always smell it or kind of taste it in the smoke.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. So, I didn't see anything that would indicate anything other
19 than the gas. And when we cut off the gas and we extinguished the
20 fire, that solved the problem.

21 Q. Okay. If you can educate me a little on procedure-wise. So,
22 you come to the conclusion that it's gas related. Now, from that
23 point on, is there any process where you have communications with
24 the gas company?

25 A. We request them out on scene.

1 Q. At what point do you do that?

2 A. You know, it's very common, even if we don't believe the gas
3 is an issue, when we have structural damage that could compromise
4 not only the structure but the gas lines themselves, utilities in
5 general, electric and gas. It's very common that we request them
6 both out for any structure fire.

7 Q. And when is that request made?

8 A. There's not a definitive time, but it usually is when we're
9 starting to get control of the scene, when we start to -- there's
10 not much that they can do on an active incident when we're still
11 fighting the fire, because we'd have to put them in the hazard
12 zone sometimes, you know, depending on the situation. But it's
13 not unlike us calling an electric company to pull a meter on a
14 home that's been compromised or disconnect from a pole when a home
15 has been compromised. It's pretty standard.

16 Q. So, in this case, was a request made?

17 A. Do you know the answer?

18 MR. PADGETT: That would have been more by the battalion
19 chief that day. Obviously, he's on the truck company, so, while
20 he's doing operations, that would be after the fact. It will be
21 on that run sheet that he has there.

22 Mark, if you can find it, great. If not, we'll have the B
23 chief pull his notes.

24 DR. JENNER: And just for the record, if you could identify
25 yourself.

1 MR. COMBS: Atmos was notified --

2 MR. PADGETT: Oh, I'm sorry, I'm Ted Padgett again.

3 DR. JENNER: Okay.

4 MR. COMBS: Atmos was requested at 0600 and 34 seconds.

5 BY DR. JENNER:

6 Q. On what date?

7 A. It looks like they were requested at 0600 hours. And it
8 looks like both Oncor and Atmos were requested at the same time.

9 Q. And that was requested by who?

10 A. Well, I wasn't there and I can't say definitively, but that
11 is a function of our command post, so either the battalion chief
12 or his command tech, which is his drive. And usually the command
13 tech handles most of the radio communication at the direction of
14 the battalion chief.

15 Q. Okay. So, you had departed the scene before either one of
16 those arrived.

17 A. I had left the scene before Atmos or Oncor had arrived to the
18 best of my knowledge. I didn't see them.

19 Q. We'll follow up on that with someone who was still on scene.

20 A. Sure.

21 Q. But if you could walk me through, in other similar incidents,
22 have you been on scene when the gas company has arrived?

23 A. Absolutely.

24 Q. If you can just walk me through what the process is, they
25 arrive on scene, and what type of communications do you have?

1 A. Typically, I mean, if it's -- if the scene isn't suspicious
2 in nature, and when I say suspicious, suspicion to us it was
3 intentional. We don't really look at suspicion of, you know, was
4 there something done by a utilities company that would have caused
5 this. That's kind of out of the scope of our expertise. But
6 typically, we request them and we ask them to cut off the
7 utilities. And occasionally, we may give them additional
8 information, you know, about the damaged area or maybe we want it
9 cut off to adjacent homes if there was exposure to that house or
10 something like that. And by exposure, I mean damage from the
11 original incident.

12 Q. So, again, we'll talk to someone who was there when either
13 one of the companies arrived. In terms of, you know, response,
14 was there anything unusual, abnormal that occurred on this day or
15 was it fairly routine?

16 A. It felt fairly routine, you know, as the initial event. Like
17 I said, it isn't uncommon for modified homes or older homes to
18 have, you know, lines that have been changed or damaged or older
19 appliances. And so, there wasn't really, you know, and I know
20 this sounds abnormal, probably, for the average citizen, but an
21 explosion or part of a roof coming off, that sounds fairly
22 remarkable, but it really didn't feel very remarkable, because it
23 was a singular event at that time.

24 DR. JENNER: Terrific, thank you very much. That's the
25 questions I have. I'm sure other people will have, so we'll go

1 around the room to my right. Just introduce yourself.

2 MR. PADGETT: This is Ted Padgett again. I think Captain
3 Collins, he discussed with you when he was on Truck 43, but the
4 incident that was actually on Espanola, he was actually the acting
5 battalion chief that day. I think he would be able to answer a
6 lot of the questions you had. I think he was confusing that with
7 incident 1. If you want to know about the injury where we had the
8 fatality, he was the first on the scene. He was there throughout
9 and would have been able to engage with the gas company.

10 DR. JENNER: I'm sorry, I should have made it a little
11 clearer. We'll just talk about the Wednesday incident first, and
12 then we'll go to the second incident.

13 But everything you've told me thus far is the first incident.

14 MR. COMBS: Everything that I was commenting, responding to,
15 I was answering about the 21st.

16 DR. JENNER: Terrific. So, we'll ask questions about that.
17 Then I'll go back and ask about the second one.

18 MR. COMBS: Sure.

19 MS. GUNARATNAM: Great. I just had a few questions. Sorry,
20 this is Rachael Gunaratnam, NTSB. I just have a few questions
21 about --

22 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

23 Q. So, you arrived, you said, the first truck, Engine 43 --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- arrived 10 minutes, 11 minutes before 6:00 a.m. or that

1 you guys received the call 11 minutes before.

2 A. Let me go back and look at the call sheet. We were assigned
3 at 5:50. Our arrival time was 5:54.

4 And I apologize, on your initial line of questioning, there
5 was something else that indicated to us that it was an explosive
6 incident and not a fire incident. The initial radio report of the
7 first engine on scene reported a lot of smoke, no visible fire,
8 okay? The truck arrived very quickly after that, and I could see
9 the house where the event had occurred and there was smoke, no
10 visible fire. But the wind picked up and I guess, maybe, some
11 fire -- residual fire in the attic found the ignition source or
12 the gas line again, and it quickly flared up and we had a lot of
13 fire showing. That part right there is not typical. Typically,
14 if you had that point of a fire, it would be constant. And it
15 looked as though the explosion almost blew out the fire
16 temporarily, and so, there was very little visible fire initially
17 and then, when wind conditions changed and it found the ignition
18 source again, it lit back up in an impressive nature. So, that
19 was another initial indicator that this was not a typical
20 structure fire.

21 Q. And who reported that? Who reported that the -- where the
22 smoke --

23 A. I made a second radio transmission --

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. -- that we did have heavy fire in the back, because after the

1 initial radio transmission of Engine 43, conditions had changed,
2 and they changed in about 20 seconds.

3 Q. Okay.

4 MR. PADGETT: This is Ted Padgett again. Walk them through
5 how a structural response, how we report out size-ups, who takes
6 command and all, because I think that will clarify some of the
7 things that they're asking.

8 MR. COMBS: Okay. So, on a regular structure fire response,
9 you're going to get three engines, two trucks, two battalion
10 chiefs, and if it's a working structure fire, we arrive on
11 location and we verify that we do have an active incident. Then
12 we'll get an MICU ambulance or what we call a rescue. Typically
13 speaking, because the engines are smaller than trucks and there's
14 more of them for a response area, they typically tend to get there
15 first. So that was very typical that the engine would have
16 arrived before the truck.

17 And so, they make what's called a size-up report. It
18 generally includes very basic information, like where they're at.
19 We are at the listed address. What type of structure it is, and
20 its use, right? Is it a single-family dwelling that's been
21 converted to a candy shop or is it a single-family dwelling that
22 is a home? And then, what our critical factors are. Typically,
23 it's critical factor number 1, do we have an active incident? Do
24 we have a fire? Confirmation that we have a fire. They try to
25 announce where the fire is and then what our exposure issues are,

1 where the fire's going, and then what their initial actions are
2 going to be and what they need from incoming companies.

3 In this case, the initial engine company's initial actions
4 were investigation, because they couldn't see the fire. They
5 couldn't verify that it was the actual address we were dispatched
6 to. All we had was a street covered in smoke.

