UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	*
	*
NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION PIPELINE	*
LEAK AND MULTISTORY STRUCTURE	* Docket No.: DCA-14-MP-002
EXPLOSION IN HARLEM, NEW YORK	*
MARCH 12, 2014	*
	*

Interview of: FRANK DIAZ

Con Edison
4 Irving Place
New York, New York

Monday,
August 4, 2014

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE: RAVI CHHATRE
Investigator-in-Charge

APPEARANCES:

RAVI CHHATRE, Investigator-in-Charge
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

KALU KELLY EMEABA, Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MATTHEW NICHOLSON, Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

FRANK McCARTON, Deputy Commissioner
Office of Emergency Management
New York, New York
(Party Representative)

ANASTASIOS GEORGELIS, Director of Field Operations
Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations
Department of Environmental Protection
New York, New York

LEONARD SINGH, Chief Engineer
Gas Distribution Services
Con Edison
(Party Representative)

CHRIS STOLICKY, Utility Supervisor (Safety)
New York State Department of Public Service
(Party Representative)

THOMAS J. HALL, Esq.
(Representative on behalf of Mr. Diaz)

I N D E X

LEGEND:

(ph.) = Phonetic Spelling

I N T E R V I E W

MR. CHHATRE: Good afternoon. Today is Monday, August 4, 2014. We are currently in the Con Edison's facility located at 4 Irving Place, New York, and we are meeting regarding the investigation of natural gas distribution pipeline leak and multi-story structure explosion that occurred on March 12, 2014. That's in Harlem, New York.

My name is Ravi Chhatre. I am with National Transportation Safety Board located in Washington, D.C. and I'm Investigator-in-Charge of this accident. The NTSB investigation number for this accident is DCA-14-MP-002.

I would like to start by telling everyone present in this room that we are recording this interview and we may transcribe it at a later date. Transcripts will be provided directly to the interviewee for review and identifying any typographical errors. The transcript may be posted in NTSB's public docket.

Also, I'd like to inform Mr. Frank Diaz that you are permitted to have one other person present with you during this interview. This is a person of your choice: your supervisor, friend, family member or, if you choose, no one at all.

Please state for the record your full name, spelling of your name, organization you work for and your title and your business contact information, such as mailing address so we can mail it to you, and whom you have chosen to be present with you

during today's interview?

MR. DIAZ: Company attorney, Hallen Construction's attorney, Tom.

MR. CHHATRE: For the record, spell your name, your affiliation with the company, your title?

MR. DIAZ: Francisco Diaz, F-r-a-n-c-i-s-c-o, D-i-a-z. I work for the Hallen Construction Company.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

MR. DIAZ: Do you want the address?

MR. CHHATRE: Your contact information? Company address where we can send you the transcripts.

MR. DIAZ: 4270 Austin Boulevard, Island Park, New York. I don't know the zip code.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. And title with --

MR. DIAZ: My position?

MR. CHHATRE: -- position with the company?

MR. DIAZ: Foreman maintenance man.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Now I'd like to go around the room and have each person introduce themselves. Please state your name, spelling of your name, your title and organization that you represent and your business contact information. We'll start from my right.

MR. NICHOLSON: Matthew Nicholson. I'm an investigator with the NTSB. It's spelled M-a-t-t-h-e-w, N-i-c-h-o-l-s-o-n. My e-mail is [redacted].

MR. EMEABA: Kalu Kelly Emeaba, K-a-l-u, K-e-l-l-y, E-m-e-a-b-a. I'm an investigator with NTSB. And my e-mail address, [redacted]. I'm sorry.

MR. MCCARTON: How you doing? My name's Frank McCarton. I am the New York City party rep. It's [redacted], and I am assigned to Office of Emergency Management, but a New York City rep on this investigation.

MR. GEORGELIS: Anastasios Georgelis, A-n-a-s-t-a-s-i-o-s, G-e-o-r-g-e-l-i-s. I'm the Director of Field Operations for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection. E-mail address is [redacted].

MR. HALL: Thomas J. Hall. That's T-h-o-m-a-s; J, like James; Hall, H-a-l-l, with the firm of Fabiani, Cohen and Hall. That's F-a-b-i-a-n-i, Cohen, C-o-h-e-n, and Hall, H-a-l-l. We're at 570 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10022. My firm is counsel at the Hallen and Mr. Diaz had asked that I accompany him to his interview this morning, or this afternoon.

MR. SINGH: Leonard Singh with Con Edison, Chief Engineer in Gas Distrubution Services. L-e-o-n-a-r-d, S-i-n-g-h. E-mail, [redacted]. I am the party rep, part of this process representing Con Ed.

MR. STOLICKY: Chris Stolicky, S-t-o-l-i-c-k-y. I'm the New York State party rep of the New York State Department of Public Service. My e-mail address is [redacted].

MR. CHHATRE: Thank you.

INTERVIEW OF FRANK DIAZ

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. Mr. Francisco, can you just tell for the record your formal training, any training classes you have, your position with the company, how long you have been with the company and your job description?

A. I've been with Hallen for 23 years. I am a foreman for them, a gas mechanic for them.

Q. Okay. Any formal, informal training?

A. Yes. I've had training through Con Ed and I also have training through National Grid.

Q. Okay. And what kind of training is that?

A. Hands on. And I would say textbook.

Q. Okay. With doing what?

A. With things, learning how to do certain things just pertaining to gas work.

Q. Okay. And did that involve fusion of plastic pipes?

A. Fusing, yes.

Q. Service tees and --

A. Yes.

Q. And how long you have been doing work on plastic pipes?

A. Twelve years, 15 years I could say I've been qualified.

Q. Okay. So as foreman, what are your duties for the company? What do you do as a foreman?

A. I run the job. I actually install the pipe, fuse it, connect it, tap holes. It's a live gas main.

Q. Okay.

A. Installment mains.

Q. Okay.

A. Services.

Q. Were you involved in the service line installation on Park Avenue close to the ground zero?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you recall when the work was done at that time?

A. Four years ago, I would imagine.

Q. Okay. So how do you go about doing your job? In this case, you are working for Con Edison?

A. Yes.

Q. So how do you know where to go, what to do? Explain the process to me.

A. We'll get to the location. We'll have a job folder that will tell us what size service we're putting in, where it should be installed at. Once we arrive, once I get there, I get into the building that the service is being installed in and I look for a sleeve that the service should be coming through the foundation with.

Q. Okay. And who gives you that?

A. Con Ed.

Q. Any particular department person?

A. Well, that I -- well, my supervisors give it to me.
Q. Okay. Your supervisors gets it from Con Edison?
A. Right. Yes.
Q. And you get it from supervisor. Okay. And then what happens? So your supervisor gives you the job assignment. Then what do you do? Just walk me through the process.
A. If it's excavated and I don't have to do any excavating, then I'll pull out my pipe. I'll look for whatever, if I have to pull plates in the street or in the sidewalk, steel plates. Then I'll get the pipe and I'll set it up to be fused and installed. We'll put it into the sleeve. I'll put ahead of service valve out and I'll start backing out the service from the building out to the street. If it's cast iron main, we'll tap a hole, put a tee. Before that, we'll test the service and then we'll do our connection.
Q. So in this particular incident, do you remember the address where you were connecting the service?
A. No. No.
Q. So to your best of your recollection, tell me when you arrived at the scene, was the ground excavated for you or you --
A. Yes.
Q. -- do the excavation?
A. It was excavated for me.
Q. And do you know who excavated that?
A. Well, one of our guys probably excavated it.

