UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	*	
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FATAL NATURAL GAS EXPLOSION	*	
IN SOUTH JORDAN, UTAH	*	Accident No.: PLD25FR001
ON NOVEMBER 6, 2024	*	
	*	

Interview of: [redacted], Operations Representative III
Enbridge Gas Utah

South Jordan, Utah

Sunday,
November 10, 2024

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National Transportation Safety Board

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I N T E R V I E W

MR. LAVALLEE: All right. My name is Scott Lavallee, and I am the NTSB emergency response group chair for this accident. We're conducting an interview on 10/24, I'm sorry, 11/10/24 with [redacted] who works for Enbridge Gas Utah.

This interview is in conjunction with NTSB's investigation of the accident in South Jordan, Utah. The NTSB accident reference number is PLD25FR001. The purpose of this investigation is to increase safety, not to assign fault, blame or liability.

Before we begin our interview and questions, let's go around and introduce ourselves. Please spell your last name and your title; we'll just spell our last name, say your title. I'll start off then pass it to my right.

And again, my name is Scott Lavallee. The spelling of my last name is L-a-v-a-l-l-e-e, and I am the NTSB emergency response group chair for this incident.

MR. HESS: Good morning. My name is Reid Hess. Last name's spelled H-e-s-s. I am the region manager for Enbridge Gas Utah.

MR. LYNUM: Morning. Sean Lynum; spelling S-e-a-n, last name Lynum, L-y-n-u-m. I am the chief of the pipeline and hazardous materials division at the NTSB.

MR. [redacted]: My name is [redacted], that's [redacted]. I work for Enbridge Gas. My operations, my title is operations representative III.

[redacted]: [redacted], [redacted]. I am the director of

operations for Enbridge Gas Utah.

MR. DAWSON: Chris Dawson, last name, D-a-w-s-o-n. I am the fire chief for the South Jordan Fire Department.

MR. JORGENSEN: Jacob Jorgensen. I'm an accident investigator with PHMSA, and my last name is spelled J-o-r-g-e-n-s-e-n.

MR. LAVALLEE: Thank you. So, a couple of things. [redacted], do we have your permission to record our discussion with you today?

MR. [redacted]: Yes.

MR. LAVALLEE: Okay. And also, do you understand that the transcripts will be part of the public docket and, as such, we couldn't guarantee any confidentiality?

MR. [redacted]: Yes.

MR. LAVALLEE: [redacted], we also afford you the opportunity to have a representative with you today, did you bring one?

MR. [redacted]: Yes.

MR. LAVALLEE: And who is that representative?

MR. [redacted]: That representative is [redacted].

MR. LAVALLEE: Okay, very good. All right, so here we go.

INTERVIEW OF [redacted]

BY MR. LAVALLE:

Q. First question I've got for you, [redacted], is just sort of background, right, so talk to me about your career specifically within the gas and pipeline world and training that's kind of gotten you to this point?

A. Sure. So, I've been working for the gas company, it was formerly Dominion, since 2018 and just kind of followed the typical career trajectory I suppose.

There's training for each level from utility worker to senior utility worker to operations I, representative I, operations representative II and then operations representative III, and each comes with different requirements I suppose, qualifications on each one.

You have to acquire your CDL and different things for the first promotion I suppose and then just various different things like training for gas field structures and different things going forward at each time.

Q. Okay. And is that training all provided by the company that you work for, or do you go outside to maybe some other training groups for that sort of training?

A. Yeah. It's all provided in house. We have a training center in Salt Lake, yeah, and then just internal trainers for the most part.

Q. Do you hold any, like, federal or state certifications in the position that you're currently working?

A. Other than a CDL which you guys, yeah, and just state I suppose. That's the only outside requirement I believe.

MR. HESS: [redacted], an operator qualification, does that, do you have any operator qualification?

MR. [redacted]: Oh, as far as, yeah, we have, I mean, I

suppose internal lists and things that's, yeah, I have them. They are operator qualifications that are listed within our company I suppose.

MR. LAVALLEE: It would be company specific qualifications?

MR. [redacted]: Yes.

MR. LYNUM: The position that you're in right now, is that the only position you've held with Enbridge, or have you held other positions within Enbridge?

MR. [redacted]: No, just this one, well, one category of, within operations, yes. The utility worker and senior utility workers just leads into operations I, rep I, II and III which are the same category of job I suppose you could say.

MR. JORGENSEN: So, what's your official title now?

