



# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations

**Interview Regarding Investigation PLD20LR001**  
**Enbridge Inc. Natural Gas Pipeline Rupture and Fire in Hillsboro, KY on May 4, 2020**

Name: William Grimes

Department: Owingsville Compressor Station

Title: Electrical Controls Tech 4

Date of Interview: 05-11-2020

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: \*

\*

ENBRIDGE INC. NATURAL GAS \*

PIPELINE RUPTURE AND FIRE \* Accident No.: PLD20LR001

IN HILLSBORO, KENTUCKY, \*

ON MAY 4, 2020 \*

\*

\* \* \* \* \*

Interview of: BILLY GRIMES, Electrical Control Technician  
Enbridge, Inc.

Via teleconference

Monday,  
May 11, 2020

APPEARANCES:

ALEXANDRIA COLLETTI, Investigator in Charge  
National Transportation Safety Board

ALVARO RODRIGUEZ, Accident Investigator  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

THOMAS WOODEN, Vice President  
Engineering and Asset Management  
Enbridge, Inc.

DANE JAQUES, Attorney  
Steptoe and Johnson, LLP

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I N T E R V I E W

(11:36 a.m.)

1  
2  
3 MS. COLLETTI: We're on the record for the Billy Grimes  
4 interview. Good morning. Today is May 11th, 2020. It is now  
5 11:36 a.m. Eastern Time. My name is Alex Colletti. I'm the  
6 investigator in charge for this accident for the National  
7 Transportation Safety Board in Washington, D.C.

8 We're holding this interview remotely via audio conference  
9 call. This interview is being conducted as part of an  
10 investigation into the Texas Eastern Transmission natural gas  
11 release and fire that occurred on May 4th, 2020, in Fleming  
12 County, Kentucky. The NTSB case number for this accident is  
13 PLD20LR001.

14 This interview is being recorded and may be transcribed at a  
15 later date. A copy of the transcript will be provided to the  
16 interviewee for review prior to being entered into the public  
17 docket. This is your opportunity to correct things that the  
18 transcriber may have incorrectly transcribed; it's not your  
19 opportunity to add and elaborate on things. So if you have  
20 something that's factual that you like to add, during the  
21 interview is the best time.

22 You're permitted to have one other person present during the  
23 interview. This person is of your choice. It can be an attorney,  
24 spouse, supervisor, friend, family member, or nobody at all.

25 Billy, for the record, please state the spelling of your full

1 name, your job title, and who you have selected to be present  
2 during this interview.

3 MR. GRIMES: All right. I have selected Dane Jaques to be  
4 representing me. My full name -- my full legal name is William  
5 Grimes. I go by Billy, and you can call me on this. And the  
6 third question was I am the electrical controls technician for the  
7 Owingsville, Kentucky, plant.

8 MS. COLLETTI: And would you mind spelling your name for --  
9 and you can spell Billy, too, that --

10 MR. GRIMES: Okay. It is William, W-i-l-l-i-a-m, go by  
11 Billy, B-i-l-l-y, last name Grimes, G-r-i-m-e-s.

12 MS. COLLETTI: Perfect, thank you. And now we're going to go  
13 around the call and everyone will introduce themselves. We'll  
14 start with PHMSA and then Enbridge and then last will be Dane.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Good morning. My name is Alvaro Rodriguez,  
16 Alvaro, A-l-v-a-r-o, Rodriguez, R-o-d-r-i-g-u-e-z. I am an  
17 accident investigator with Accident Investigation Division of  
18 PHMSA.

19 MR. WOODEN: All right, Thomas Wooden, T-h-o-m-a-s,  
20 W-o-o-d-e-n, Vice President of Engineering and Asset Management  
21 for Enbridge and also the party coordinator for the investigation.

22 MR. JAQUES: And my name is Dane Jaques, spelled D-a-n-e,  
23 last name J-a-q-u-e-s, and I am a partner with the law firm of  
24 Steptoe and Johnson.

25 MS. COLLETTI: Okay, great. Well, Billy, thank you very much

1 for agreeing to interview with us today. I really appreciate your  
2 time. It's an important task we have to collect the information  
3 we can from your memory of that day. I'm going to ask you to  
4 provide a lot of details for us, as much as you can remember.  
5 Please don't speculate. Just provide what you can remember, but  
6 provide it in as much detail as possible.

7 If I or any of the other interviewers ask you a question you  
8 don't know the answer to, it's completely fine to say that you  
9 don't know. As much as you can give us, the more information is  
10 the better.

11 INTERVIEW OF BILLY GRIMES

12 BY MS. COLLETTI:

13 Q. Before we get started on the day of the accident, though, can  
14 you talk a little bit about your background, where you've worked,  
15 where you -- did you start at Texas Eastern? Did you work  
16 somewhere else before? Have you always worked at the -- as a  
17 station operator? What's your background?

18 MR. GRIMES: I got one real quick question, first.

19 MS. COLLETTI: Fire away.

20 MR. GRIMES: Okay. The investigator for PHMSA at the  
21 beginning, my earpiece -- it sounded muffled, and I couldn't even  
22 get the name or the spelling.

23 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, sure, I can repeat again. I hope this  
24 time it's better.

25 MS. COLLETTI: I think you need to raise your voice a little

1 bit more --

2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

3 MS. COLLETTI: -- Alvaro, too. You're a little softer on  
4 the --

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Yeah, I can (indiscernible). My name  
6 is Alvaro Rodriguez. Alvaro is A-l-v-a-r-o, Rodriguez,  
7 R-o-d-r-i-g-u-e-z.

8 MR. GRIMES: Got it, thank you so much.

9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, you're welcome.