7 I arrived shortly after them. Let me look at the call notes.
8 Engine 43 arrived on scene at 5:53. And Truck 43, which would
9 have been me 5:54. And we were actually only about 30 seconds
10 apart. And in that brief period of time, from the time I rolled
11 up and their initial report of no fire showing, I had my windows
12 rolled down. You could feel a change in wind direction or a
13 pickup of wind, and then an impressive re-ignition of the
14 structure, or at least the parts of the structure that had fire
15 damage.

16 MS. GUNARATNAM: Thank you.

17 MR. COMBS: Does that help?

18 MS. GUNARATNAM: Yes.

19 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

20 Q. So, you arrive at 5:54, and you went to turn off the gas.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You did that --

23 A. I did that myself, because I -- when I get on scene as a
24 second-arriving company, the first-arriving truck officer, of a
25 higher ranking officer than the initial engine company, most

1 times, so, I'll take command. So, I took command of the scene.
2 And because of how the fire was presenting, we typically always
3 cut off the gas at any working structure fire, but it became
4 priority number 1, because they were making entry in the
5 structure. They already knew they had one victim. They had an
6 obligation, not only to extinguish the fire, but to do a primary
7 search and make sure nobody else was in the home.

8 So their actions were typical for those type of
9 circumstances. At 5:00 in the morning, people are normally in
10 their beds, right? So I have an obligation to do at 360 of the --
11 that's walk around the structure and make sure there's no other
12 hazards or issues or things that need to be communicated to the
13 interior companies, and then, in the process of doing that, I cut
14 off the gas.

15 Q. So you cut off the gas. And how long did it take to
16 extinguish the fire?

17 A. Not long at all. They had what we call a knock-down on the
18 fire probably within 60 seconds. I made a radio transmission to
19 Dan Plintay (ph.), who was riding the seat on Engine 43 and told
20 him that he still had fire extension in the attic above them, and
21 they had that put out in probably another minute and a half. So,
22 other than some just residual spot fires and some fire that was
23 underneath, there appeared to be some fire that was underneath
24 some floor board. They had control of the fire very quickly.

25 MR. PADGETT: With out-taps.

1 MR. COMBS: I tell you what. You help me and I'll -- sorry,
2 Chief, and try to find some of those things for me.

3 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

4 Q. Yeah, I believe you guys actually write that down on your
5 report, right? Like the fire --

6 A. Well, it's not quite like that. We'll make a radio
7 transmission back to channel 1. So, we operate on a fire ground
8 channel, okay, which is, you know, just -- it only broadcasts in a
9 small area. And so, there are certain communications that happens
10 in the fire ground that's tactical in nature and have a certain
11 benchmark events. We've performed a rescue. We have -- you know,
12 that would be a benchmark event. We have a primary search and
13 all-clear for the structure, so we believe we've got everybody
14 out. That would be a benchmark event. Fire under control. Some
15 people -- some departments call it that. We call it an out-taps,
16 so tap out the box. That would be a benchmark event that would be
17 recorded on channel 1. And then, channel 1 keys it in and gives
18 it a timestamp. Is there a delay there? Maybe --

19 Q. Right.

20 A. -- from the time it takes someone to keystroke, but it's
21 going to be pretty close to the time that the event occurred.

22 Q. So, I was wondering if you could just -- I know you explained
23 it a little bit about the fire itself, the nature of it. So, when
24 you arrived on scene, what was the first thing you noticed about
25 the fire?

1 A. About the fire?

2 Q. Yeah.

3 A. Well, when I first arrived on scene, it didn't appear to be
4 much fire. It was just -- but the volume of smoke indicated that
5 we had something that, you know, obviously, something had
6 occurred.

7 Q. So, you saw smoke first.

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. Okay. And then, after that?

10 A. Yeah, it had appeared as though -- for us, there's a lot of
11 reasons where you could have heavy smoke and not much fire. You
12 could have a fire that's what we call vent limited. It was very
13 aggressive, and then because the structure was closed up and it
14 couldn't breathe, it starts to peter out. It's produced a lot of
15 smoke, but at that point, you don't see much visible fire.

16 A house that's missing part of its roof shouldn't peter out,
17 right? It has plenty of oxygen. It should do what we call free
18 burn, and continue to burn until it runs out of material to burn
19 or we extinguish it. So, that is not typical to have, you know, a
20 big hole in the roof and not have a fire that's in a free burning
21 state. You know, I'm not a fire investigator, but as a career
22 firefighter, it appeared as though the explosion had knocked the
23 fire out itself and then re-ignited when the gas continued to
24 bleed out.

25 Q. Sure. And you guys didn't have to break any windows or

1 anything.

2 A. A lot of the windows were knocked out.

3 Q. Already.

4 A. And like I said, the concussion of the explosion had knocked
5 the sheetrock down from the ceiling. If you do an investigation
6 of the home, the actual compartments that were involved in fire
7 are a small piece of the footprint of the home. Most of the
8 home's compartments were not involved in fire. But the sheetrock
9 was knocked down in every room.

10 Q. And this was a two-level house?

11 A. No, ma'am, single story.

12 Q. Single story.

13 A. But when I say add-on, it looked like it had been added onto
14 in the rear.

15 Q. Oh, okay. Right. Single story. And where was the gas
16 meter, exactly?

17 A. In the alley.

18 Q. In the alley.

19 A. Right. And so, all of the incidents that are involved share
20 an alley. They're all on a stretch of Durango and Espanola that
21 are the cross streets to the west are Larga, and the cross street
22 to the east is El Centro. And so, the houses on Durango that were
23 affected were on the north side of the street, a backup to that
24 same gas line, and the house on Espanola was on the south side of
25 the street that backed up to that same gas line.

1 Q. Okay, so I'm done asking questions about the incident. I had
2 a question about the general procedures about with responding to a
3 natural gas incident, and your request -- when you guys request
4 the gas operator for their assistance, is that in your procedures
5 itself to put in a -- like to request the gas operator when --

6 A. If it's appropriate for the incident, yes. But you also got
7 to understand that although it looks like in a post-fire -- you
8 know, from my standpoint -- I can't speak for our fire
9 investigators, and I don't want to because I don't know what their
10 report said. But although it looks like that the cause of the
11 incident was gas related, that was not what we had classified as a
12 natural gas call. It was a structure fire. And so, we respond as
13 such, right?

14 So, for us, when we receive a natural gas call, specifically
15 a lot of times there's construction in the area and they know that
16 they've dug into a line and they call us. You know, most of that
17 is accidental. It's small of a gas odor. It's a carbon monoxide
18 detector or faulty appliance, stuff like that. But when we arrive
19 and we do have a set of procedures, that deal with a gas-related
20 call, all these incidents came in as structure fires. You know,
21 so that, for us, we would deal with the gas component as a
22 secondary issue to the initial response.

23 Q. Okay. All right, so you have procedures for how to respond
24 to a gas odor call, which are separate, right?

25 A. Right. And I don't know, because I haven't pulled the run

1 data, but I don't know that we've responded. I have not
2 personally responded to any gas odor calls in the neighborhood,
3 you know, around the same time period as these incidents. It
4 doesn't mean they hadn't occurred, but I haven't responded to any.

5 Q. Right, okay. Great, thank you. And, oh, sorry, about the
6 February 21st incident, how many fire staff personnel responded?

7 A. So, we respond three engines. This is an initial structure
8 fire response, what we call a single-alarm response. Three
9 engines, two trucks, and all of those apparatus typically are
10 staffed with four, no less than three members. So, somebody could
11 have been off on a brief period of leave or something like that
12 where somebody would be riding short with three members. I don't
13 know that that was the case on any of these runs, but you're
14 looking at three to four staffing on each apparatus. Battalion
15 chief's vehicles and the rest of the ambulances or rescues respond
16 with two members. And so, you would have had two battalion
17 chiefs' vehicles and one rescue, all initial one-alarm responses.