MR. [redacted]: Operations representative III.

MR. JORGENSEN: III?

MR. [redacted]: Yes.

MR. JORGENSEN: Thank you.

BY MR. LAVALLEE:

Q. I'd like to go with the start of the day, right, tell me how your day started and that would have been, just for reference on the transcript, that was, been November the 6th, right, so talk me through your start of the day.

A. Yeah. So, I was assigned to service that day which is just a category that you respond to emergencies and things if they come up. Up until that point, I hadn't received any emergencies so

what we do in the meantime is go work on gas meters and just do maintenance on different gas infrastructure and things like that.

Q. And, [redacted], what time did you start the day?

A. Seven a.m.

Q. Seven a.m., okay. What were you doing immediately prior to the call regarding the explosion?

A. Finishing a valve change which is just typical maintenance on a gas meter. It was up in Kerns, I believe.

Q. Okay. Just doing typical maintenance, and I'm assuming maybe off of a list of maintenance items to get done if you're able for the day?

A. Yeah, that's correct.

Q. How did you receive notification of the incident?

A. Just initially a phone call from dispatch.

Q. Do you happen to recall what time that call came in, ballpark is fine if you're not 100 percent certain on the exact time?

A. Yeah, I mean, ballpark, it would have been right after, about 3:00, probably 3:15 or 3:20 or something like that.

MR. LYNUM: Just confirming it was your dispatch that you received a call from?

MR. [redacted]: Yes, that's correct.

MR. LAVALLEE: Where's that dispatch located, is it local?

MR. [redacted]: Salt Lake, the Salt Lake DNR, the Department of Natural, or not Department of Resources (indiscernible) it's the Salt Lake office.

MR. LAVALLEE: The Salt Lake office, okay.

MR. [redacted]: Yes.

BY MR. LYNUM:

Q. Can you talk a little bit about your duty hours and your work schedule and on-call rotations?

A. Sure. Our typical schedule is from about 7:00 to 4:30 each day. We work what's called a flex nine schedule. We actually have every other Friday off, just work longer hours during the week to compensate for that and have two rotating groups that each Friday.

We do go on call once every 6 or 7 weeks just with different on-call groups, and those call schedules last from Thursday to Thursday. In those cases, we still work our regular shifts during the day, we just respond to any emergencies that come up after the fact or after hours as well.

Q. Were you on call this week?

A. No.

Q. And did you get a good night's sleep prior to the incident?

A. Yeah, nothing unusual.

MR. DAWSON: For the on-call group, when's the changeover on Thursdays?

MR. [redacted]: After the shift ends. So, you still work your Thursday shift but once 4:30 comes, that's when the next group jumps on.

MR. LAVALLEE: Go back to the initial call that you got from

your dispatch, what sort of details were you given in that initial call?

MR. [redacted]: You know, they did say just generally that it seems there was an explosion and just to expect that when you're out on scene essentially, and that there was a lot of debris was the only other specific thing I remember them saying.

BY MR. HESS:

Q. [redacted], was that, did you receive one or two calls?

A. From dispatch?

Q. From dispatch, yeah.

A. Ultimately, I think, I mean, shoot, throughout the night, I probably got like (indiscernible).

Q. For initial response. Do you recall?

A. If I recall, it was only the one initial.

MR. HESS: Okay. All right, thanks.

MR. JORGENSEN: What areas do you normally cover?

MR. [redacted]: We cover everywhere from, there's really a specific boundary line. I could get into that if you'd like but, essentially, it's from almost Murray and Taylorsville and Kearns all the way up to Saratoga Springs is where our region office covers from.

MR. JORGENSEN: Can you guestimate about the square miles?

MR. [redacted]: Ooh, I would not be good at that.

MR. JORGENSEN: Okay (indiscernible).

MR. LAVALLEE: So, as far as the area that the event happened

in, right, the address immediately surrounding that area, how familiar are you with that area, what assets the company has as far as like lines and where they're at? Would you call yourself familiar with it, unfamiliar, somewhere in the middle?

MR. [redacted]: I'd say I'm familiar with the area but as far as like the specific underground gas lines and things like that, it's not something that I was out and about, you know, I'm trying to think of the best way to word it.

MR. LAVALLEE: Would that be something that, a person in your position would be expected to know, like, I've got a gas line here, there, or just kind of where your major ones are and then be able to look up all your branch lines?

MR. [redacted]: It's more, I would generally know where gas lines typically are in a neighborhood in that area, but I didn't know specifically where they were until you look at the maps.