10 MR. GRIMES: Okay. My main background, not starting when I  
11 was a teenager, but I worked at an automotive manufacturing plant  
12 in Georgetown, Kentucky. It was a Toyota motor, motor  
13 manufacturing in Kentucky. It was there that I got my technical  
14 training. I got into a -- I think it was a multi-skilled  
15 industrial maintenance program, which was 3 years of classroom  
16 plus on-the-job training. I completed that in, I think it was  
17 2001 and worked there until 2012. And that is where I put in and  
18 got hired for the electrical controls technician job with -- it  
19 wasn't Enbridge at the time. It was Spectra Energy, but it was  
20 the same company.

21 So I, I had the electrical background before coming down  
22 here. My role down here is pretty much anything that has to do  
23 with electrical, including the whole site lighting, the automation  
24 of our units, all the controls and devices, transmitters, pressure  
25 switches, fire ~~retention~~<sup>detection</sup>, gas detection, just pretty much anything



1 that is electrical or has anything to do with the control <sup>of</sup> ~~or~~ the  
2 station or the turbines is my responsibility out here.

3 I've been doing that -- actually hired in as an entry level,  
4 <sup>our</sup> ~~or~~ kind of title has -- have changed a little bit with Enbridge,  
5 but there's, like, four levels of the technician family. And I  
6 hired in as entry and then, as you get job experience and your  
7 knowledge and on-the-job training, you will sign off to a higher  
8 level of the same position. So I have -- I progressed through all  
9 the possible levels of the electrical control technician, which  
10 with Enbridge is a level four control tech, which is the highest  
11 level you can go. So I have a pretty good knowledge of, of  
12 automation and control of the station.

13 Q. Well, that's great.

14 A. Um --

15 Q. Go ahead. I'm sorry.

16 A. Also --

17 Q. I'm so sorry.

18 A. I, I --

19 Q. I broke my rule. I broke my rule. I broke my rule which was  
20 that no one will interrupt you. I'm so sorry. Go on.

21 A. Okay. So and after I got very comfortable with my position,  
22 I've also trained and then signed off and (indiscernible) to  
23 operate the station, which I can start -- stop and start units and  
24 pretty much most of the things that the operators do here I also  
25 do. And I will -- from time to time, when the operators are

1 unavailable or on vacation, I will actually take the first, you  
2 know, be the first one that gets called out for operational issues  
3 and stuff like that also.

4       And at the time of my training, we were -- don't know about  
5 everybody, but I was -- there's several levels of pipeliner, a  
6 three utility pipeliner and stuff, that before I could get my  
7 first promotion to my level one electrical control tech, we also  
8 sign off on the first two levels of pipeliner. So the pretty  
9 basic levels of pipeliner, but they want anybody who works for the  
10 company to at least have the understanding of some of the pipeline  
11 stuff. So I am a level two pipeliner, a level one operator, and a  
12 level four electrical controls tech.

13       Now you can interrupt.

14 Q.   I was giving it a longer pause there. You've got so much --

15 A.   Okay.

16 Q.   You've got so much experience, I wanted to make sure I didn't  
17 interrupt. I'm so sorry about that. That is my Golden Rule for  
18 interviews, and I broke it.

19 A.   No problem.

20 Q.   I'm so sorry. I haven't done that in a while. So I'm going  
21 to hazard a guess that you're pretty experienced based on that and  
22 you're pretty familiar with, with the station there.

23 A.   Yes.

24 Q.   Okay, good, good. It's good to know. It's good to talk to  
25 someone that knows, that knows what they're doing. I always,

1 always like talking to the right folks.

2 Well, here's the long part -- and I promise I actually won't  
3 interrupt this time -- is I want you to walk me through the day of  
4 the accident from when you first got notification of what had  
5 happened, where you were, how you got notification, how you got to  
6 -- I believe you went to the station? What you did when you got  
7 there, who you did it with, what activities you did to isolate,  
8 what those looked like; don't assume I know anything.

9 Like I said, I worked in measurement for years, but that was  
10 very different than a compressor station. So, you know, artiz  
11 (ph.) and chromatographs are, are a lot different than turbines.  
12 So just talk -- walk me through the basics of everything that you  
13 did in excruciating detail if possible and up through the time  
14 that you were dismissed and went, and went home for the -- for  
15 that day.

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. And now it's you.

18 A. All right. Well, I will say if, if I say something that  
19 confuses you, you -- I wouldn't be mad if you interrupted so I  
20 could explain it immediately.

21 Q. Oh, okay.

22 A. (Indiscernible) the whole thing. It, it may make -- it may  
23 clarify for the next few -- I have a couple (indiscernible) things  
24 that as I'm filling out the letters and numbers that aren't going  
25 to mean anything to some people. So I will try to explain exactly

1 what those are and what they do, but all right. If you're all  
2 ready, I'll start my presentation here.

3 Q. Wonderful. Thank you, Billy, I appreciate that.

4 A. Okay. Monday, the 5/4/2020, it was -- I'm going to start  
5 before with a normal, with a normal day's work and actually went  
6 home little to no overtime. I had gotten home that afternoon.  
7 Pretty sure I mowed my yard. I was sitting on my back patio  
8 talking to my wife in my shorts and Crocs, and 4:46 p.m. -- all  
9 these times are going to be in Eastern. I know the gas  
10 controllers are on Central Time, but all the ones up there on  
11 Eastern, and they could be translated if we need to. But at  
12 4:46 p.m., my supervisor, Bart Johnson, called me and told me I  
13 need to get down to the station; we have a possible rupture.