Q. I'm sorry?
A. One of our employees excavated that --
Q. Okay. You do not know who did that?
A. I can't recall.
Q. Okay. And so when you arrived, what did you see in the excavated location? What did you see?
A. Just a gas main.
Q. Was it plastic, cast iron?
A. No. Because we actually had to replace the cast iron main.
Q. Okay. So was the main cast iron at that time --
A. Yes.
Q. -- when you arrived?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. So tell me, walk me through the whole process.
A. First, I would replace the main --
Q. Okay.
A. -- the cast iron main that was there because it was actually what's called an encroachment. When someone undermines the main, Con Ed will give it to a company to replace it or they'll do it themselves. And I replaced the main, and the service was part of that. The new service was in line with the new main that was going in, so we did it.
Q. Okay.
A. So I would put in the new main, liven it up, do the

service, test profusity (ph.) on the main, hook up the service and test the tee and the service all at once because it's not tapped yet.

Q. Okay. So was the main, then, inactive when you replaced it?

A. No, it was still alive. The cast iron main?

Q. Yeah.

A. Yeah, I would -- I'm the one that actually would stop it and cut out the section that I had to cut out.

Q. So how did you stop the --

A. Stoppers.

Q. Stoppers?

A. Yeah. We'd tap holes on either end and pull out, if it was 30 feet, 40 feet.

Q. Okay. Did you know where the pressure in the line was?

A. No, we have it by water column, so it'd be 6, 8, 4.

Q. 8-inch water. And was this --

A. That may be low. That may be low.

Q. -- was this information in the package you get?

A. No. No.

Q. Okay. So somebody told you it was 6 to 8-inches --

A. No, we actually will know it when we tap our holes to cut it out. We still -- we run what's called a bypass. It's two pieces of pipe coming up at each end and we run a hose and it tells us whether -- which way the main is being fed, if it's fed

from both ends or it's just being fed from one end.

Q. And how will you know that?

A. We'll run the hoses and there's a valve in the end and we put gauges up and it'll tell us if it's it's 6 water column, 8 water column, whatever it is. And once we throw a stopper in, we'll shut that gate valve, and if it stays the same, the pressure, that means it's being fed from both sides. Now, if one starts to drop, that means it's only being fed from one side.

Q. So you do that on the scene?

A. Yes. And it's being fed from both sides, so now we throw all of the stoppers in and make sure everything's out. And there at the main, get all the gas out, cut it, pull it out, replace it with the 8-inch.

Q. And how do you put the stoppers in? I understand this stuff is pretty routine for you, but we need to get this in the record.

A. That's fine.

Q. So bear with me.

A. It's called a T-handle. It's a canvas bag that you put in the tap hole, turn it and pull it and then you tap it, and it expands when you put it in.

Q. So that's a different tap hole than you would for the bypass?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. And how close are those two holes?

A. A foot away.
Q. And that's from procedure or just from experience?
A. Procedure.
Q. Okay. And how big are those holes?
A. Inch and a half, 2-inch. Depends the size of the main.
Q. Okay. And for this particular job, how big were the holes?
A. That I can't recall.
Q. Okay.
BY MR. STOLICKY:
Q. When you say two holes, are you double-bagging each --
A. No, It's actually three holes. It'll be three holes, to be exact.
Q. Okay.
A. Each hole -- each stopper gets its individual hole.
Q. Okay. So you --
A. And then there's a bypass --
Q. -- you use one bag to stop it?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Just so we're all clear. Because some companies will use two bags.
A. Yeah, we do use two bags. We use four stoppers total.
Q. Okay.
A. It's called a backup.
Q. Got it.

A. So you do your primary and then your backup.

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. So that's why you have three holes on each side?

A. Yes. Correct.

Q. I just want to make sure. Not total three holes; three holes on each side?

A. Each side, each side. It's six holes total.

Q. Total.

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay. And those holes are drilled while the pipe is still active?

A. Yes.

Q. So how do you go -- tell me step-by-step, which one you do first?

A. You work your way --

Q. So you do bypass first?

A. -- you start -- no, no. You start your first one for the bypass and then you work your way back and then you go to the other side and you work your way -- you don't set anything up until all your tapholes are done.

Q. Okay.

A. And then you set up your bypass.

Q. Okay. So you did that, and typically how long it takes to do this?

A. It varies.

Q. Okay.
A. Some mains are harder, some mains --
Q. Do you recall how much it -- how long it took you on this one?
A. Not really. Maybe an hour and a half, 2 hours.
Q. Okay. And what time you arrived at the job scene?
A. Eight o'clock, maybe.
Q. Okay. Then what happened?
A. Well, we replaced the main; pull out the old one, replaced with the new plastic main.
Q. Okay.
A. Hook it all up, and then we'll start introducing gas into the new main.
Q. Okay. Now you remove the cast iron main and you hook up the plastic main?
A. Yes.
Q. What happened to that cast iron main? Did you ship it someplace or you just (indiscernible)?
A. No, we get rid of it. It's just --
Q. So you guys took it with you?
A. Yeah, and I think it's -- I'm not sure, but we just put it in a dump truck and dump it.
Q. And then did you pressure test the plastic?
A. Less than 100 feet, we don't have to. It's called a visual inspection.

Q. Okay. So main is connected with a cast iron pipe?
A. Yes.
Q. And that's it? It wasn't -- it was just checked for leak at that joint?
A. Yes.
Q. Using what?
A. Soap water.
Q. But no pressure testing was done on that?
A. No.
Q. And then you start connecting the service?
A. Then we start backing out the 2-inch service.
Q. Okay.
A. We fuse our 2-inch plastic up where that was curb valves, and then install the 2-inch service, fuse a 2 -- an 8 by 2 punch tee, because I remember it was an 8-inch pipe.
Q. Okay?
A. And hook up the service and test the tee and the service all at once.
Q. Okay. So you hook up the service tee, hook up the coupling, and then tested that assembly first?
A. Right.
Q. And then what happened? Then how do you connect the service? Do you start from the inside?
A. It's connected. It's all connected already to the main because it's a fuse tee. A fuse tee is with an iron and -- so we

fuse it up. The service is already out. We put a coupling onto the fuse tee, wait until it cools off, and then we'll take the cap off the fuse tee and take the cool-pon. It's not tapped yet, so there's no air going into the gas main. Then we'll test the service line.

Q. Okay.

A. And then once the air test is good, we'll take the air out and I'll put the cool-pon back in, and then I'll tap the main and bring up air, bring up gas, shut the valve, go inside and shut the line.

Q. So service line is installed from the meter, going towards this main first, and then you connect at the main? I'm just trying to understand the process. I understand you change the cast iron for the plastic.

A. Right. We'll install the 2-inch service and fuse a tee onto the main.

MR. NICHOLSON: Install a 2-inch service to --

MR. DIAZ: To the main.

MR. NICHOLSON: -- the main --

MR. DIAZ: Right.

MR. CHHATRE: To the main. Okay.

MR. NICHOLSON: -- at the 2-inch service tee. But it's not connected to the meter yet?

MR. DIAZ: No, no.

MR. NICHOLSON: Right.