18 MS. GUNARATMAN: I think I'm done.

19 DR. JENNER: Great. Chief, do you have any questions?

20 MR. PADGETT: No, sir. Again, this is Ted Padgett. We can
21 get you, as he has the run sheets, and it will list all of the
22 personnel that were actually assigned on that particular day.
23 Also, our MOPs, SOPs on how we handle gas leaks, gas and the odor
24 and/or utility notifications on box responses as delineated. And
25 then how, if that escalates, how hazmat is involved, et cetera, et

1 cetera, so, I have nothing else for him.

2 DR. JENNER: Yeah, we appreciate those documents.

3 MR. COMBS: And just to differentiate the initial two
4 responses from the third one, we'll probably need to verify that
5 the names listed on the response document are correct, because
6 what made that one a little bit different is that it came in at
7 shift change. And so, I don't know that anybody on scene had
8 time -- we have to go in and update the computer, manually put
9 into the computer who's riding for that day. And that call came
10 at 6:30 in the morning. That probably hadn't occurred. So, I
11 would suggest that I could do that for us, Chief, or figure out
12 somebody to make sure that the ride data is correct.

13 DR. JENNER: Thank you, anything else?

14 Mr. Collins?

15 MR. COLLINS: One quick question, just for clarification.
16 This is Jim Collins, Railroad Commission.

17 BY MR. COLLINS:

18 Q. Once it was noticed that gas was involved, and the roof had
19 come off, was a gas detection meter employed to detect if there
20 was still gas remaining in the structure at all?

21 A. I did not.

22 MR. COLLINS: That's all, thank you.

23 DR. JENNER: Mr. Murdock?

24 MR. MURDOCK: Phillip Murdock, Atmos Energy. I don't have
25 any questions.

1 MS. COLLETTI: Alex Colletti, PHMSA. I've only got a few for
2 you, and they're mostly procedural, because I'm not familiar with
3 fire departments. So, forgive me if I ask really stupid
4 questions.

5 BY MS. COLLETTI:

6 Q. First thing, when you talk about transporting a burn victim,
7 I'm assuming you mean transporting to the hospital, correct?

8 A. To a burn facility, not just any hospital, to a hospital
9 that's capable of treating burns.

10 Q. Okay, great, thank you. In terms of you actually shutting
11 off the gas, are you going to the meter and turning it off?

12 A. To the meter. That's -- you know, our hazmat team may have
13 some alternative methods for plugging lines. We carry on all
14 apparatus for a line that is torn by the residential size line to
15 the house from the meter. Most truck companies carry a plug kit,
16 expansion plugs in order to plug the line. But in this instance,
17 those weren't really appropriate remedies. Cutting off the gas at
18 the meter was the only thing that -- I mean, that's our standard
19 operating procedure is to cut it off at the meter.

20 Q. That makes sense.

21 A. And as long as we can access it to do that and there's no
22 damage to the meter, for us, at that point, we've managed that
23 issue. And it's now an Atmos issue. So --

24 Q. Thank you.

25 A. -- we didn't have any indication that there was anything

1 wrong with the line feeding the meter, no visible damage to the
2 meter. It looked like a problem from, obviously, in the
3 structure.

4 Q. And those expansion plugs that you were talking about, that's
5 just standard equipment for you guys. That's not -- you know, if
6 they had called it in as a gas complaint, that's not something you
7 would have had to go get and then put it --

8 A. It's something that years ago was pretty standard practice
9 for truck companies to use. I would say that probably in recent
10 years we've moved much more to a specialty team, hazmat response
11 to deal with torn or ruptured lines. But certainly, you know,
12 there's a lot of things -- you know, we consider ourselves a
13 modern fire department, a multi-hazards entity. But we've always
14 been that thing. It just was always handled by the truck company.
15 But now, we have a lot more specialty training, specialty teams
16 and stuff like that that we haven't always had in the past. So,
17 we utilize them when it's appropriate. On the 23rd, we utilized
18 the heck out of it.

19 Q. In terms of, you know, you mentioned that the gas company
20 used to be kind of slow and stuff, I've worked with a couple of
21 folks that the gas company and the fire department work really
22 well together in terms of training. Is that something that they
23 provide to the entire Dallas Fire and Rescue or is that really
24 hazmat-specific?

25 A. I haven't done any co-training with the gas company.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I think the only training, I believe, that I've ever done
3 with any utilities company was that there was some electric
4 vehicle training that was offered for free when they started
5 putting in some of the charging stations.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. And I set it and I went and took a training class. But it
8 wasn't -- that wasn't something that everybody in the fire
9 department too. So --

10 Q. Okay, that makes sense. And I've just got one more and then
11 I'll hand it back over. In terms of the notification process, and
12 if you're not the right person to ask, just feel free to tell me.
13 You said, I have at 0631, Atmos was requested on scene. Who does
14 that? Is that the battalion chief? Is it the first on scene?

15 A. Well, and I know this is language, but language is important.
16 Our command acts as a team. So, when we say the command issued
17 that, you know, it was either the BC or his command tech, but
18 typically speaking, most of the communication on scene is face to
19 face between the BC and the command tech. And then the command
20 tech manages the regular traffic and actually issues the request
21 back to 660, our dispatch center. So, that's typically -- I'm not
22 going to say in all cases, but that's typically how that occurs.

23 Q. Okay. And command tech, is that someone that's on scene --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- assisting the battalion chief?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Great, sorry. Like I said, I'm not familiar at all
3 with the setup --

4 MR. PADGETT: And again, this is Ted Padgett. And then, that
5 call is made to our dispatch center downtown who has the ring
6 down. That's who actually makes the contact with the specific
7 utility companies, whoever it may be.

8 MS. COLLETTI: Okay.

9 MR. PADGETT: So, they are just contacting our dispatch,
10 which is based in the city hall in the basement, the bunker as we
11 call it. And then, they reach out to the respective parties. So,
12 our command techs and/or chiefs or anyone else at the scene,
13 they're not physically picking up the phone and calling them.
14 That is done by the dispatch downtown.

15 MS. COLLETTI: Which makes a lot of sense, because you guys
16 are a little busy at that point.

17 In terms of, and you might be the wrong person to ask, but
18 when dispatch calls Atmos, do you know who they're contacting and
19 how that's done?

20 MR. PADGETT: I couldn't tell you that. I can get who they
21 call. We have the numbers they call. Typically, it's their
22 emergency support center, and that is a regional deal. They have
23 their main office down there off of Oak in central Dallas, and
24 that's typically who we engage with.

25 MS. COLLETTI: Thank you, very much, Captain.

1 MR. COMBS: Sure.

2 DR. JENNER: I'll just look around the table, see if there
3 are any follow-up questions for this incident. No, no, no.

4 Is there anything that we didn't ask you that you think would
5 help our understanding of the first incident that we're talking
6 about?

7 MR. COMBS: Not off the top of my head. But if I think about
8 it, I'll be sure to bring it up.

9 DR. JENNER: Okay. Thank you. Well, we're going to put you
10 on overtime now.

11 MR. COMBS: Okay. You want to move on to the 23rd?

12 DR. JENNER: We'll move on to the 23rd.

13 BY DR. JENNER:

14 Q. And you can just similarly start your day and tell us how you
15 got notified and take it from there.

16 MR. COMBS: Well, this one's probably going to be a much
17 larger discussion, so can we take, maybe a 5-minute bathroom
18 break?

19 DR. JENNER: Oh, absolutely.

20 (Off the record.)

21 (On the record.)

22 DR. JENNER: We're back on the record. It is 9:50, and we'll
23 continue our conversation.

24 BY DR. JENNER:

25 Q. We were transitioning over to the incident that occurred on

1 February 23rd, and we'll have you walk us through that.

2 A. Okay. February 23rd, I was opening up at Station 35. I was
3 riding Battalion 7. So, riding up was battalion chief. And the
4 call came in, literally, as I was carrying my gear from my truck
5 to the battalion chief's vehicle. So, myself and Phillip Biabo
6 (ph.), he is the regular command tech and driver for Battalion 7,
7 got en route to Espanola.