14 At that time, I turned to my wife and I said, well, I don't  
15 know if this is real or it's a simulation or somebody just called  
16 in, I said, but I've got to go. So I very quickly ran inside, put  
17 on my normal clothing, which are all FR, and put on my work boots  
18 and jumped into my truck and started heading down toward the  
19 station.

20 I live approximately, well, almost dead on 10 miles from our  
21 station. Of course they're back country roads, so it takes, it  
22 takes about 15 minutes to get to work in the morning. So I  
23 started heading out to the garage (ph.), came off my road which is  
24 Highway [REDACTED] I turned onto US [REDACTED] going -- [REDACTED] West. When I got  
25 to the turn on Highway [REDACTED] which leads to our station, I was

1 coming down that road, oh, within -- I think within the first  
2 2 miles I could actually see the flame from the rupture from  
3 Highway [REDACTED] which I was still probably, oh, 6 or 7 miles from the  
4 station. So I knew then this wasn't a simulation. This was the  
5 real deal and more than likely our line.

6 So, at that point, I continued onto the station. There was  
7 probably a little bit faster or greater speed under the urgency  
8 and -- but then, let's see, at 16:55, this was very shortly after  
9 I saw the flames, Bart Johnson called me to let me know that ~~the~~  
10 gas control had shut down all of their units. They were shut down  
11 so -- because I knew, when I'd left that day, I think we were  
12 running either three -- I think we were running three -- either  
13 two or three of our units. Pretty sure it was three units that  
14 were running, so that was important information to me, because I  
15 knew then that I didn't have to shut down the -- any units when I  
16 got to the station. He confirmed they were shut down, and he said  
17 I needed to shut <sup>in</sup> ~~the N-~~ line 10 and 25 as soon as I get to the  
18 station.

19 So, in my mind, that took a lot of the thinking that I had to  
20 do when I get down here. I knew exactly what I had to do, lines  
21 10 and 15 going north, there's four main possible (indiscernible).  
22 We have our line 10 bypass, line 25 bypass, line 10 north block  
23 valve, which we consider our ESD (ph.) valve -- that is one that  
24 shuts in the pipeline to the station -- and line 25 north block  
25 valve. So I had essentially four main tasks to do as soon as I

1 got to the station.

2 At 5:01, I pulled into our station. The down (indiscernible)  
3 very close proximity to, I think it was line 25 bypass valve,  
4 which is located in the yard, so I ran to (indiscernible) bypass  
5 valve. It was closed at the time, and that's normal because the  
6 units were running. When the unit's shut down, it's ~~flipping~~ a  
7 pressure differential on the north and south transmitters, and  
8 when they get within (indiscernible) PSI of one another, that  
9 valve will open automatically. Well, didn't want that to happen,  
10 so because it was closed, I quickly disabled that valve. Then I  
11 walked over to line 10 bypass and same thing, it was closed.  
12 Would have had the command to open if the differential got right,  
13 so it was closed, so I disabled it. This was (indiscernible).

14 And then I quickly walked over to line 10 north block valve,  
15 which at the time, I didn't know -- I knew it was 10 or 25. I  
16 didn't know which it was, but that happened to be the valve that  
17 was closest to me, so I went there first and I closed line 10  
18 block valve and disabled it.

19 At the same time I was closing that valve, Dustin Bailey,  
20 pipeliner in Owingsville, he pulled up close to where my truck was  
21 and he said, well, what do you need help with? So he and I  
22 together walked over to line 25 north block valve, which is  
23 (indiscernible) about 20, 25 feet from line 10 north block valve.  
24 I closed that valve, and at that time, we had isolated the gas  
25 going to the south side of the incident rupture. There was no

1 more gas feeding from Owingsville, just what was in the line  
2 accident.

3 All right. So, at that time, I knew in my mind that, if we  
4 had it isolated from the station side, which was the closest place  
5 south (indiscernible), so I instructed Dustin Bailey to go over to  
6 the south side of the station and close line 10 south block valve,  
7 disable it and then close line 25 south block, south block valve  
8 and disable it. And he went over to do that.

9 And Joey Grimes, the station operator of the station, at 5:12  
10 -- I think I missed a few times. I'm going to go back to when I  
11 closed the, the line 10 north block valve was at 5:04 p.m. When  
12 Dustin, Dustin Bailey and I closed the north block valves, it was  
13 17:05, 5:05. At 5:10 is when I sent Dustin to close line 10 south  
14 block valve, and it closed at 17:10. At 17:11, he closed the  
15 south block valve. We just wanted an added layer of protection  
16 with (indiscernible) to further isolate. We had it isolated. We  
17 were kind of like almost double blocking (indiscernible).

18 At 17:16, Bart Johnson called and requested that I shut line  
19 15 bypass. Line 15 was -- well, before when I went to the  
20 station, I (indiscernible) I knew that I needed to shut in lines  
21 10 and 25. Line 15 was not in service at this time still due to  
22 the Lincoln County incident. The bypass was open. It was just  
23 kind of like a bottle.

24 And Bart was -- told me when he called that line 15 was not  
25 dropping pressure, so we knew that wasn't 15 for the pressure.

1 Line 10 and 25 were the two lines that were dropping pressure, so  
2 that was the reason we weren't focused upon line 15, so -- but it  
3 -- at 17:16, he wanted me to go ahead and close it just to isolate  
4 it in case there was some collateral damage to that line. So I  
5 did what he told me, at 17:16, to shut it. At 17:18, I closed the  
6 bypass and -- (indiscernible) for added protection in case line 15  
7 had suffered any damage due to the rupture.