MR. DIAZ: None of our services are connected to the meter because it's what's called new business. So they would -- they don't even have gas or meters yet.

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. Okay. So you don't go inside the building at all?

A. Yeah, just to put a shutoff valve. We do install a shutoff valve.

Q. Okay. So the plastic tee, you go inside the building in the basement and put a shutoff valve?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay.

A. Not the plastic tee, just the -- just the valve.

Q. Okay. Now, after you install the service line, do you pressure test the service line?

A. Yes. Yes.

Q. And how many must it be tested at?

A. I do 90, 92, 96, wherever my gauge stops. I don't go below 90.

Q. From what point to what point your service line was tested?

A. From the tee all the way to the valve inside.

Q. Okay. And how long you hold the pressure?

A. It's 15 minutes. I usually do 20.

Q. Okay. At 80 pounds or 90 pounds?

A. Ninety pounds.

Q. Ninety pounds gauge? Okay. And the pressure held?
A. The pressure test held.
Q. So tell me, when you went at the scene and you saw the ditch and you saw the cast iron pipe, how did the ground look to you?
A. To me, like every ground in New York. I mean, nothing --
Q. Did you see any rocks? Did you see any backfill with a sand?
A. No, I just --
Q. Okay.
A. It just looked like it was a regular hole.
Q. So when you remove the cast iron pipe, how did the ground feel like? Do you guys enter into the ditch or do you just lower the plastic pipe and --
A. We're in the holes.
Q. In the hole?
A. Yeah, yeah.
Q. And how was the ground? What did the ground feel like? Was it soft? Was it rocky?
A. I can't recall.
Q. Okay. Did you see any groundwater in the ditch? Was the soil moist, for example?
A. I can't recall.
Q. You can't recall? Do you know how deep the ditch was?

A. Three feet, 4 feet.
Q. Okay. And did you see any other pipe in the ditch besides the cast iron main?
A. No.
Q. No other pipe was visible?
A. I don't think so.
Q. Did the ground feel soft to you?
A. I can't --
Q. Or was it, like, was it like a quicksand? You know, you can barely stand up?
A. I can't recall that.
Q. Did you go actually in the ditch?
A. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I actually do the work.
Q. Okay. So you are the one who put the -- fused the plastic --
A. Yes.
Q. -- fitting? And was anybody from Con Edison there with you watching what you are doing?
A. We do have an inspector. He covers multiple crews, so if he was there at the time, I can't recall. But he did show up to the job.
Q. He did show up that day --
A. Yeah, definitely.
Q. -- before you go?
A. Definitely.

Q. And what did he do, do you remember?
A. Well, he's just there to make sure we do it right and to make sure it's safe and make sure we're doing our job.
Q. And how did he do that? How did he do -- how did he make sure that you are doing right? How did he make sure that it was even being done safe? I'm just trying to find out what he did?
A. He would come make sure our equipment's up-to-date and everything is --
Q. Did he ask any questions?
A. No. No.
Q. No. Did he look at equipment?
A. I'm pretty sure he did. Maybe -- I didn't see him look at it, but --
Q. Okay. Were you in the ditch when he showed up or you were --
A. That I can't recall.
Q. Do you remember he showed up before you started work or during the work?
A. Probably during the work.
Q. During the work? Okay. Was it after the cast iron pipe was replaced or --
A. That I can't remember.
Q. That you cannot recall?
A. No.

Q. Okay. Do you have to carry your operator's qualification documents with you?
A. Can you repeat that?
Q. Do you have to carry with you your operator qualified --
A. Do I carry it with me? Yes.
Q. And did you have those documents with you --
A. Yes.
Q. -- at the time?
A. Yes.
Q. And did person from Con Edison ask to look at those?
A. No.
Q. Okay. Did he even ask whether you had the document with you?
A. No.
Q. And how many people were with you?
A. Myself, another mechanic, and a laborer.
Q. Okay.
A. So two other people.
Q. Can you tell us their names?
A. Richard Martello.
Q. How do you spell it?
A. R-i-c-h-a-r-d, M-a-r-t-e-l-l-o.
Q. Okay. And what was his title?
A. Maintenance man.
Q. Maintenance -- maintenance?

A. Yeah.
Q. You mean mechanic?
A. Mechanic, yeah.
Q. Maintenance mechanic, okay. And who's the other person?
A. Antour, A-n-t-o-u-r, Johnson.
Q. Okay. And he's a laborer?
A. Yeah, just a regular laborer.
Q. And what is the function of Mr. Martello?
A. Same as mine.
Q. So he can -- if you're not there, he would install the plastic and he's qualified to do that?
A. Yes. To do a main cutout, you need two mechanics.
Q. Okay.
A. I can't do a cutout by myself.
Q. Okay.
A. Because it's just two sides. I can't be in two places at once.
Q. So you cut the main simultaneously? Is that what you're saying?
A. Yeah. One shot.
Q. Okay.
MR. STOLICKY: Well, and you need multiple people to watch the gauges.
MR. DIAZ: Right. Yes.
BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. And what about Mr. Johnson, what did he do?
A. He's just a laborer. He's the top guy. Gets the tools, whatever.
Q. Okay. So he just go out if you --
A. Yeah, yeah.
Q. -- ask for some tool, then he gives it to you?
A. Right. Yeah.
Q. Okay. Was any of these two people were in the ditch with you?
A. I'm pretty sure Martello was, you know, on one side and I was on the other.
Q. Okay. But Mr. Johnson wasn't in the ditch?
A. No, no, he wouldn't -- there is no reason for him to be.
Q. Okay. Do you recall how long the job took to finish?
A. About 8:00, I think, most likely.
Q. Like so it's like a 12-hour shift, pretty much?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay. So did the Con Edison contact person, do you remember his title or his name?
A. That I don't remember. I don't remember -- his title is an inspector.
Q. Okay. But will that have in the document package that you were given?
A. No.
Q. It will not?

A. No.

Q. So how do you know he is working for Con Edison and he's the person who is going to watch over your workmanship?

A. He will call me in the morning, call.

Q. He'd call you in the morning and tell you he's the one who --

A. Yeah. They'll assign him the job.

Q. Okay. And do you recall, he came once or twice?

A. He probably was there more than that. He probably came in the morning and then stayed with us until the end.

Q. Okay. When you finish the job, do you have to show him what -- I mean, what is the process? You replace everything, you finished your job. What happens next?

A. We close up our plates and wrap everything up. Take our bypass down, take our stoppers out, do what we have to do to make sure everything is right. Shut what we have to shut off, lock what we have to lock, close our plates, make sure everything is safe, and that's it.

Q. So do you ever call Con Edison to tell them --

A. Yes, yeah.

Q. -- that you are done or --

A. If the inspector -- yeah, I do have to tell the inspector that we're done for the day.

Q. And how would you do that?

A. I will call him on the phone.

Q. And how would you get his phone number?
A. I will have it.
Q. So it would be in the package?
A. It'll be on our phone or he'll call me or I'll save it on my phone or --
Q. Okay.
A. I'll know who it is for the day.
Q. Okay. And so you called the inspector and told him that you are done?
A. We are done.
Q. Then what happened then? Did he say fine, go home, or --
A. Yeah, that's it, okay.
Q. Okay.
A. That we left safe, nothing's wrong.
Q. Now, do you recall if you were current on your credentials --
A. Yes.
Q. -- at the time when you did the job?
A. Yeah. I thought I was.
Q. You thought you are, but were you or were you not?
A. Was I? On my full 3-year, yes I was. I've come to find out that I wasn't on my fuse.
Q. Okay. So you were shy on that?
A. Right.