8 Now, immediately, we knew that this run was different. I say
9 different, that's not a fair characterization. We knew it was
10 important, because I had the original structure fire, gas-related,
11 on the 21st. I have been informed via text message from another
12 captain on another shift of the second incident on Durango on the
13 22nd. And so, now I knew -- I knew where Espanola was and I knew
14 -- I could see from our map that it was in close proximity to,
15 almost directly across the alley from our original incident that,
16 let's just say, my initial inclination was this was going to be a
17 long day.

18 I don't remember if Phil and I actually talked about it, but
19 I do know that the second ride battalion chief who operates as our
20 safety officer, he and I had a, right away, a conversation of
21 we're not leaving this scene until we know definitively how big
22 this is. Because he was aware of at least one of the other two
23 incidents, and we didn't know conclusively, but we had a high
24 degree of suspicion that they were related. And pretty quickly,
25 we knew we were going to evacuate at least that block area after

1 we gave control of the initial customer service delivery issues
2 related to the injured parties in the house.

3 So, we're en route to that scene. I'm listening to the size-
4 ups. First-up engine company was Engine 43. First-up truck was
5 Truck 43, which is the crews that I normally supervise. They made
6 a good size-up of structure that was -- that had exploded, and no
7 visible smoke or fire. And there weren't any -- there was no
8 indications of any fire conditions at all, no smoke conditions,
9 but a huge concussive explosion that had compromised the entire
10 house. I'm sure you all seen pictures of it.

11 My initial concerns were twofold. One, how many people we
12 have injured, and are they out of the structure. And two, how big
13 an area, ultimately, is this going to affect. In other words, we
14 were very concerned about gaining control of the utilities beyond
15 just cutting off a meter, and how far -- how big an area do we
16 need to be concerned about.

17 The initial decisions of the initial companies, Engine 43,
18 Truck 43, and the other responding units were excellent. They had
19 already requested additional ambulances to deal with all of the
20 injured persons. They were already performing CPR on the 12-year-
21 old girl in the yard. And they were able to give me confirmation
22 that everybody was out of the structure. So, that -- for an
23 incident commander, that's great news, because when you have a
24 structure that's compromised, that's a very difficult operation to
25 put people back into it. So, to get confirmation that all the

1 citizens were out, and then to be able to verify that from the
2 family members themselves and the neighbors was a good feeling.

3 They had a really good handle on the emergency service, you
4 know, aspect of the people that were injured, and kind of setting
5 up a perimeter around the house. They had even followed our
6 procedures to a T. When we have a gas line issue, we want to put
7 a charged hose on the ground, even though there wasn't active
8 fire. They had followed our procedures and addressed that and
9 were prepared for any sort of other, you know, escalation of the
10 incident. I gave them a directive, once I had enough companies
11 there to manage the EMS concern and the transport of those
12 patients, to go ahead and cut off the gas from the meter to that
13 house and the two adjacent homes.

14 Now, one of the things that was unique about this is that
15 even though we put out a request for an Atmos representative, we
16 had Atmos crews on scene that I believe had been working through
17 the night. I don't know that definitively, but I knew we had
18 crews on scene as early as when we arrived there down Larga. And
19 so, what I was able to do -- you know, our safety officer's job is
20 to provide scene safety for citizens and firefighters and just
21 make sure that -- sometimes we operate in an aggressive nature in
22 order to mitigate an incident, right? But to make sure that we're
23 taking the right safety precautions in order to do that. Well, my
24 biggest safety concern at that time was how far-reaching is this
25 problem? And so, we initially gave the order to evacuate the

1 homes from Larga to El Centro on the north side of Durango and the
2 south side of Espanola. But I had no idea if that was sufficient.
3 And so, what I asked him to do was to find the highest-ranking
4 Atmos representative on scene and start trying to get some better
5 information about what they're doing. You know, is it working?
6 How far reaching is this?

7 So, when we got an Atmos representative back to the command
8 post -- he did that and did an excellent job really of managing
9 that role with Atmos for the remainder of the day, or at least for
10 the initial 12-hour operational period. And that's Battalion 9,
11 Chief Clumpner was performing that role.

12 We got an Atmos representative there and we had -- we'd been
13 having some heavy rains and they said they were having difficulty
14 getting to the cutoffs. They thought they could cut it off at
15 both ends of the block, but they were having to sump out water out
16 of manhole covers in order to get down there and make that happen.
17 So, that, to a certain degree, I think, escalated our or confirmed
18 our feeling that we needed to evacuate the area because they
19 weren't able to confirm that they had control of that area.

20 And it -- you know, Chief Clumpner asked them to get some
21 confirmation from higher level supervisors, because what we were
22 getting was speculative information and not definitive
23 information. So, we'd asked, is it just this line? You know, we
24 might get a shrug or just an I don't know. Well, I don't know
25 doesn't really provide a safety factor for us that's comforting.

1 So, at this point in time, even though that was our initial
2 exclusionary zone where we wanted to get everybody out and try to
3 provide a measure of security to that area, and of course this is
4 a process. We have to get PD units in place. We got streets with
5 barricades and we got DART buses out in case people need to
6 shelter in place or transportation. You know, we also didn't know
7 how -- okay, this is where we're starting. How far is this going
8 to go?

9 And so, one of the things I requested are 684, 685, which
10 Chief told you all is our arson inspectors, arson investigators.
11 Is I asked them if they could get some additional resources on the
12 scene. The neighborhood is predominantly Spanish speaking. And I
13 wanted our FP&I, which is Fire Prevention and Investigation unit,
14 to canvass the neighborhood and basically informing everybody of
15 what was going on. To the best of my knowledge, that hadn't been
16 something that -- unless you just witnessed an Atmos worker in the
17 neighborhood, I don't think there was any, you know, initiative to
18 notify the neighborhood that there was a gas problem.

19 And I wanted to get the word out to the other streets,
20 because I felt like, one, we're starting to inform the
21 neighborhood of what's occurring. Two, if someone else had an
22 incident in their home that they didn't report, that's our
23 opportunity to find out, someone just told us they had a problem a
24 block north of us or somebody just told us they had a problem a
25 block south. And I might be able to get information from the

1 neighborhood that maybe I wasn't getting from Atmos or that they
2 weren't reporting to 911, right? So, initially, that was our
3 plan.

4 Now, as far as a completely accurate time line, it's hard for
5 me to say definitively. In our profession, we deal with something
6 that we label as time compression. I managed the first 12-hour
7 operational period. I was there 12 hours, but it felt like two.

8 But at some point, we started to get information from Atmos
9 of we think this is going to be bigger. So, at that point, our
10 initial exclusionary zone was essentially 2 city blocks on the
11 south of our site. We eventually, our secondary exclusionary zone
12 took that all the way out to Marsh and then north 2 blocks and
13 south, I believe, an additional three. It ended up being close to
14 10 city blocks. Ended up being approximately 300 homes, two
15 apartment structures, with approximately 250 units in the two
16 apartment structures, and then a business on the southwest end of
17 the exclusionary zone. And even though that process is laborious
18 and takes a lot of resources, because of our lack of definitive
19 information about the scope of this, we felt like it was
20 appropriate. In other words, if there was going to be a fourth
21 house that had an incident, we didn't want anybody to be in it.

22 Once the exclusionary zone had gone out to Marsh -- and I
23 would pause for just a second. Sorry, our lights go out when
24 nobody moves.

25 Q. Yeah, yeah.

1 A. I found out later or at some point during the day that the --
2 and I don't know that this report is 100 percent verified, but if
3 it is, that the school across the street had actually requested
4 Atmos out the day before to get readings at the school, which I
5 thought was very forward-thinking of the school administration.
6 And obviously, once they heard about the evacuation of the
7 neighborhood, they were having questions about what was happening.
8 Considering, you know, the neighborhood was problematic from an
9 evacuation standpoint, this is so porous, you'd evacuate an area,
10 but until you get a strong police presence, people can bleed back
11 in. For that reason, we stayed there for almost 12 hours to have
12 several sweeps of the neighborhood until we knew we had it locked
13 down.