8 And at 17:15, Joey Grimes, the station operator, he had gone  
9 up to the control room where we have our HMI display that shows  
10 the pressures, and he confirmed that the pressure drop was line 10  
11 on the station HMI. At that time, the -- both pressures were  
12 slightly dropping because we had a -- we were still feeding it,  
13 and as soon as we closed those valves, the pressure went down  
14 quickly on line 10, and it came up very quickly on line 25. And  
15 we knew for sure at that time it was line 10 that, that had  
16 ruptured.

17 And at 17:26, Joey Grimes shut DCO-1, DCO-2, DCO-3, SCO-1,  
18 SCO-2, SCO-3. That was just further isolating the lines. Those  
19 were all lines that will tie either on the south side or north  
20 side of our station. It was -- when I say tie lines together,  
21 that's for operational purposes so we can feed gas from any of the  
22 three lines at the beginning of our five turbines. And this was  
23 (indiscernible).

24 The south side of our station, the valves are labeled SCO-1,  
25 2 or 3. SCO stands for Suction Crossover, but with our reverse



1 flow, they -- either side could be ~~suctioned~~<sup>suction</sup>, either side could be  
2 discharge. So if I say SCO-1, 2 or 3, that is on the south side  
3 of our station. The DCO valves are Discharge Crossovers. Once  
4 there's reverse flow, we can -- they can be suction or discharge.  
5 So the DCOs are always on the north side of our station. So the  
6 DCOs are the ones that are closest to the rupture.

7 And like I said, they were all open. That's how they knew it  
8 was currently running. When the station shut down, those valves  
9 will stay in their last configuration until you start ~~executing~~<sup>a unit</sup>  
10 and go to the configuration you need, so we left -- wanted to shut  
11 those valves just to further isolate that line where, if a valve  
12 or something leaked, we wouldn't be putting more gas where we  
13 didn't want it to go. So that was just for further, further  
14 isolation.

15 At 17:32, I got a call from Bart Johnson. We were talking  
16 about making sure we get everything locked out, that he was  
17 checking on the status of that. At 17:40, I had a call out from  
18 Barry Blevins. I can't remember just exactly what that was about.  
19 It wasn't instruction. It was probably for, for the status of  
20 (indiscernible). At 17:54, I called Joey Grimes, station  
21 operator, just wanted his assistance in the yard. He was still up  
22 in the control room.

23 At 18:16, Joey shut GCI-1, ~~next gas (indiscernible)~~<sup>that's gas cooler</sup> inlet-1,  
24 and at 18:18, Joey Grimes shut gas ~~tool (indiscernible)~~<sup>cooler</sup> bypass-1,  
25 C -- or CGBP-1. Again, that was just further isolating and making

1 sure that this will be our -- with our CSD layout, we're just  
2 making sure that we -- if something was to happen at valve -- with  
3 a valve or something that we were further isolating it from the  
4 other two lines.

5 At 18:25, I completed the lockout-tagout. I actually  
6 installed the ~~lock hookup up through line 10 isolated valve.~~ The  
7 critical valve that we're, we're preventing more gas from going.  
8 I went ahead and got those locked up at 18:25. I sent -- at  
9 18:45, I emailed the lockout-tagout that we'd already had complete  
10 to Ashley Clemens (ph.) and Ross -- can't remember his last name,  
11 so I'm not going to say it, but both of them are, pretty sure, out  
12 of Nashville. They were working on our gas ~~(indiscernible)~~ <sup>handling</sup>  
13 procedure to get it approved so we could do the rest of the, rest  
14 of the work, isolation of the (indiscernible).

15 At 18:58, Joey Grimes and Daniel Lamb (ph.) -- he's out of  
16 Danville Station -- they started blowing lines 15 and started  
17 blowing line 15 down to 50 PSI. Before they started blowing, the  
18 pressure was at 668 PSI. I was, I was watching the station HMI so  
19 I could let them know when it got down to 50. I wrote this down  
20 because I was, I was part of doing that and I was the one looking  
21 at the screen, but Joey and Daniel got the instructions to do that  
22 from someone else.

23 At 18:58, Joey Grimes and Daniel Lamb started blowing down  
24 line 25 to 50 PSI. And these are both -- I'm sorry, these are  
25 both north. We're blowing down the north line to 50 PSI. The

1 idea is to make things safe for firefighters or any kind of  
2 emergency people to get -- to deal with the (indiscernible) that  
3 the lines ~~ward loaded up local Lancaster --~~ when they started  
4 blowing that one down, it was at 641 PSI.

5 At 19:00, I monitored lines 15 and 25 pressure. ~~We might be~~  
6 ~~looking at the HMI to be able to give those questions to Joey~~  
7 ~~Grimes and Daniel Lamb,~~ who were inside our station on the  
8 blowdown valve. We (indiscernible) are inside our, our  
9 (indiscernible) and that's, that's where we're actually blowing  
10 those lines down from.

11 At 19:15, I got a call from Barry Blevins, and he was  
12 requesting that I, that I give him the north pressure reading. He  
13 kind of stated that he needed to know when the pressure was down  
14 and safe enough to where the first responders could get closer to  
15 -- for any possible fires that were still there.

16 At 19:20, ~~Jed~~ <sup>Chad</sup> Powell (ph.) called to check on the  
17 availability of utilities from (indiscernible). This has no  
18 impact on this investigation, but it was on my call log.

19 At 19:45, Barry Blevins called and requested I let him know  
20 when line 15 and 25 are below 50 PSI so firefighters could safely  
21 enter the area. At 20:06, Ashley Clemens called and requested the  
22 lockout lines 15 and 25 bypass valve and also use our, our seal  
23 tagboard as needed. But again, this was an additional layer of  
24 protection. We wanted to go ahead and lockout some, some other  
25 valves that weren't directly tied to it, but we did, did not want

1 them to inadvertently open or change state.