Q. Did your supervisor in your company knew that?
A. That I don't recall.
Q. Okay. And do they check your documents? How would they know you are qualified to do this job?
A. With -- we check --
Q. I mean Hallen Construction? How would they --
A. Well, they have a -- I guess they will have a -- with everybody's qualifications, they have somebody that checks to see who's out and who is not.
Q. Okay. So when you're doing this job, Hallen Construction didn't say anything that you are --
A. Right.
Q. -- you are behind?
A. Right.
Q. And Con Edison person didn't ask for the documents anyways?
A. No.
Q. So he will not know?
A. No.
Q. So when did you find out that you were not qualified at that time for whatever that small -- when did you find that out?
A. After this was, this happened.
Q. The incident happened?
A. Yes.
Q. I mean, after the incident how -- why would you check

your qualifications at that time? I'm trying to find out what led to you to check that?

A. Well, what happened is we worked in the Bronx, and in the Bronx our Con Ed foreman used to keep up on our quals and say, okay, I'm coming out today to give your fusing qualifications; they're up; I'm going to give you the test out on the field if you're fusing. And that's how we would keep up-to-date when we were there. In Manhattan, they do things different. So I had just finished working in the Bronx a year prior to that, so I didn't know that my quals were over.

Q. Right. But how did you find out that you were behind?

A. Oh, my bosses would tell me or something. They would find -- they -- how did I find out this time? I was told by my bosses.

Q. That you are --

A. Yeah, that I was --

Q. -- behind?

A. Yeah.

Q. Did he mention how did he find out or what triggered it?

A. I guess Con Ed told him.

Q. And do you know when was that, roughly?

A. No.

Q. Was it, like, 8 days after the accident or next day or --

A. That I can't --

Q. You don't recall?
A. No.
Q. So what happened after that? Once you find out you are not qualified, what happened next?
A. I was actually due for my 3-year, so I got requalled.
Q. Okay. And when were you due for your 3 years?
A. In -- I think that would be that November.
Q. Okay. November?
A. I think. Because I go every November every 3 years. So I'm trying to figure --
Q. So you're still months away from your 3-year?
A. No, my -- yeah, I'm still months away from my 3 years now. Years away. Because I just went back recently in this November to get my 3-year.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 2013?
MR. DIAZ: Hum?
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 2013?
MR. DIAZ: Yes.
UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.
MR. DIAZ: And just recently I went for my fusing quals over.
BY MR. CHHATRE:
Q. So 9/13 you were requalled, you requalified for 3-year --
A. Right.

Q. -- qualification?
A. Right.
Q. So around, like, 3, 4 months before the accident?
A. Right. Right.
Q. And do you recall when this job was done, by any chance?
A. No.
Q. We got -- your job folder will have that information?
A. Right. The job folder will have it. Do I --
Q. Okay.
A. Well, I remember because you just told me it was the 12th.
Q. Well, that's when the accident was.
A. Yeah.
Q. But I don't know when you finished the work; is when I'm asking.
A. Oh, that's when -- yeah, right. Oh, I -- years before that; 2011 --
Q. Okay.
A. -- if I'm not mistaken.
Q. Okay. All right. And that's all I have for you. Thank you so much.
A. That's it?
Q. That's it.
A. My hands didn't even start sweating yet.
MR. NICHOLSON: No, we've got other people --

MR. CHHATRE: Oh, well, all these (indiscernible) --

BY MR. EMEABA:

Q. Thank you, Mr. Francis. Ravi has really ask a whole lot of questions, so which I'm -- more than cover. You mentioned something, just to clarify the response the gave earlier, I believe I heard you well. He asked you about the -- he set out the facts on what you saw on Park Avenue and you said that the excavation was already made?

A. Um-hum.

Q. So when you got there, what you could only see was a cast iron --

A. Um-hum.

Q. -- already exposed? And then, from what you mention here, your group had to actually tap off, did a bypass, cut off a section of the cast iron 8-inch?

A. Um-hum.

Q. And then you install the plastic 8-inch pipeline, correct?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. And then from what you stated here, you said the 8-inch plastic pipe, because it was less than 100 feet --

A. Yes.

Q. -- it was no need -- you didn't have to pressure test it?

A. Correct.

Q. It was only visual inspection?
A. Yes.
Q. Of what, the pipe itself or where you just put the dresser coupling --
A. Correct.
Q. -- do that, that's it. And then after that, you tapped 8 for the service to 1642?
A. Yes.
Q. And then 1642, you pressure tested it?
A. Correct.
Q. Okay. Why did you pressure test 1642?
A. All services have to be tested.
Q. And, but all main do not have to be pressure tested?
A. Over 100 feet. No.
Q. Okay. What procedure test show that? Is that a Con Ed procedure?
A. Con Ed.
Q. That test showed that?
A. Um-hum.
Q. Okay. Okay. So not because of the regulation? The regulation did not tell you that --
A. No, no.
Q. -- it's only procedure you follow? Okay. I just wanted to point that out and understand that's what you meant.
A. Right.

Q. Because I -- okay. Ravi already ask you a question and I do ask this question again to you. Who is responsible to know when you're not -- you are no more OQ qualified?

A. I would say me, no?

Q. Yourself? Okay. Apart from you being the one responsible, do another person has a responsibility to tell you if you are still OQ qualified or not? Does any other person has that responsibility except yourself?

A. I would say Con Ed.

Q. Con Ed?

A. Um-hum.

Q. Okay. Now who qualifies you for all your OQs?

A. Con Ed.

Q. Do your company qualify you in any one of them at all?

A. Not me.

Q. So both your 3-year and your 1-year requalification are both performed by Con Ed?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. So at any point in time previously, have Con Ed ever notify you that you are due for qualification?

A. Not that I can recall.

Q. So how you get requalified? Is it you that initiate your requalification at all times?

A. Um-hum.

Q. Okay. So the failure for you not being requalified was

based on you not being able to remember?

A. Well --

Q. Yes or no?

A. Yes. I would say that.

Q. Okay. I will yield at this time.

A. Okay.

Q. Thank you.

BY MR. STOLICKY:

Q. Chris Stolicky, New York State Department of Public Service. Just, I want to get a better understanding of the fusion procedures in qualification because you do work for Con Edison and National Grid?

A. Yes.

Q. Is that National Grid, Long Island, New York or both or --

A. In Queens.

Q. From Queens? Okay.

A. Well, on Staten Island.

Q. Okay, that's mainly Brooklyn territory. When you go through OQ with National Grid, how different is it than when you go through -- well, basically, is it similar training for Con Ed?

A. The OQ --

Q. I mean, is it done -- we're talking about plastic fusion. Each company has their own procedure so they're a little different. So when you go through, let's say training for

National Grid, do they do anything different as far as the testing goes than Con Ed does?

A. No. They do a destructive testing. I've never -- they've never done that in front of me in Con Ed.

Q. Okay. As far as the 3-year cycle, does National Grid do a similar 3-year cycle than Con Ed does?

A. Yeah, they -- they do. Certain aspects of the job call for a yearly.

Q. Do you still do a 3-year or is it just --

A. Yeah. Who, Con Ed?

Q. No, Grid.

A. Grid? Like I said, Nat Grid does yearly too. Certain things have to be done yearly. But yeah, they still got 2, 3 years.