14 But the school is not porous. The student body is very
15 closely monitored and controlled. It's a building that has
16 controlled points of entry. People don't walk into schools, come
17 out of schools, you know, on their own anymore without being
18 admitted. And so, it was an easy place to control and verify that
19 you had everybody evacuated. And the school was a great partner
20 in that. DISD was a great partner in that.

21 Our feelings was is that there weren't -- even though we had
22 a large geographical area that we were evacuating, there weren't
23 very many people that we actually evacuated, because it was
24 daytime working hours. People were at work. Most of what we had
25 to do was secure the area and make sure that when they got home

1 from work, they weren't able to get back in unless it was safe.
2 The school, however, was the most densely populated structure in
3 our immediate response area. And so, we felt like that although
4 it may have been precautionary and it was appropriate to evacuate
5 the school as well. It ended up probably being a smart move,
6 because at the end of my 12-hour operational period, as I was
7 handing off the incident to somebody else, Atmos gave us reports
8 that they had lines they wanted to dig up on the east side of
9 Marsh, which the school was, and that they had lines they were
10 concerned about in that area.

11 And so, that became our exclusionary area No. 4. And I say
12 that -- my numbering system is just that. When you're on scene,
13 you come up with your own numbering and labeling system, using,
14 you know, NIMS. But our initial exclusionary area was the north
15 and south side of that same block that had the gas line, you know,
16 one city street. The secondary exclusionary area drew it out to
17 Marsh, right, on the far east side, and then 2 blocks north -- 3
18 to 3½ blocks if you count the apartments, south. The school would
19 have been the third exclusionary area that we evacuated, and then
20 we established a fourth exclusionary zone on the east side of
21 Marsh that evening around 7:00. So -- or 1900 hours.

22 You know, the incident continued to grow. And that was
23 really our concern most of the day is trying to get reliable
24 information, trying to get a handle on, you know, how far out we
25 go with this thing. But the main thing is, is that, you know,

1 with all the responding -- I say all the responding, most of the
2 people who responded there, a lot of them responded to the initial
3 call, so everybody understood that it was -- at least on the scene
4 with DFR, that we're not leaving until this is managed.

5 Q. Okay, thank you. You stayed there for 12 hours?

6 A. I personally did, yes.

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. When I left at the end of my 12-hour tour, our 12-hour
9 operational period, I responded to one of the shelters that we set
10 up. And it ended up not being a shelter in the sense that we
11 housed people there. We called it a shelter, but it ended up
12 being more of a processing center. We had Red Cross there. We
13 had Atmos representatives there to give hotel vouchers and, I
14 guess, prepaid debit cards for incidentals, food and stuff. But
15 it was certainly a place for people to go to get information and
16 resources. But we had set up initially, three of them. One of
17 them ended up being the primary, and that was the Walnut Hill
18 Recreation Center. We also had opened Bachman Lake and -- I can't
19 remember the third off the top of my head.

20 But our concern earlier in the day, you know, was that this
21 is not an issue for shelters right now, but at 5:00 it will be,
22 when people get off work. And so, we were trying to put
23 mechanisms in place early where they had resources. They had
24 water. We had a Dallas Fire/Rescue medical team there in case
25 anybody had needs. When we moved the command post out of the

1 exclusionary zone, initially we're at ground zero, right, the
2 explosion of the house. Once we had evacuated the neighborhood
3 and we felt like we had a strong police presence and all the
4 entrances barricaded with a DPD officer, there was really no
5 reason for us to keep the command post there. We relocated so
6 that we could be essentially co-located with Atmos. So, we
7 relocated where their command trail was to increase our face-to-
8 face communication. And that was close to the Carnival Food Store
9 parking lot on Webb Chapel Road.

10 When we did that, we knew that we'd have to anticipate
11 residents wanting to get back in the neighborhood when they got
12 off work, and that's, in fact, what happened. So, we started
13 bringing companies, fire companies, down in 4-hour intervals to
14 either use fire apparatus or fire Suburbans. And what we would do
15 is, if people needed medications, a pet, essential items, right,
16 then we would go back into the exclusionary zone on their behalf
17 and retrieve those items for them. And then, those people were
18 directed to go to the Walnut Hill Rec Center, what we were calling
19 our shelter, but it was more of a processing unit, in order to
20 gain access to more resources.

21 So, when I was relieved by Battalion Chief Mike Meador, who
22 is not on duty today. He was hired back riding Battalion 4. I
23 went up to the rec center to verify that we had an appropriate
24 level presence of Dallas Fire/Rescue members, and to see if there
25 were any problems. We were having a little bit of a communication

1 lag. DFR was telling people go to the rec center, that's where
2 your resources are. You know, folks, and understandably so, they
3 didn't want to go. They wanted to go to their home. And so,
4 telling them that you can get a hotel voucher and get a prepaid
5 credit card for incidentals, unless someone's handing that to you
6 face to face, they don't want to go to the rec center and get it.
7 So, I retrieved an Atmos public relations rep and brought her back
8 to the command post to help facilitate that conversation with the
9 citizens, so that maybe their needs could be met at both
10 locations, the command post and the recreation center.

11 Q. You had mentioned it's a predominantly Spanish-speaking
12 neighborhood. How did you deal with any potential communications
13 issues?

14 A. Well, fortunately, we have some bilingual members in the
15 department. Also, I asked our PD rep to identify who she had as
16 part of her own team, you know, they facilitate that. It just
17 creates a little bit more communication. You know, sometimes you
18 have to get on the radio and ask for help. We also used a
19 language line. And so, as a last resort, our members could get on
20 the phone with a translator.

21 And also, some of our members are just creative problem
22 solvers. They might use Google translate on their phone. And
23 although that's not perfect, it's a means to an end of trying to
24 basic, pretty simple information. You know, the main thing was,
25 is that we wanted them to understand that, you know, our interests

1 were their safety. And when you have a fatality right down the
2 street, it is a little bit easier to have that discussion, because
3 people take it seriously. So, it wasn't a huge impediment.

4 If someone was absolutely just refusing to leave, then we
5 used DPD, our police, as a resource in that instance, because we
6 don't, as fire personnel, we don't physically force or restrain
7 anybody. We ask. But we didn't have any -- we had some folks who
8 were upset, but no -- nothing out of the ordinary. Everything
9 went pretty smooth. Most residents knew more about it, in some
10 cases, than anybody else, because they talk to each other.

11 Q. Let me go back, a couple questions that came to mind. You
12 had mentioned you saw the girl receiving CPR.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Did you see any of the other family members getting medical
15 assistance?

16 A. Yes. Obviously, the initially your response units are -- we
17 only get one ambulance as a standard response. And one of the
18 things I was very pleased with is that the first on scene
19 companies had already requested additional medical support. But
20 we do what's called field triage. And that's where the most
21 injured individuals get the most attention first. And the other
22 ones get, you know, some basic BLS or basic life support. If they
23 are, what we call ambulatory, able to walk around and talk on
24 their own, they may be hurt, but they're in pretty good shape
25 comparatively speaking, and that's the situation we were in, is we

1 had one critical patient and four ambulatory patients. So,
2 everybody was transported and relatively quickly, but the
3 priority -- medical priority at that time was the 12-year-old
4 girl, CPR.

5 The scene priority at that time was fencing and
6 stabilization, making sure that we didn't have anybody else in a
7 compromised structure, right, accountability for the family that
8 was in the home, gaining control of the scene so that we could
9 start to set up a perimeter, and then executing a reasonable
10 evacuation effort in an organized manner. So, that's how it
11 progressed and it just grew throughout the day.

12 You know, Atmos, I believe, gave us the best information they
13 had at the time. I know that they had air monitoring equipment,
14 and they told us at that time that they weren't getting any
15 readings. I never heard until later in the evening any positive
16 readings for gas until we started expanding the exclusionary zone.
17 We also had our hazmat team that responded to liaison with Atmos,
18 and then also to go get readings at the school, because Atmos
19 wasn't there. So, we had an on scene presence that had the
20 capability for gas readings in the neighborhood. And we felt like
21 that, you know, that initially that was -- you know, we had the
22 ability to gather data within the neighborhood. We didn't have
23 the ability to gather the same data at the school. And so, we
24 initiated a hazmat response to the school to get gas readings over
25 there.