2 At 20:46, Joey Grimes went to the control room to watch the  
3 pressure so I could go out and continue to lockout the additional  
4 valves from the request from Ashley Clemens. At 20:48, I had Joey  
5 Grimes shut RCO-1 from the station HMI. And this was, again, to  
6 further isolate line 10, and we were going to be able to  
7 double-block and bleed line 10 from our station. That was the  
8 only valve that was open out of the one, two -- I think there was  
9 four, about four main valves that we had to shut and block, and  
10 that was the only one that was open at this time, so I had to shut  
11 it so, when the time came to double-block that line, it would be  
12 in the correct position and locked.

13 At 21:10, I finished the additional lock ~~down~~<sup>out</sup> (indiscernible)  
14 on line 15 and 25 (indiscernible) north block valve, and I locked  
15 ~~down~~<sup>out</sup> RCO-1 and DHB-1. RCOs are Reverse Crossovers and DHBs are  
16 Discharge Header Blocks. These are north and south valves. We  
17 have, pretty sure, six RCO valves and six header block valves, and  
18 we're currently in the south flow mode, which all the RCOs are  
19 open and all the header blocks are closed. So, being that the  
20 header block was closed, that's the reason we only had to close  
21 the RCO-1, and that isolated it in our station so we could blow  
22 down ~~the off section~~ to get our double block on line 10 on the  
23 north side.

24 At 21:27, I called and gave Barry the pressures for line 15  
25 was 24 PSI, and line 25 was at 22 PSI on the north end, and I just

1 recorded the line 15 actually had zero PSI at some point. And it  
2 wasn't through me, or I didn't get the call, but they decided to  
3 go from 50 all the way down to zero. So anyway, I just recorded  
4 the time it hit zero -- line 15 hit zero PSI at 21:42. Line 25  
5 hit zero PSI at 21:43. And so that was just -- I have it recorded  
6 in case anybody needed to know.

7 At 21:45, I called Barry Blevins to let him know that lines  
8 15 and 25 were at zero. At 22:07, Joey Grimes and I reviewed the  
9 line 10 isolation procedure and called Ashley Clemens to give our  
10 comment. This was the normal practice when we're ~~running~~ gas  
11 handling procedures. There's usually either one or a group of  
12 people will write the procedures, and they usually send it out for  
13 review to put more eyes on it to make sure that if something  
14 wasn't missed or something wasn't on the ~~(indiscernible)~~ <sup>CSD</sup> or PLD  
15 that they were looking at and just basically just a second or  
16 third or fourth set of eyes. And so that is a normal thing to  
17 happen.

18 So we called him, and at 23:23, at this point, I was looking  
19 at -- and of course, we had many, many, many alarms in our  
20 station, and being a control tech, I have to make sure that we  
21 don't ever leave our station with active, what we call call  
22 attendant alarms. Those are serious enough to where our control  
23 system at Owingsville, our station ~~(indiscernible)~~ <sup>PLC</sup> would signal to  
24 Houston that it will generate a call attendant. And from there  
25 they will call whoever is on call at our station.

1 They'll -- at this point, I started working on trying to  
2 clear all those call attendant alarms, because there's one call  
3 attendant alarm that hundreds of things can be triggered, but if  
4 you have an active call attendant alarm, the next call attendant  
5 alarm won't necessarily trigger a new alarm because that alarm's  
6 already active. So my job, at this point, was to make sure that  
7 all the call attendant alarms were clear, so I put all -- at  
8 23:23, I put all five turbines ~~at the baseload~~, and that will  
9 block a lot of the specific alarms.

10 At 23:36, I -- in the PLC, I ~~force stopped~~ <sup>forced out</sup> several call  
11 attendant alarms so any new alarm will trigger a callout. That's  
12 what I was explaining a minute ago. So 23:37, call from Bart  
13 Johnson to check our progress. 23:47, I called ~~damage~~ <sup>Gas</sup> control to  
14 confirm that they didn't have any call -- active call attendant  
15 alarm, and they said, yes, they were all clear.

16 Now we're rolling into midnight, so I guess this is 5/5 now.  
17 I think I had 5/4 on my sheet. At midnight, I got a call from  
18 Bart Johnson just letting me know when he would be at the station.  
19 At 00:15, Bart Johnson and I removed hydraulic ~~paint fluid~~ <sup>tank plugs</sup>  
20 lines 10, 15 and 25 ~~(indiscernible)~~ <sup>bypass valves</sup> to prevent any leakage from  
21 having any impact on valve movement.

22 At 00:20, I applied our tags from our seal tagboard and any  
23 affected emergency valve that were either moved out of their  
24 normal position or were disabled. And at 00:40, I just put the  
25 (indiscernible) -- put the locks on the turbines, ~~take red~~ <sup>safe/run</sup>

1 switches (indiscernible) and just flip it over and end those  
2 alarms. That was only for keeping the alarms (indiscernible). I  
3 don't have what time I went home, but --

4 Q. Billy, that is great. Thank you very much. That's exactly  
5 the level of detail I was looking for. I really appreciate it.  
6 I'm -- and you did a great job of explaining terms along the way.  
7 I only have a couple of questions on the -- on terms, and I'll ask  
8 those as I get to them.

9 I want to step back to a couple of things along the way, just  
10 ask some clarifying questions, but like I said, that's exactly the  
11 level of detail I'm looking for. I don't get that very often, so  
12 thank you.