Q. Okay. And you've done sidewall fusion with Grid?

A. No.

Q. Okay, so you wouldn't have taken that OQ training with Grid?

A. I've taken, but I don't work on Nat Grid. I work on Con Ed.

Q. Just Con Ed?

A. Because I'm a Con Ed mechanic. You can't work on Con Ed pipeline unless you're a Con Ed mechanic.

Q. Okay. So that's --

A. And I've been with the company for 25 years, so I take

everything they have to offer.

Q. So with National Grid, are you qualified or do you stay qualified to do sidewall fusions?

A. That I don't, I don't know. I don't know if I'm qualified or not.

Q. Okay, you're not doing that now --

A. They don't put me on it, so --

Q. Okay.

A. And if they did, they would ask me. They would check to see if I was qualified.

Q. Okay. Do you recall running into any issues with fusions on this particular job, anything -- have any issues visually when you guys cut out and reinstalled, anything?

A. Not that I could recall.

Q. You don't recall any issues with the iron or the bead sizes or anything?

A. No. No.

Q. Okay. That's all I have.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Frank?

BY MR. McCARTON:

Q. When you left the site, how did you leave the site? Was it open, closed? Did the --

A. Closed. The plates, steel plates over the excavation. We leave no excavations open in Manhattan.

Q. So it was plated and not refilled?

A. Right.
Q. And then who was going to do the refill based on that?
A. Another the team.
Q. Okay. All right.
MR. MCCARTON: Thanks, Ravi. Good.
MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Len?
MR. GEORGELIS: Nothing from me.
MR. SINGH: Tasos? Sorry.
MR. GEORGELIS: No.
BY MR. SINGH:
Q. I have a couple of questions. Some are similar to Chris's and there'll be a little different twist to it. So you said you have 25 years in the business.
A. Um-hum.
Q. How long for you working the trenches before you started working on the pipe, in terms of a maintenance man. Were you a laborer probably at some point in your career?
A. Yes.
Q. And you worked your way up. But how many years before you actually started fusing pipe and when have you requalified to fuse pipe?
A. I've been qualified for 15 years now.
Q. So about 10 years before then?
A. About 10 years.
Q. Okay. In terms of the training that you received from

Con Edison compared to National Grid, classroom training similar? Different?

A. Yes.

Q. Length of time?

A. Similar.

Q. Right?

A. Yeah.

Q. Testing, written test?

A. Definitely.

Q. Practical exam, practical test?

A. Yes.

Q. Same as, similar to Nat Grid; different?

A. Yes.

Q. How many jobs do you typically complete in a week? Because it seems like you're the surgeon, right? You don't dig the hole. You don't backfill the hole.

A. Right.

Q. You come in and you cut the main out, you fuse the service up, you pressure test it, and put them in?

A. Yeah.

Q. How many of those do you do, typically do in a week?

A. It depends on how big the job is, what it calls for. Two to three, maybe, four. It all depends on how big --

Q. You're talking about a main cutout with services?

A. A main cutout with services, that has to be completed in

a day. Not the excavation part, but the tie-in part and everything.

Q. So probably several of them per week? If you do one a day, it's five a week, roughly?

A. Yeah. Um-hum. Never one a day, but it's --

Q. Okay. In terms of your OQ card, you carry that with you, you mentioned before. What information is on an OQ card? What does that mean to you, that card?

A. What does it mean to me?

Q. Yeah?

A. It's my life.

Q. But what does that card tell you?

A. It tells me my fusing quals, my tapping quals, my cut-out quals, my tapping machines. I have the cards on me.

Q. Right. Does it have an expiration date on it?

A. Yes, it does.

Q. I think that's all I have for now.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Just a couple of follow-up questions.

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. So what time -- what is the date that your quals, qualifications expire when you did this job for Con Edison in 2011?

A. That I really don't know. That would have coincided with the 3-year.

Q. Three-year? Okay.
A. Meaning whatever day that was.
Q. Do you remember when your 3-year requal was? Was it in November?
A. November.
Q. Okay. So how many jobs for Con Edison you think you did before you realize your official qualification was expired?
A. That I don't know. I can't recall that.
Q. Do you remember doing any jobs for Con Edison?
A. Sure.
Q. Okay. And did they involve main and fusion service tees or --
A. It's possible.
Q. Okay. When you pressure test the service, did that include the weld you put on the main --
A. Yes.
Q. -- to put the service connection?
A. Yes.
Q. Because at that time the main has not been penetrated?
A. Right. It hasn't been tapped yet.
Q. Okay. So it did include everything from main all the way up to --
A. Right. To the valve inside of the building.
Q. Okay. Did Con Edison ask you any questions about the other jobs you performed when you were not qualified?

A. No.
Q. Have you done any jobs since then for Con Edison?
A. Yes.
Q. Involving similar work?
A. Excuse me?
Q. Involving similar work?
A. Yes.
Q. So after you find out you are not qualified, you did go through training, did you not?
A. Yes. Yes.
Q. And how long that training was?
A. A day.
Q. Okay. Now, do you visually examine the joint before you pressure test it or you just go ahead and pressure test it?
A. Excuse me? Can you --
Q. Do you visually examine the joint, service tee joint that you fuse before you pressure test or you pressure test --
A. Yeah, you have to. You just don't put a pressure test on it.
Q. Okay.
A. You have to make it safe. It can blow.
Q. Okay. So what is a visual exam? Or how do you --
A. Make sure you have enough beads, make sure your couplings are on, make sure everything is secured.
Q. Okay.

A. Make sure everything is right.

Q. Now, does your colleague, Mr. Martello, did he look at it --

A. That I can't recall.

Q. -- with a second set of eyes?

A. It's possible. I don't know, I doubt it.

Q. You don't -- you doubt it? Okay.

A. But I doubt.

Q. Yeah. That's all I have. Thank you so much.

MR. CHHATRE: Matt?

BY MR. NICHOLSON:

Q. Yeah, I've got -- I want to be sure I understand, because I'm not sure I do. On the annual -- so I've heard that you were out of qual on your annual when this was installed, okay, but then I also heard you say, boy that card is your life, right?

A. Um-hum.

Q. Well, it seems like if that card's your life, man, you sure would pay attention to that expiration date, wouldn't you?

A. Yes.

Q. So I also heard you say something about you used to be qualified in the field in the Bronx and -- can you just walk me through that again? How did this expire without you understanding it?

A. The Bronx kept records, I would say records, but our Con Ed foreman would check to make sure every year our stuff was good.

Q. In the Bronx, your Con Ed foreman would check your --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- your OQ dates --
A. Right.
Q. -- to make sure you were still --
A. Our fusing OQs, yes.
Q. Okay.
A. And then he would come out when we were about to expire and give us a test on the field.
Q. Okay.
A. And he would punch our cards. Sometimes they wouldn't punch our cards. It just -- but he would give us our -- and then I was always a Bronx mechanic. When I came into Manhattan, I guess they did things different so I really didn't catch on to it.
Q. Okay. So you became used to doing that field --
A. Right. Correct.
Q. -- qual? They moved you to Manhattan -- who moved you to Manhattan? What happened?
A. Well, we lost the contract in the Bronx.
Q. I see. Okay. And they didn't do the same field qual when you got to Manhattan?
A. Right. No.
Q. Okay. How is the 1-year qualification different than the 3-year?
A. The 1-year is just fusing.