1 Q. So, I think you characterized the four other family members
2 as ambulatory, they were walking, able to walk?

3 A. To the best of my knowledge. That's what I observed. I
4 spoke to one or two of them, because I wanted to reconfirm, you
5 know -- and that's one of the things you have to -- I don't know
6 what it sounds like. It's not a matter of distrust. It's a
7 matter of checks and balances, okay? If I get a report that
8 everybody's out, it's my job to verify that report. The best
9 person to verify it from is family members.

10 So, you know, we were able to verify that. I told the
11 command techs to transmit on channel 1 that we had an all-clear on
12 the initial structure. There was slight damage to the adjacent
13 houses, so fairly early on, I asked companies to knock on doors
14 and make sure that not only the people were out of the houses, but
15 the gas was cut off and that nobody in the adjacent homes were
16 injured.

17 We kept a pretty strong -- I say pretty strong. After our
18 injured persons left, we still kept a medical presence on scene
19 for the remainder of the day, because, as we evacuate, we have no
20 idea if we have people that have pre-existing health conditions.
21 Maybe they're invalid, immobile, et cetera. And so, being able to
22 address those needs was something that continued to be important
23 throughout the day.

24 Q. I didn't get the names, two names if you can help me out
25 with. Battalion 9 chief?

1 A. Scott Clumpner. And he's Battalion 9, C Shift.

2 Q. Clump --

3 A. C-L-U-M-M-P-E-R, I believe.

4 Q. And he had a conversation with a high-ranking Atmos person.

5 A. Well, he did a great job with me -- for me. He was the
6 second responding battalion chief. And how this works in our
7 organization is is that you respond two battalion chiefs. Whoever
8 gets there first is the incident commander. Whoever gets there
9 second is the safety officer.

10 The biggest safety issue I had throughout the day, obviously,
11 was the gas. And so, to partner him with the people who had the
12 most information about that was important. And so, throughout the
13 day, he managed most of the conversation with Atmos
14 representatives. When I was lucky enough to get one come by the
15 command post, then I might have had some discussion with them.
16 You know, and that's where I got the information about them
17 sumping water and we're trying to figure out, is it just this
18 line. I really wanted, you know -- it's one of those
19 conversations you don't have once. You have it 50 times
20 throughout the day. Have we gone far enough? Or do you have any
21 more concerns? Do you have the -- show me where these lines are
22 cut off.

23 And so, once Scott was aware that there was a growing Atmos
24 presence and that there were maps and things like that available,
25 then he was the guy that was gaining that information on our -- on

1 DFR's organizational behalf. And he did a great job of that.

2 Q. You had discussed that at one point they were canvassing the
3 neighborhood to talk to other neighbors and to see if --

4 A. That was our initial approach, because when we started with
5 exclusionary zone 1, which was a fairly small area, you know. You
6 want to do -- it's always a balance when you do stuff like this
7 between doing what's prudent and then, you know, eating up every
8 resource and displacing every person in the world. Where do you
9 stop? We could stop at Oklahoma.

10 You know, so you really want to try to make decisions that
11 are based on accurate data and then maybe go a little bit further,
12 right? Which is what we -- a good example of that would be the
13 school. We had reached Marsh. We didn't know if there were any
14 problems on the other side of Marsh, but if there were, most of
15 the people in the neighborhood are gone, but all those kids are in
16 that school, so let's not wait to find it out later. Let's deal
17 with it now, and that would have been a precautionary measure that
18 ended up probably being justified once we found there were lines
19 that were compromised across Marsh.

20 So, you know, I wanted a public awareness effort, not only
21 because I thought it was important to provide that service to the
22 residents, but also I wanted a mechanism of gaining information I
23 didn't have. People have problems all the time. Oh, my stove
24 didn't turn on, but they don't think about it. They reignite the
25 pilot light. But maybe there was air in the line or something

1 that caused that. I don't know. But if somebody had those
2 incidents, and it didn't result in a 911 call, this is my
3 opportunity to find out and push the borders of our exclusionary
4 zone.

5 Before we really accomplished that sort of informational
6 campaign, Atmos had already said, we think we got a bigger
7 problem. So then, we bumped it out to exclusionary zone 2. And
8 instead of knocking on doors to inform people, it was knocking on
9 doors to evacuate. And we did a tiered approach to that. In the
10 fire service, we try to keep our models very simple. And so, if
11 we do a search on a structure, we do a primary one and we do a
12 secondary one.

13 So, we did a primary evacuation to alert all residents, help
14 provide, you know, avenues for them to get out and resources and
15 stuff, and then after we got the neighborhood secured with PD and
16 barricades, then we did a secondary. And that was appropriate,
17 because, like I said, the area was porous and people were able to
18 come back in that didn't know what was going on. So, that was
19 kind of the escalation of events. And it definitely was escalated
20 in real time based on the best information we had from Atmos at
21 the time.

22 Q. During the time that you were there, do you know if any of
23 the conversations you had with the residents if any one of them
24 said, yeah, I did smell gas that day or previous days?

25 A. I didn't have any conversations with residents. At the

1 command post, you're so far removed from that. You're really --
2 you're dependent on other people relaying that information back to
3 you.

4 Q. Right, not necessarily you directly. Did you learn of any
5 residents who said, oh, yes, I had smelled gas?

6 A. You know, we really didn't. And if -- you know, I don't know
7 if that's because it didn't occur at all, no other residents had
8 suspicious issues, or if simply the evacuation took precedence
9 over the fact-finding. If we had had just exclusionary area 1 and
10 it truly was an information campaign to share information, then
11 that might have been something that would have been revealed in
12 the process. But once it becomes an evacuation, the discussion
13 quickly turns to, but I don't want to leave. Or okay, I'll leave,
14 but where do I go?

15 Q. Right.

16 A. And it's a different conversation entirely. So, I didn't get
17 any reports, but I wouldn't say that that doesn't mean that they
18 didn't occur, right?

19 DR. JENNER: Great description. I don't have any questions
20 right now. I'll send it around the room.

21 MS. GUNARATNAM: Yes, thank you. That was very thorough.
22 One thing -- sorry, it's Rachael, NTSB.

23 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

24 Q. I had a question regarding the timings of every -- how when
25 you set these evacuations, exclusion zones. But I'm wondering if

1 maybe what we can do is pull out a map later and then look at --

2 A. We can get an iPad in here and I can show you.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We have maps coming.

4 MS. GUNARATNAM: Oh, you have maps coming? Okay, yeah,
5 because I think --

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They're not here yet.

7 MR. COMBS: Could we take a quick 2-minute break to use the
8 restroom?

9 MS. GUNARATNAM: Sure.

10 (Off the record.)

11 (On the record.)

12 DR. JENNER: We're back on the record. It's 10:26.

13 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

14 Q. So, I wanted to ask when -- after you -- when you arrived on
15 scene and, you know, addressed the victims of the household and so
16 forth, was there any documentation of the house afterwards? Did
17 you guys take photographs?

18 A. Our Arson Division does.

19 Q. Arson Division does that, okay.

20 A. And that's -- you know, that is one of their primary
21 functions is to document and investigate, right?

22 Q. Right.

23 A. As first responders, we're mitigation. And we do what's
24 called after action reports. Primarily, after action reviews are
25 our way of getting better, learning about what we did, and finding

1 ways to improve our performance. And it's an internal education
2 process. But Arson Division documents for a much different
3 reason, right? I mean, that's a litigious process. So, that's
4 kind of the division of things. We look at it from an operations
5 standpoint. Did we follow our policies? Did everybody do -- did
6 we have any problems? Did we have any injuries? Were they
7 preventable? You know, those type of things. And so, that'll be
8 information that you'll be able to get from Arson.