13 So you're walking -- you're getting the call from Bart  
14 sending you out to the station, and you know you need to isolate  
15 and you know what lines you need to isolate. And you said you  
16 made the decision to which valves to shut in, which line to shut  
17 in first essentially, just based on proximity. Is that correct?

18 A. Yes, proximity to the truck where I parked.

19 Q. Okay. Now, in terms of you said that the -- on the bypass  
20 valves for lines 25 and 10 were already closed, but you knew to  
21 disable them. How did you know to do that?

22 A. Knowing the control system inside and out. I knew exactly  
23 when the -- when all units go down whichever -- let's see -- we  
24 can run, I think there's, I don't know, 30, 40 different  
25 configurations we can run our station in depending on which units

1 are online. A single unit won't usually use all three lines. It  
2 may use two and then bypass the third line.

3 But when that unit shuts down, or when all units shut down,  
4 at some point we open the bypasses up when we lose differential.  
5 We'll always have differential when the units are online. Was  
6 looking to that point, and I'm almost certain it's (indiscernible)  
7 PSI when the suction pressure and discharge pressure get within 50  
8 PSI that valve will open.

9 Now, the reason they weren't open is because of the rupture.  
10 Of course, didn't know exactly what the differential pressure was  
11 between the two, but I didn't want there to be any chance of those  
12 open back up because that would feed the, the rupture.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. If the correct one didn't -- did not, I didn't know those  
15 lines 10 or 25 -- I know it was one of those two, but I didn't  
16 know which one it was yet because we hadn't isolated it.

17 Q. Right, because 15 was already isolated because of the anomaly  
18 (ph.) work.

19 A. Well, there was -- I think it was -- you know, I just  
20 (indiscernible) two lines.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. ~~In and itself that~~ bypass was open, but it's just like a big,  
23 long bottle. I'm not sure how many miles of bottle, but it was a  
24 non-flowing, static bottle, and the pressure was not dropping  
25 during this event. So we knew it was not the rupture.



1 Q. Got you.

2 A. It (indiscernible) totally skipped (indiscernible).

3 Q. Okay, got you. Okay, that makes sense to me. So, in terms  
4 of shutting down the valves, which valves are you shutting?  
5 Manually, which ones are you shutting in via station controls on  
6 the HMI?

7 A. On the initial four, of course, the two bypass valves, line  
8 10 and line 25, since they were already closed, I isolated the --  
9 I removed the power gas feed from it. I closed that valve so they  
10 couldn't -- it couldn't operate locally or through the controls  
11 because I knew the controls was going to try, when the  
12 differential's ~~not~~<sup>got</sup> right -- it may never have gotten right, but I  
13 didn't want to take the chance, so I disabled the power gas which  
14 actually moves the valve.

15 And on the line 10 north block valve and line 25 north block  
16 valve, those do not have any electrical controls on them. They  
17 are only -- they only operate on a pilot versus the power gas  
18 differential. When we initiate an ESD, we (indiscernible) our  
19 power gas, and at a certain PSI, they -- those valves will  
20 automatically shut.

21 And, of course, our station blowoffs will open, but the only  
22 way -- there is no electronic way to shut the, the line -- any of  
23 the station block valves. So those were manual controls, so I  
24 actually pulled the handle and closed it manually on 10 and 25.  
25 And the same when Dustin did the south side of our station. He

1 did those manually.

2 Q. Okay, that makes sense. Are those -- what kind of valves are  
3 those? Gate valves, ball valves? What are --

4 A. They're either -- they're not gate. They're either, like,  
5 the globe or ball.

6 Q. Globe or ball? Okay.

7 A. They're ~~equipped~~ -- they're (indiscernible).

8 Q. Okay, okay. Yeah, okay. So they're pretty quick then.

9 A. Yes, yes. Yes, probably, I don't know, maybe 10 seconds from  
10 beginning to end.

11 Q. Okay, okay. I was wondering how you did them all so fast  
12 then. That makes more sense.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. I was going to say, you're pretty quick, sir.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Okay. That makes more sense. Okay. So how, how -- so you  
17 knew those four, just walking in the door, you knew those four.  
18 Did you know them -- how did you know which valves, or is it  
19 training? Is it procedures? Is it just instinctual knowledge?  
20 Walk me through kind of your thought process walking in.

21 A. Okay. Well, we do our ESD test, you know, twice a year, and  
22 I know the ~~R valves very close~~. I know all of the (indiscernible)  
23 very well. And the main thing ~~that emergency that you guys~~ know  
24 exactly what will stop the gas from coming in or going out or  
25 crossing over inside our station. So there wasn't any question in

1 my mind.

2 And when Bart called, when he told me the units were shut  
3 down and that either the rupture or the release was either on line  
4 10 or 25 north of the station, there was four main valves. Now,  
5 there's a few small, like two-inch valves for fuel gas, domestic  
6 gas, stuff like that, but the main feeders, there's only four  
7 possible (indiscernible) from experience doing our ESD checks and  
8 just knowing my ESD in the station.

9 Q. Okay, that makes sense. You mentioned that you and Barry  
10 Blevins know -- that he had requested that you let him know when  
11 the lines dropped below 50 PSI so he could let the first  
12 responders know that it was safe to work out there. Why, why 50  
13 PSI? Why is that determined kind of the safe number in terms of  
14 pressure?

15 A. Yeah, that -- you're asking the wrong person. I do not know  
16 why that was deemed safe, and then they actually went ahead and  
17 decided to take it all the way to zero. I don't, I don't know the  
18 answer to those questions.