Q. Oh, okay.
A. The 3-year is everything else.
Q. All covered tasks?
A. Yeah.
Q. You said there were three of you on site and that -- you walked us through. You ran the service line to the tee. Did you couple the service line to the tee before the tee was welded to the main?
A. No. Can't do that.
Q. So the service line was up to a -- near the main?
A. Right.
Q. And then you welded the tee to the main?
A. Yes. Fused.
Q. Fused. Sorry. And then how did you make that last connection?
A. With an electric fuse coupling.
Q. Okay. So you had to drag the service main into one side of the coupling or --
A. No, because it's usually brought out further than where the main is and then when --
Q. Oh, okay.
A. -- when you're going to make the connection, just cut where you got to cut and the coupling goes right on. You just slide it right onto the tee.
Q. Okay. Do you have to grab that service main and bring

it over into the coupling?

A. No, because it's not -- it's freely installed.

Q. Okay.

A. It's open, just the whole trench is open.

Q. No stress on it?

A. Yeah, no -- yeah, there's no stress on it.

Q. Okay. It's a stick, straight piece?

A. Yeah, it's --

Q. It's not a coiled piece?

A. No, straight plastic.

Q. Okay. How do you go about on an install like that, how do you go about keeping the pipe and fitting clean, free of contaminants?

A. You do it visually. You have your alcohol wipes. You wipe it down, make sure there's no dirt or debris.

Q. Where do you use the alcohol wipes?

A. On the edges, wherever you're fusing, wherever your couplings are going.

Q. So this would be the bottom of that tee, on the face of the tee?

A. All on the tee, yes.

Q. Okay.

A. You definitely have to make sure that's cleaned out.

Q. Do you take alcohol to the top of pipe as well?

A. Well, you just clean it and make sure there's nothing

and then you do your emery board and make sure you get virgin plastic.

Q. Okay.

A. And you do the same for the tee.

Q. Okay. And then the next step is to put the, what --

A. It's called --

Q. -- use a clamp or --

A. It's called a sidewinder.

Q. Sidewinder?

A. Yeah, it sits down and wraps around the main and it has a cup in it. And you bring it up and you do -- it's a pressure thing. You heat it up with the iron.

Q. Okay.

A. And then when you get your melts, you take the iron out and you bring it on your tee and you put pressure on it. It has a gauge on it.

Q. Okay. Do you remember how much pressure you were using and temperatures back --

A. What it calls for.

Q. Okay. Is it fairly standard?

A. Yeah. Yeah, I mean, each tee is different, but for 2-inch tees on those mains, it's pretty much the same.

Q. What is it?

A. 195 to start.

Q. 195 is the pressure or the temperature?

A. Pressure. That's to melt. And then it's at zero for a few until you get your visual inspection. And then to put the tee on the main is 195.

Q. Okay. What's your visual in this case?

A. A bead, a quarter inch -- a little less than a quarter inch bead.

Q. On the main pipe?

A. Yeah. Yeah, main pipe and the tee.

Q. So you're looking at both?

A. Yeah, yeah.

Q. Okay. Okay, and then once you've joined it, how do you know you have a successful --

A. Your rollbacks.

Q. What's a rollback?

A. It's melted, and once you put 195 pounds of pressure, that plastic rolls back.

Q. Okay.

A. Because it's so hot.

Q. Okay. I think this line was installed in December --

A. Correct.

Q. -- about as -- okay. Probably pretty cold in New York in December?

A. Yeah.

Q. Does that create any challenges, cold-weather work? Yeah?

A. Actually, it was, I think -- used to it.
Q. Okay. So it's -- it's nothing different about installing in December versus --
A. Yeah, we have the same --
Q. -- September?
A. -- what we do. It's 82 and sunny every day here.
Q. I don't believe it.
And I'm not sure we got this from you, but you were the one that installed the tee, because I know there's three of you out there, right?
A. Yes.
Q. So do you know what time you got to the tee?
A. No.
Q. How was the cast iron pipe cut? I didn't hear that in your story. Once the stoppers are in?
A. Widder saw. We have -- it's called a Widder saw.
Q. Is that a dry cut or --
A. Yeah, yeah. It's a Widder -- it's called a Widder saw. It sits on a saddle.
Q. Okay.
A. You tying it to the saddle and it's a saw that stands -- it's straight.
Q. Okay?
A. And it does a circular motion to cut.
Q. Is it pneumatic?

A. Yeah, it's air.
Q. It's air?
A. Yeah.
Q. Okay.
MR. STOLICKY: Is it like a sawzall?
MR. DIAZ: Yeah, not as fast. It's not a fast saw. It's just -- the torque on it is very well. It's a lot.
MR. STOLICKY: Did you find it difficult to cut this particular pipe?
MR. DIAZ: That I can't remember.
MR. STOLICKY: Any more or less than other jobs?
MR. DIAZ: I've cut, you know --
BY MR. NICHOLSON:
Q. But it's air driven, it's not --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- it's not an oil? It's not hydraulics?
A. No.
Q. And the equipment you're using to do this fusing, is it your company's equipment?
A. Yes.
Q. It's not Con Ed's?
A. No.
Q. Is it certified by Con Ed?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. And how do you know it's certified by Con Ed?

A. We have to take our fusion equipment to be inspected every 6 months.

Q. Every 6 months? Okay. And do they tag it or --

A. They tag it.

Q. Okay.

A. They put a tag with a date on it.

Q. How was the -- once you had that fitting on, you pressure tested, I assume -- I guess opened the outlet valve inside to relieve pressure?

A. Um-hum.

Q. How did you make that final tap into the main?

A. It's called a tapping tee.

Q. Is it a tool or --

A. It looks like, it looks like a -- I got the word on the tip of my tongue.

Q. Well, I know -- I'm familiar with the tee. I know there's a cutter inside.

A. Right. And --

Q. How are you turning that cutter?

A. By hand.

Q. You are -- okay. And when you were talking about inspectors earlier, is it always a different inspector from Con Ed that's on site? Since you didn't remember the name of the guy, it made me think maybe you don't --

A. I've seen him before. I've had him before --

Q. Okay.
A. -- I'm pretty sure. I mean --
Q. But not every job you work on --
A. No.
Q. -- you're not paired up with a single inspector?
A. No. No.
Q. Okay.
A. No.
Q. Okay. That's all I've got.
MR. CHHATRE: Kelly?
MR. EMEABA: Yeah. Just a few.
BY MR. EMEABA:
Q. When, before you install the service tee or saddle tee, what preparations are you expected to perform over the 8-inch plastic pipeline?
A. So you need -- make sure I could get underneath it to install my sidewinder.
Q. How do you clean it?
A. I clean it with alcohol wipes, rag, make sure it's free of all debris. Then I'll take an emery cloth, scrape it to get the -- there's a film on plastic and you have to remove that film. You have to get to virgin plastic. That's what we call it.
Q. So you use the emery cloth to --
A. To take away the --
Q. -- to wipe off. Which is, okay, just to remove the dirt

and what, contaminations?