9 Q. Did you finish your after action report?

10 A. No. This one's going to take a while. I'm sure your
11 report's going to take a while.

12 Q. Oh, yeah.

13 A. And unfortunately, and I don't know of any fire department
14 that has mechanisms where that information generates itself,
15 because what we do is not dissimilar to what you're doing. We
16 don't do it individually, but we get together in a room together
17 and we go through, okay, what did you see? What did you do? Did
18 it work? Okay, it worked. What did you see? What did you do?
19 And then we talk about communication. Was the communication good?
20 Were the assignments good? Did we close the information loops?
21 But it's much more from a performance education standpoint like
22 coaching than it is what you all are doing.

23 Q. So, just to back up a little bit, when you first heard about
24 this accident, you started to make connections because of the
25 other previous two incidents?

1 A. Well, our job -- we operate in an environment of compressed
2 time and limited information, right? But we have to draw
3 reasonable conclusions from that information. And so, I'm not an
4 investigative officer, but it's not unreasonable for a third
5 occurrence in 3 days, to think that they are connected. And I
6 feel like it was our responsibility to operate under that premise
7 until we were proven otherwise. And it ended up being the correct
8 premise, right? So, you know, that's -- I think the precautions
9 we took were appropriate, but I think the sequence of events that
10 transpired over the next 24 hours proved that they were
11 appropriate.

12 Q. And you mentioned that Atmos was already out there before you
13 requested them?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And they were on what street again?

16 A. You might want to confirm their exact location with Scott
17 Clumpner.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. The report I got was that they had work crews in the alley
20 and that their equipment was focused -- was located on Larga.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. Which would be to the west, slightly southwest from where our
23 command post was in front of the house on Espanola.

24 Q. So, when you had these suspicions, you know, gas was probably
25 the cause here, do you guys have a gas protection meter on your

1 truck?

2 A. We have the ability on most of our apparatus to read carbon
3 monoxide. And there are some 4-gas detectors from the department.
4 But really, our team that we utilize to -- when it starts getting
5 beyond carbon monoxide readings where we're looking for faulty
6 appliances, trying to figure out if we need to evacuate people
7 from their home, or they have a carbon monoxide detector and they
8 call us to confirm that it's accurate.

9 Q. Right.

10 A. We have a certain set of procedures for measuring carbon
11 monoxide and then making a determination of whether or not we need
12 to red-tag the appliance, that's lockout-tagout process, evacuate
13 the home, et cetera. In a situation like this, Atmos usually has
14 much more sophisticated equipment than we have, with the exception
15 of our hazmat team. And so, with Atmos on scene, it wasn't
16 unreasonable for me to ask them what are your readings. And
17 that's what we did.

18 The problem is, I didn't have an Atmos presence at the
19 school, and so, when we started talking about the possible
20 evacuation of the school, we dispatched our hazmat team to be an
21 on-scene resource to take measurements there, which they found no
22 positive readings. But again, it was a precautionary evacuation.
23 While we had our hazmat team on scene, they did, you know, meet up
24 with Atmos at their, what I would call their command center, and
25 compare, you know, findings. And most of that conversation, my

1 safety officer was the lead on, because that was information that
2 was revoked from the command post. So, that was information that
3 was getting relayed to me through Chief Clumpner.

4 MS. GUNARATNAM: All right, that's all I have.

5 DR. JENNER: Thank you. Chief, do you have any questions for
6 us?

7 MR. PADGETT: No, sir.

8 DR. JENNER: We'll go around the room.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No questions.

11 MS. COLLETTI: This is Alex Colletti.

12 BY MS. COLLETTI:

13 Q. Do you know specifically, maybe not the people's names, but
14 like the titles of the Atmos employees that were on the scene?

15 A. I wish I could provide that information for you, but -- and
16 just so you, you know, really understand kind of how we divide
17 labor, like I don't talk to the press. Jason Evans, our public
18 information talks to the press. But he gives me reports or
19 requests for information. And I talk to Jason Evans.

20 You know, if in the absence of Chief Clumpner, let's say that
21 I had three houses that had exploded and were on fire, Chief
22 Clumpner's role in that instance would be the safety officer for
23 the original explosion of the two exposures. And what I would
24 have done is got on the radio and requested another chief officer
25 to be a liaison and still give me that information. But I would

1 have never left the scene to go inquire myself.

2 And so, my job and my function there was to manage the
3 overarching responsibilities of the incident, and predominantly,
4 the emergency aspect of it where the delegated functions would be,
5 you know, because there wasn't an immediate -- we didn't have
6 crews operating in the house that was destroyed. We had
7 confirmation when the family was out. We had a USAR team, which
8 is our urban search and rescue team, come out. And because it's a
9 part of our procedures, even though we had a confirmation
10 everybody was out, they did a cursory secondary search with
11 thermal imagers to get a secondary verification. And that's kind
12 of what we do. We try to repeat processes to make sure that
13 they're redundant.

14 But all those things become delegated functions. And so,
15 Scott Clumpner -- really the whole day was about gas, right? And
16 so, my greatest safety concern -- he was my safety officer, was
17 the gas. And he, you know, he was responsible for those
18 conversations.

19 So, as far as names, titles -- now, I will tell you this,
20 contact information got written up on our command board so that we
21 could call them by phone, so I have pictures that would have names
22 and phone numbers of Atmos reps, but not titles along with it.

23 Q. Understood. Was there anything about the scene that struck
24 you as unusual or --

25 A. Well, and that's kind of a -- I don't want to be unfair and

1 say --

2 Q. That's a big question, yeah.

3 A. I don't want to say -- it's not a loaded question. It's a
4 fair question, but the thing you have to understand is is that we
5 live in the unusual. We respond to any and everything. Anything
6 from a cat in the tree to a building explosion to involvement fire
7 just with water to everything. And so, I may not be the best
8 meter of was it unusual. We just knew that those are the things
9 we respond to.

10 Now, was this scope -- was this incident larger in scope?
11 Absolutely. Do we typically have, you know, calls that are
12 related? Well, if there's an arsonist, we do, right? And we try
13 to pick up on that. In this instance, there wasn't an arsonist,
14 but it seemed to be several, closely related, gas-related
15 incidents in a very close proximity. It wasn't unreasonable to
16 make that jump that they were related and to try to get a hold of,
17 you know, how far arching this problem really was.

18 And so, I think -- I don't think I'm the only one that felt
19 that way. I would be surprised if every other emergency apparatus
20 that had people that responded to either the first or second
21 didn't go, this is going to be a long day, because we're not
22 leaving this neighborhood until we definitively know that
23 everybody can be reasonably safe. And when I say reasonably, just
24 like any other day.

25 Q. Last question.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. I'm assuming in terms of shutting off the gas at 3534
3 Espanola and the two adjacent houses, same methods, shutting off
4 the meter?

5 A. At the meter. That's the only -- and here's the thing about
6 this also. To the best of my knowledge, this was not a gas line
7 explosion in the alley. These were all -- whatever occurred,
8 occurred in the structure itself from the meter to the house. And
9 so, that is -- and we also shut the meters off at the apartment
10 complexes. You know, the reason we didn't shut the meter off at
11 every single house in the neighborhood is Atmos was giving us some
12 updates that we had -- okay, we got this line on this street shut
13 off and we're working on this line in this street. And that, to
14 me is probably a much better solution than just the meter. But to
15 the initial house, the two houses in close proximity, and then
16 because Atmos was working from that area out, the apartment
17 complexes that we had concerns about, the meters of those were
18 shut off as well.

19 Q. Thank you very much, Captain.

20 A. Oh, you're welcome. I'm sorry I don't have an answer for
21 everything. It's just not the way our command --

22 Q. No, we don't expect you to. I really -- honestly, that
23 answer gave me what I wanted, which was how does the IC work and
24 how do you guys do that. And I didn't expect you to be able to
25 call out -- if you did, then you know everything.

1 A. Well, you know, we try real hard. We practice radio
2 communications. We practice documentation. We have certain
3 processes. And for those of you all who are familiar with NIMS,
4 you know it's simple, but it's -- that's why it works. It's
5 scalable and modular and it just works. You can roll it out and
6 you can reduce it.