19 Q. Okay, so that's just kind of a procedural decision that was  
20 made in Houston then?

21 A. I don't know who made the decision.

22 Q. Okay, okay. That's fine.

23 A. I mean, it didn't ~~survive~~. (Indiscernible) I mean, that's  
24 not (indiscernible). You definitely wouldn't -- sometimes you  
25 don't want to take them all the way to zero, because if something

1 was, you know, could be crushed, having pressure in the pipe could  
2 be a good thing, but --

3 Q. Yep.

4 A. -- somebody made the decision above my pay grade to take it  
5 to 50 and then decided to take it all the way to zero. And it  
6 didn't sound abnormal to me at all.

7 Q. Okay, that makes sense. Yes. No, I agree. Sometimes,  
8 sometimes it's good to have pressure. Sometimes it's -- and it's  
9 good to know where the gas is as well.

10 A. Right.

11 Q. Yeah. There's, there's goods and bads to all of that. Okay.

12 A. Exactly.

13 Q. Yep, yep. Just a calculated kind of decision. You -- there  
14 was only one term that you didn't define, only one acronym, which  
15 I am really impressed. And it was when you were talking about the  
16 line 10 isolation procedure that you went over with Ashley and  
17 Ross. You said, I believe, PLB.

18 A. Oh.

19 Q. You were talking --

20 A. Pipeline Diagram.

21 Q. Oh, okay, PLD.

22 A. (Indiscernible) PLB and PLD, pipeline pressure  
23 (indiscernible).

24 Q. I heard PLB and I, I could not for the life of me figure out  
25 what the B would be, but PLD makes way more sense. Okay, got it.

1 Great.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Yeah.

4 A. What time did I say that? I'm not seeing it on me. What --

5 Q. That is around -- let me find that --

6 A. I don't remember saying PLD.

7 Q. Yeah, well, I heard PLB so that's why I was confused. It was

8 10:07 when you were talking about -- 10:07. It's on Page 2 of

9 your talk through. "Joey Grimes and I reviewed line 10 isolation

10 procedure and called Ashley Clemens to give our comments." But

11 you had mentioned -- I had written down PLB and I was trying to --

12 because I couldn't think of anything that -- couldn't think of a

13 PLB, but PLD makes total sense, pipeline diagram makes a lot of

14 sense. You were probably just saying you'd walked through it with

15 him would be my guess.

16 A. Oh, yeah, okay. Yeah.

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. He's (indiscernible) yeah. I probably did say that.

19 Q. Yeah. As you --

20 A. Yes, PLD is -- I do remember saying that, yes.

21 Q. Yeah, yeah. No. PLD makes sense. I just misheard the

22 letter, so yeah. I couldn't figure out what a PLB would be.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. That's all. Okay. What -- so you mentioned towards the end

25 that you worked to clear the alarms off the system so that if

1 something else came up later that it would call someone out --

2 A. Right.

3 Q. -- which, which sounds like good procedure. Is that standard  
4 procedure? Is that something that you just know to do?

5 A. Yeah, it's -- we've been doing this project since 2016, and a  
6 lot of times, you'll take something like, say, you'll take a  
7 cooler bank or something out of service that you don't need, but  
8 because it's out of service, it generates a call attendant alarm.  
9 A condition like that, turn off the electrical breaker to a fan.  
10 We're not using it, but it will generate a call attendant alarm.

11 So if it's going to be a long term, we'll temporarily just  
12 force out that particular alarm so we can clear that call  
13 attendant. So say we have a fire or an illegal entry or  
14 something, it will trigger a new call attendant and get their  
15 attention (indiscernible) <sup>at Gas</sup> control.

16 Q. Okay. That sounds very similar to what we did when we worked  
17 on chromatographs. So we'd shut them offline in a water vapor  
18 analyzer, and if we --

19 A. Right.

20 Q. -- if we didn't let them know, it would be reading 20 pounds  
21 of water vapor, and they'd freak out. So --

22 A. Yeah, yeah.

23 Q. Yeah.

24 A. Exactly.

25 Q. Yeah, yeah, same idea. Okay. Mostly I was just kind of

1 thinking, you know, is that something that you just do as a best  
2 practice because you've been working for so long and so familiar  
3 with the system or if that's kind of, you know, everybody's best  
4 practice and it's in the procedures and everybody does that?

5 Okay.

6 Did, did you have issues shutting any of the valves? Did  
7 anything not operate like it was supposed to or anything like  
8 that?

9 A. No. The, the two valve that -- the two main valves that I  
10 had shut (indiscernible) like they were supposed to.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. I don't, I don't remember having any trouble with any of the  
13 valves working.

14 Q. Okay. Did you have any of the, any of the alarms that you  
15 cleared that couldn't be explained just through the whole series  
16 of events that were going on? Did they all make logical sense to  
17 you?

18 A. Oh, yeah, absolutely. And most of them were like, you know,  
19 gas path, which it's a unit -- one of our units say it runs on  
20 line 25 suction and straight to a discharge. If either one of  
21 these station block valves are not fully open, it gives an alarm  
22 and says, hey, you can't run because there's no gas path. That  
23 was the majority of those was gas path alarms, and a few of the  
24 low pressure alarms because we didn't have any gas in that  
25 section. So yes, absolutely every single one of them made perfect

1 sense or they would not have been ~~locked~~<sup>blocked</sup> out.

2 MS. COLLETTI: Okay. All right. Well, that's all I have  
3 for, for my first round of questions. I'm going to pass you off  
4 to Alvaro for, for next.

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Alex.

6 BY MR. RODRIGUEZ:

7 Q. Again, this is Alvaro Rodriguez. I am with Accident  
8 Investigation Division of PHMSA. I am in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.  
9 And thank you very much for providing a very detailed timeline of  
10 the event. My first question is about a cause of the incident.  
11 Do you know how this incident happened?