A. Right. And then you set your tee onto your sidewinder and you bring it down, make sure you have a good fitting on the main, make sure the main is in EG (ph.) or flat because the tee comes in and -- that tee is specially made for that plastic, make sure it sits properly. And then you do your visual inspection of your iron, make sure, and you do your tempil stick, make sure it's the right temperature and you heat up the iron and you heat up the pipe.

Q. Okay. That's it?

A. That's it.

Q. That's it? Is that how you were qualified to do that?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. And is that how you have been doing it all the while?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. How do you perform or what preparations do you have to make in order to do electrofusion coupling?

A. Same. Except not with a sand, not with an emery cloth.

Q. What do you do?

A. It's called a scraper. It's like a paint scraper. You scrape the -- or it's called a half a moon. It has these little teeth in it and it goes around the pipe. You clean it, mark and measure your coupling, and once everything is clean and done, you take your coupling, you put it on and you bring it back and you

set it where you got to center it. You take your measurements, you put your clamp on and you shoot it.

Q. Okay. So on saddle fusion, you were never required to scrape it?

A. No, not scrape. You use an emery cloth.

Q. I know you use an emery cloth. You use it even for electrofusion. You use an emery cloth at all time to wipe all of them. You know, we try to cease from the alcohol because might affect it, but emery cloth, yes. So that just what I wanted to get from you, the fact that you're not expected to scrape it, because each pipeline do have the thin coating, which is, you know, glassy nature, which also do protect it even from the ultraviolet light, and which on electrofusion you're expected to scrape.

A. Right.

Q. That's why I'm asking you, because if you don't scrape it for electrofusion, it's not going to bond.

A. Right.

Q. Okay. But you just stated you are not expected to scrape that?

A. No.

Q. Okay. Now, in the past 5 years, if you can remember, how many of your joints --

MR. SINGH: I'm sorry, I'm not sure that's what he said.

MR. DIAZ: Wait. Yeah, I just got --

MR. SINGH: Yeah.

MR. EMEABA: What did -- can you repeat?

MR. SINGH: Yeah. You asked him if he scrapes it. He says you use a half a moon scraper to scrape it for electrofuse coupling?

MR. EMEABA: Yes, that's what I copy.

MR. SINGH: Right.

BY MR. EMEABA:

Q. From what he stated here, correct me if I quote you wrong, you use your half moon or whatever to scrape it for electrofusion?

A. Yes.

Q. But for saddle fusion, you don't scrape it?

A. No.

MR. SINGH: He uses an emery cloth.

MR. EMEABA: Emery cloth does not give you rough, a rough surface.

MR. SINGH: Well, when I -- right, that's --

MR. EMEABA: Yes.

MR. SINGH: -- that's not for us to decide here.

MR. EMEABA: It's not --

MR. SINGH: Let's not draw conclusions here, please.

MR. EMEABA: No, no, no. Based on what he's saying --

MR. DIAZ: Okay, it's either emery cloth or sandpaper.

MR. SINGH: That's his procedure. That's what he

follows.

MR. EMEABA: That's procedure.

MR. SINGH: He follows his procedure.

MR. EMEABA: That's what, that's what I asked --

MR. SINGH: And he follows the procedure. Correct?

MR. EMEABA: -- yeah, is that what procedure.

MR. SINGH: Right. Correct.

BY MR. EMEABA:

Q. You said yes?

A. Yes.

Q. So we are already finished with that.

A. Okay.

Q. Yeah, that -- you don't scrape it during saddle fusion?

A. Right.

Q. You just emery cloth using wiping it?

A. Right.

Q. But for electrofusion, you wipe it with emery cloth and you also scrape it with a half moon?

A. Correct.

Q. That's what you stated, and that's okay. And I ask you is that according to procedure?

A. Yes.

Q. You said yes.

A. Right.

Q. So that's fine. And then my other question I was about

to ask, in the past 5 years, at least, you know, can you recall how many of your joint fusions you've made that after you thought about it, that it wasn't well made, you have to cut it out and redo it, or an inspector observe it, say that's not right, and you have to cut it out and redo it?

A. How many?

Q. Yes.

A. I -- that I can't --

Q. Can you just give us a little bit of an idea?

A. Me, personally, none.

Q. It has never happened?

A. Maybe once, twice, if that.

MR. STOLICKY: Have you had any failures on the pressure test?

MR. DIAZ: No. No.

MR. EMEABA: All right. Thank you. That's it for now.

MR. CHHATRE: Frank?

MR. McCARTON: Nothing.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

MR. STOLICKY: I do, I have a couple follow-up questions.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

BY MR. STOLICKY:

Q. Do you have your OQ card with you? Could you show us? A lot of people here haven't seen one. That may answer my next

question, is how many tasks are you qualified for? And they should be listed on this, right?

A. These are my fusing quals.

MR. SINGH: Yeah, all but C&G card.

MR. DIAZ: All but C&G card. Everything that has an X, I'm qualified for.

MR. STOLICKY: So it's butt fusion, sidewall fusion, mechanical fitting, electrofusion. Those -- this is a fusion card?

MR. DIAZ: Yeah. That's (indiscernible).

MR. CHHATRE: And this is your 3-year?

MR. DIAZ: Yes.

MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. Thanks.

MR. CHHATRE: (Indiscernible) yearly --

BY MR. STOLICKY:

Q. So are you OQ'd to preform non-fusion tasks?

A. Excuse me?

Q. Are you OQ'd to perform any other tasks other than fusion?

A. Sure.

Q. I mean, excavation? I mean, you do tapping, obviously?

A. Yeah. I'm OSHA. I can do everything.

Q. Okay.

MR. SINGH: Except C&G card?

MR. DIAZ: Except C&G card. Yes, natural gas card, I

don't -- that's bottoming a building.

MR. NICHOLSON: Oh, okay.

MR. DIAZ: I don't want that.

MR. STOLICKY: Is that the same thing as re-lights or turn-ons?

MR. SINGH: No, it starts with being able --

MR. STOLICKY: Do you have the --

MR. SINGH: -- to put the building on bypass when the buildings are (indiscernible).

MR. STOLICKY: Okay.

BY MR. STOLICKY:

Q. Okay. The valve inside the building that you guys installed, is that right inside the wall or is that further down --

A. No, all inside the wall. It would be 2 to 4 inches from the foundation wall.

Q. On the outside of the building?

A. Inside.

Q. Inside the building? So it's right inside the building then?

A. Um-hum.

Q. Okay.

MR. NICHOLSON: Now, I want to be sure I heard that right, because at first I thought I heard 2 to 4 inches outside. It's 2 to 4 inches inside?

MR. DIAZ: Well, yes. Well, I meant to say from the inside wall.

MR. NICHOLSON: Okay. To the inside, interior of the building?

MR. DIAZ: Yes.

MR. NICHOLSON: Okay.

BY MR. STOLICKY:

Q. Did anything stick out in your mind as to any issues on that street, where there be fresh patches nearby or sinkholes or cars hitting bumps and going flying or anything along those lines stick out?

(Cell phone tone.)

MR. DIAZ: (Indiscernible).

BY MR. STOLICKY:

Q. Anything?

A. Traffic. I'm sorry.

Q. No, just (indiscernible).

The alcohol wipes, I'm not that familiar with using alcohol wipes. Is that in Con Ed's procedures?