7 But really, my job in these scenes is not to be the actual
8 person that collects the information, but the person that makes
9 decisions based on it, right? And then, you know, in that -- I
10 say that I don't operate on an island. My safety officer comes in
11 and tells me here's what I think we need to do. You know, here's
12 my concerns. Here's what I think we need to do.

13 Ninety-nine times out of 100, when you have competent, good
14 people working with you that you execute their plan. But then,
15 it's your job as the incident commander to say how we're going to
16 execute it, get the appropriate resources, make the appropriate
17 notifications, and so, that's just -- we pull information in and
18 then we send directives and orders out in order to accomplish
19 that, you know.

20 Q. Absolutely. One person can't do it all, the whole point.

21 A. And not that it really matters to you all, but I would be
22 remiss if I didn't say several times, we had a really good group
23 of people working that day that really did a good job. I really
24 don't have any complaints with anything, other than, in any
25 situation, you're always wishing you had more information right

1 now. And it just never works that way. You're always at a
2 deficit.

3 So, what else?

4 MS. COLLETTI: Just -- last question.

5 DR. JENNER: You done now?

6 MS. COLLETTI: I'm done, thank you.

7 DR. JENNER: Okay. We'll go around a second time to see if
8 there are any follow-up questions. I have a couple.

9 MR. COMBS: Aren't you supposed to announce your name?

10 (Laughter.)

11 DR. JENNER: Thank you. This is Steve Jenner.

12 MR. COMBS: Thank you, Mr. Jenner.

13 BY DR. JENNER:

14 Q. In most general terms possible, if you can just discuss the
15 duties of an incident officer versus a safety officer.

16 A. The incident officer is responsible for every aspect of
17 incident management, managing the incident. The safety officer,
18 you know, is a growing role with the fire service community. But
19 essentially, they're responsible for trying to be a sounding board
20 and an alert tone for safety issues.

21 So, safety officers, if I'm so focused on incident management
22 and mitigation, which is my job, I might not be seeing or hearing
23 the feedback of something that could be a safety concern, whether
24 it's for our people or for the residents. So, their job is to
25 kind of keep a -- take a step back from the incident a little bit

1 and look at it, you know, through a different lens. Not
2 mitigation, but information and safety.

3 You know, that could be as simple as you're working a
4 roadside accident and you remind your guys, hey, never turn your
5 back to traffic. Always keep your face towards traffic and have a
6 reflective vest on. Or it could be something really, really big
7 like this where I'm at a complete information deficit about what
8 Atmos is doing and where they're at. And that's my greatest
9 concern today, so where would it make sense to put my safety
10 officer? With Atmos.

11 When we evacuated the school, I asked him to go over, and for
12 at least a brief period of time, take a look at that, because I
13 wanted to make sure that that 600 children, you know, that were
14 evacuated, our neighborhood was -- we're getting pretty good
15 reports that we're getting all-clears. Thus my safety issue. I
16 was concerned about the school, so my safety officer went over
17 there to keep eyes on that operation to make sure we didn't have
18 any concerns.

19 So, there is no definitive one place for a safety officer.
20 But unlike a company that's at the task level, they will get
21 assigned to a division or group. A division is a location and a
22 group is functional. Your safety officer is attached to command.
23 They're a part of the command post and the command decision-making
24 process. And if the person is doing their job appropriately, one
25 of your best resources for real-time information. So, they're not

1 stuck at one location. They have the ability to go anywhere in
2 the incident. And he probably was my strongest resource at fire
3 that day. He did a great job.

4 DR. JENNER: Great. Thank you for that.

5 MR. COMBS: Yes, sir.

6 DR. JENNER: That's all I have. We'll continue on to the
7 right, Rachael.

8 BY MS. GUNARATNAM:

9 Q. When did you lift the evacuation?

10 A. I didn't. When I -- so, typically speaking, this isn't
11 always the case, I mean, you can have operational periods -- when
12 I say an operational period I mean that's time that one IC hands
13 over the operation to another incident commander, okay? My
14 operational period spanned approximately 12 hours. I handed off
15 the operation to Chief Mike Meador, who was Battalion 4 higher
16 backed chief that day. And so, he became the incident commander
17 after I incident briefed him.

18 So, we got together at command post. We go over pretty much
19 everything you all got to hear today, but because we speak the
20 same language and there's less clarifying questions, it usually
21 takes maybe anywhere from 10 minutes to an hour. This probably
22 took an hour to go over the synergists, you know, of the incident,
23 how it grew, and then, who's playing what role, what companies he
24 had on scene, what processes were set up in place, going over
25 contact numbers.

1 At that point in time in the command van, we had transposed
2 everything from our command board. You asked about Atmos
3 representatives. We co-located with them so that we didn't have
4 to call them anymore, right? But we had all those contact numbers
5 on the board, any of the, you know, Atmos public relations people
6 that had resources.

7 And I forgot to mention. Fairly -- you asked what was
8 unusual. This does not happen very often. We activated our OEM,
9 Office of Emergency Management. And the reason we decided to do
10 that is that -- and I apologize for not thinking to mention that
11 piece. There were so many things we wanted to get done, like
12 opening up the rec centers, that one phone call just wasn't making
13 it happen. And so, when we activated the OEM, they were able to
14 accomplish all those ancillary, you know, things that we needed
15 done, but they swung a much bigger stick than Battalion 7 standing
16 out in the rain on Espanola Avenue, right? And so, they did a
17 great job of, hey, here's -- they sent out an on-scene presence.
18 We were able to have a discussion in the command post. I told
19 those guys, here's what we're trying to put in place. And they
20 had it done in about 20 minutes when we were told it would take 2
21 hours. So, that really helped escalate things.

22 Q. So, when you say -- what did they do in 20 minutes, exactly?

23 A. Well, and I don't know definitively it was 20 minutes. That
24 may be a little bit tongue-in-cheek. It just happened a lot
25 faster, right. We wanted to have, you know, some rec centers open

1 so we had a place to put displaced residents if they needed it.
2 We wanted to be able to provide medical attention. We wanted to
3 be able to provide information updates. We wanted a little bit
4 better coordination on the public information side.

5 And so, when we activated the OEM, that kicked out the city
6 PIO to assist Jason Evans, our department public information
7 officer. So, he had more help on his end. It just -- all the
8 things we were doing. It didn't make anything new happen. It
9 just really made it happen faster, because we had a whole resource
10 team that managed that. And so, instead of my command techs, the
11 people at the command post having to work the phones to make it
12 happen, they had the Office of Emergency Management working the
13 phones making it happen. And so, that was nice. That was good.

14 Q. So, if I could get a copy of that snapshot of the board. You
15 said you had contacts of all the Atmos -- do you still have it?

16 A. We took pictures, and I think Scott has some and I have some.
17 We'll have to email them and print them off and do that.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. I could show you an example of what I'm talking about.

20 Q. Yeah. You can show me later.

21 A. Okay.

22 MS. GUNARATNAM: I'm done.

23 DR. JENNER: Okay, Chief, anything?

24 MR. PADGETT: No, sir.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No follow-up.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No, sir.

2 MS. COLLETTI: No, thank you.

3 DR. JENNER: Thank you very much for your time and your
4 efforts. We really appreciate you being here and telling us your
5 story. Is there -- same question again, anything else do you
6 think is valuable for us to know for our investigation that we
7 didn't ask you?

8 MR. COMBS: I think most of the stuff of value that we could
9 provide is stuff that we'd have to gather for you, you know,
10 better timeline, some of these run reports like I have, but
11 nothing that I feel like I need to verbalize right now.

12 DR. JENNER: Terrific. Again, thank you for your time and
13 effort.

14 And so, we'll finish up at 10:45.

15 (Whereupon, at 10:45 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


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

ACCIDENT NO.: PLD18FR002

PLACE: Dallas, Texas

DATE: February 26, 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.


Wendy C. Cutting
Transcriber