12 A. I do not.

13 Q. All right. And do you think different that if you had done  
14 (verbatim)?

15 A. I'm sorry, sir, could you repeat that?

16 Q. Yeah. Is anything different than you have done (verbatim)?

17 A. Not that I'm aware of, no.

18 Q. Okay. And how did you receive any update on the integrity of  
19 the pipeline?

20 A. I don't receive updates for integrity of the pipeline. ~~It~~  
21 ~~would be~~ in the electrical controls technician. I'm not in that,  
22 in that group.

23 Q. Okay. Okay. Are you aware of any type of maintenance done  
24 or to be performed on any of the lines?

25 A. No. Sometimes I occasionally will -- if they need extra



1 manpower, I will assist in running cleaning pigs and  
2 (indiscernible) but no, I'm not involved with the planning or the  
3 maintenance of those lines, so I would not have that information.

4 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay, perfect. Other than that, I don't have  
5 any other questions.

6 MS. COLLETTI: Okay, great.

7 MR. WOODEN: Hi, this is Tom Wooden. Alex, I think Billy was  
8 very thorough in walking us through. I don't have any questions  
9 at this time.

10 MS. COLLETTI: Okay, great.

11 BY MS. COLLETTI:

12 Q. Billy, I just have one more question about normal operating  
13 conditions. I noticed that, at the time of the rupture, the line  
14 10 was operating at 657 PSI. Was that -- is that standard? I  
15 know it's on the suction side, so I expect it to be a little  
16 lower, but it's at least -- on EP&J (ph.) we used to run really,  
17 really close to MAOP, as close as we could all the time. So I'm  
18 not sure what your experience is with that?

19 A. Yeah, it really depends on how many units we're running. At  
20 the time, we were running close to <sup>35,000</sup>~~435,000~~ horsepower where we had  
21 a large <sup>frame 5</sup>~~(indiscernible)~~ and two frame threes on. So we could --  
22 and it really -- it varies, as you probably know, on the pipeline  
23 conditions on your upstream and downstream stations. It's not  
24 unusual for us to have 200 to 250 pounds of differential to our  
25 south and our north.

1           We -- our MAOP ~~is not 36.~~ Usually our gas controllers will  
2 set the limit at, say, 920 in case it goes over a little bit, but  
3 we are not really, really close to our MAOP but -- so it's -- and  
4 I can look and (indiscernible) ~~and give you the exact OP~~ of the  
5 station at the time of the incident, but it -- that totally sounds  
6 normal to me, if we had a 900 discharge, for it to be even 250  
7 below that or more.

8 Q.    Okay, okay.

9 A.    And if our discharge was only, say, 850 at the time, it could  
10 have even been lower. We usually try to keep our, our suction,  
11 our suction side at least in the mid-500s.

12 Q.    Okay.

13 A.    And I've seen it as high as in the 800s depending on how many  
14 units we have on. If we only run one unit and there's not much  
15 flow on the pipeline, we might only have 50 pounds across our  
16 station. It, it varies wildly between the pipeline conditions,  
17 what other stations upstream and downstream are doing, and then  
18 what we're doing here. But yes, those numbers definitely sound in  
19 the normal range.

20           MS. COLLETTI: Okay, okay. Well, thank you very much.

21 That's good to know. Yeah, every pipeline operates very  
22 differently, so it's just always very interesting for me to hear  
23 that, so thank you. That's all I have.

24           Alvaro, do you have any more questions?

25           MR. RODRIGUEZ: I do not.

1 MR. WOODEN: Alex, nothing additional from me.

2 MS. COLLETTI: All right. Well, I'm -- that's going to be  
3 the end of our questions then. Billy, I just want to thank you  
4 very much. I will say that is one of the best descriptions of  
5 response that I've had in my interviews. You really went into a  
6 lot of detail, and I really appreciate it. That's why we had very  
7 few questions for you. I really appreciate the explanations of  
8 everything.

9 I will be sending you a transcript in about a month. It will  
10 come along with a sheet with some legalese on it. There will be a  
11 couple of checkboxes on it. One you could check if there's no  
12 errors on it. If there are errors, you can send me back an email  
13 that says on Page 1, Line 4 they spelled Barry's name wrong or  
14 wrote PLB instead of PLD.

15 But otherwise, if you think of anything, feel free to email  
16 me or call me at any time. I'll be getting your contact  
17 information from Bart probably, most likely. If you think of  
18 anything later, that's very normal.

19 So I really appreciate your help. Again, thank you for being  
20 so detailed. That really helps the investigation a lot, so -- and  
21 I hope you don't have to talk much more today. That's, that's my  
22 wish for you.

23 MR. GRIMES: Well, I (indiscernible) from our management and  
24 my local management (indiscernible). They really drive in  
25 details, details, details. You wouldn't think a small detail

1 doesn't matter, but it's been driven into us. That's the reason I  
2 do it in detail.

3 MS. COLLETTI: Good, good. No, the details are very  
4 important, very, very important to me, and it's just nice -- it's  
5 very nice when I get someone that also believes that. So I  
6 appreciate it.

7 Well, this concludes the interview, and it is 12:28 p.m.  
8 Thank you so much.

9 (Whereupon, at 12:28 p.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: ENBRIDGE INC. NATURAL GAS  
PIPELINE RUPTURE AND FIRE  
IN HILLSBORO, KENTUCKY,  
ON MAY 4, 2020  
Interview of Billy Grimes

ACCIDENT NO.: PLD20LR001

PLACE: Via teleconference

DATE: May 11, 2020

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.



---

Teresa Holevas  
Transcriber