A. Con Ed supplies them, yes.

Q. Okay. So, like I said, you answered my next question is you always use the same ones?

A. Yeah.

Q. You ever run out of them and, like, you know, spit on it or something and then --

A. No.
Q. -- cut it off?
A. No.
Q. Okay.
A. We don't run out of them.
Q. Okay. That's all I have.
BY MR. CHHATRE:
Q. Just a couple of quick ones. The pipe that you installed --
A. Yes.
Q. -- came in a roll, or was it straight pipe?
A. Straight pipe.
Q. That is 8-inch straight?
A. Straight.
Q. What about the 2-inch service?
A. Straight.
Q. Straight? So there's no curvature on the pipe?
A. No.
Q. And after the accident, did it occur to you that, oh, my God, I was the one who worked on that area of the accident? When you heard about the accident, what are the thoughts that came to your mind, if any? I'm not saying any thoughts came to your mind, but --
A. I was concerned, sure. You know, you know with --
Q. Anything from your company? Did anybody contact you or

did Con Edison contact you?

A. Well, not right away. I mean, my bosses, we all knew we did work there. They didn't --

Q. When did Con Edison contact you?

A. That I don't know. That -- my bosses would know better.

Q. Thank you so much. I appreciate your time.

MR. CHHATRE: Anybody -- Matt?

MR. NICHOLSON: Just a few follow-ups. Sorry.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay.

BY MR. NICHOLSON:

Q. You've got a lot of experience doing this, so you're a good resource. That's probably why this is going longer than you'd like. Since you've made a lot of fusion joints over the years, can you just tell me what is -- in that process you were describing with initial pressure, the soak time, and then the fusion pressure, what's the most critical part of putting together a good fusion joint for the sidewall fitting that we're talking about?

A. Your melt.

Q. The initial melt or the soak?

A. I would say the whole process, and then your final drop with pressure.

Q. So you -- there's not one --

A. Right.

Q. -- step in there that's like, if you were watching a new

guy in the trench, you'd be looking for? It's --

A. Not over-melt.

Q. Not over-melt? Okay. Meaning you've left the pressure on --

A. Well, yeah --

Q. -- I mean you had a pressure against the heater adapter?

A. Right.

Q. Okay. Because what happens with over-melt?

A. You sink the tee. That's what we call it. I don't know what it's called.

Q. Okay.

A. We call it --

Q. Can you just describe that? Because I don't know.

A. You get too much of the tee. You melt it, you know?

Q. Okay. And this -- to me that sounds like a better joint, right? Because you have more melt --

A. It's not bad. It just doesn't -- me, personally, I just don't -- you get more, you have more room because now you're this far away sometimes from where the outlet is.

Q. Oh it, does it mess up your alignment?

A. Right.

Q. Is that what you're saying?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay. All right. So over-melt would be bad. Okay. What about does soak time make any difference at all?

A. No.
Q. Okay. You mentioned visual inspection of the heater plate, I think, in your process steps when you were talking to Kelly. What is a visual inspection of the heater plate?
A. Make sure mine is, my plates are right, my gauges are working, all the screws are in it, it's not sitting in dirt or old plastic shavings that are in the bag or whatever. Make sure there's nothing on the iron itself.
Q. Okay.
A. It's an iron. It's hot.
Q. It's hot. Yeah, I know these things are --
A. You know, we wear sometimes gloves with coatings on them and then some guy touches it and like -- and, you know, don't say anything. Make sure your iron is properly functional.
Q. What kind of coating's on the gloves?
A. It's different gloves. It's just a work glove. I'm saying -- it doesn't have to be a specific glove. It's just --
Q. Yeah. But that's something that could happen, right?
A. Yeah, sure.
Q. I mean, somebody's got something on their gloves, they grab the irons and --
A. Possible.
Q. -- you could have something. So you're visually inspecting to check it?
A. Sure.

Q. You don't use the solvent wipes to clean the heater elements?

A. If it's dirty, you know, you make sure -- before you plug it in, you make sure it's fine --

Q. Okay. So clean heater plates --

A. -- so nothing melts in it.

Q. -- clean heater plates are important?

A. Sure.

Q. Okay. In your experience -- we were talking about inspections and just the work you do, how common are 2-inch tee installations? Is that something you do quite a bit? Or service line, service tees?

A. Sure. Sure.

Q. You do a lot of those?

A. Yeah.

Q. Okay. Is that something a Con Ed inspector would be wanting to witness?

A. Con Ed inspector wants to witness everything.

Q. Oh, they do? Okay.

A. Sure. That's their job is to inspect.

Q. I didn't get the impression this Con Ed inspector was actually overseeing that part of the work?

A. He will check. He will definitely check.

Q. Okay.

A. You know, it's his job.

Q. It's not considered routine work that --
A. That they're not there?
Q. That -- well, yeah, that's not something they have to witness, the tee installation?
A. No.
Q. Okay. What is -- I've heard the term cold weld. What does a cold weld mean in the fusion process?
A. A cold fuse.
Q. Or a cold fuse. Sorry.
A. Not enough heat on one side.
Q. Okay. It could be either side?
A. Yeah.
Q. Well, what's not enough heat? Because the spec's, like, 500 plus or minus?
A. Right, 475, 525.
Q. So anything --
A. The whole iron isn't getting hot, it's just partially checked one spot and --
Q. Have you ever had that happen?
A. That I can't recall.
Q. Okay. How often do you change out heater plates or heaters or --
A. You do --
Q. Do you ever?
A. Unless they're broken and they're not working when you

initially plug it in, you know. But you do your test on it, which are tempil sticks and make sure you got your press, your --

Q. You run that tempil stick all the way around to make sure it's heating --

A. Right across.

Q. Right across the front or the sides or --

A. Do it like the cross.

Q. Oh, you do the cross? Okay.

A. It's your four -- your corners is where you melt is, not in the middle.

Q. Okay. So you're looking for uniform temperature?

A. Yeah. Sure.

Q. Okay. That's all I have. Thanks.

A. Yeah.

MR. CHHATRE: No other questions?

MR. STOLICKY: Do you have your National Grid qualification card?

MR. DIAZ: That I don't.

MR. STOLICKY: So we can compare the two?

MR. DIAZ: No.

MR. STOLICKY: Okay.

BY MR. EMEABA:

Q. Do you always have your 2-inch plastic pipe supplied as straight pipes to you?

A. Always.

Q. Straight pipes?
A. Yes. In Manhattan, yes. In other I don't --
Q. Okay. In Bronx did they do it differently?
A. In the Bronx? No. Straight pipe.
Q. Straight pipe?
A. Um-hum.
Q. Not curve?
A. No.
Q. Okay.
MR. CHHATRE: Frank?
MR. EMEABA: Thank you.
MR. CHHATRE: Okay?
MR. McCARTON: I'm good, Ravi.
MR. CHHATRE: Lenny?
MR. SINGH: I'm good. Thank you.
MR. CHHATRE: Thank you so much for coming.
MR. DIAZ: Thank you.
MR. CHHATRE: I appreciate your time.
Off the record.
(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION PIPELINE LEAK AND MULTISTORY STRUCTURE EXPLOSION IN HARLEM, NEW YORK MARCH 12, 2014 Interview of Frank Diaz
DOCKET NUMBER:	DCA-14-MP-002
PLACE:	New York, New York
DATE:	August 4, 2014

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.

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Karen A. Stockhausen
Transcriber