MR. HESS: [redacted], how readily available are those maps to you?

MR. [redacted]: We've got access to them at all times through our computers.

MR. HESS: Why don't you talk a little bit about that access.

MR. [redacted]: Yeah. So, we've got a program on our computer call FieldSmart which is kind of the typical system, but then we have, it's a separate map that gives you different overlays and different things that you can add layers or remove layers, depending on what you're trying to find on the system.

It's got information about the locations of the gas lines and some visuals that you can, you know, if you needed to in certain instances locate the line, there's pretty good precision if you needed to excavate it for whatever reason.

MR. DAWSON: Is that in the application or a website?

MR. [redacted]: You know, so right now, the first one, FieldSmart, is an application. But we also have, I couldn't even say what it's called, it's field something, but it's, the other one's based on, like, a website that they have. It gives the exact same information actually so they're essentially just side-by-side applications.

MR. LAVALLEE: And you access both of those through, I'm guessing, a company-issued computer, is that correct?

MR. [redacted]: Yeah, that's correct, and it's only company accessible so it's not a public --

MR. LAVALLEE: Not public?

MR. [redacted]: Not a publicly available document.

BY MR. LYNUM:

Q. Is there a maximum distance before you would not be called on all, in other words, you're too far away, they pick somebody else?

A. No, I mean, at least not within our working area just because the response time that our company issues is within an hour is are, what we try to maintain. I think there's state requires it too, but I don't (indiscernible) but generally, they try to pick the service tech that's closest and most available.

Q. And how does Enbridge know where, who is the closest person?
A. Dispatch keeps track of those things.
Q. Like a GPS-type thing, or something like that?
A. I believe so, but I don't know for certain. I could just be assigned a service area.

MR. LAVALLEE: This is just for the record, this is Lavallee again. I'd just like to remind our panelists that prior to asking a question, please just go ahead and state who you are so our transcriptionist has a record of who it is that's asking the questions.

MR. LYNUM: Thanks for that.

MR. LAVALLEE: No worries. Did you have anything else, Sean, Mr. Lynum, with your previous question that you wanted to complete?

MR. LYNUM: No. I'm kind of (indiscernible) them as we go through the (indiscernible).

MR. LAVALLEE: Sure. This is Lavallee with the NTSB.

BY MR. LAVALLEE:

Q. [redacted], what time do you recall did you arrive on the scene of the incident that day?
A. It was between, it would have been between 3:30 and 3:50, I believe.
Q. So, sometime between 15:30 and 15:50, that'd be 3:30 and 3:50 p.m., is that correct?
A. Correct.

Q. Do you generally document your time of arrival?
A. Yes, and normally we just hit, we have a service application when we're doing work like this, we hit on site when we've arrived.
Q. And did you do that this day?
A. I did it within 10 minutes of arriving.
Q. Okay.
A. Yeah.
Q. That record of your arrival time is in the system somewhere?
A. It's -- yeah.
Q. Okay. Talk to me about upon your first arrival at the scene, what did you see?
A. Initially, I had to navigate through quite a lot of just neighbor's running around and their cars zipping around and things like that. There was, you know, a lot of the street was blocked off, whatever, probably a good 100-plus bystanders just trying to look at the scene and things and try to navigate through that.

But, yeah, when I showed up, the fire department already had some sections taped off and so I got through there. Yeah, there was a lot of debris from the building just spread out everywhere, things like that.
Q. So, talk to me about, you mentioned the fire department had erected some barriers, I'm assuming, I think that's how you described it. Did you have any issues getting through those and to the actual site?

A. No issues getting through there.
Q. Okay. So, you saw the debris, you saw a lot of bystanders?
A. Hm-hmm.
Q. I'm assuming you saw the fire department in action as well?
A. Yes.
Q. Tell me more about that.
A. They were actively still putting out the fire essentially, yeah, that's what they were doing (indiscernible).

MR. LAVALLEE: At this point, I'm going to, I want to pass it on to my right here to Reid Hess.

MR. [redacted]: Sure.

MR. HESS: [redacted], I don't have any specific questions for you. I may have some as the interview goes on.

MR. [redacted]: Okay.

MR. LYNUM: Okay. Sean Lynum, NTSB.

MR. LYNUM: So, you've been dispatched, can you walk us through everything you remember from the incident to include what you were doing at the time of dispatch, anything heard, seen or anyone you may have talked to, and please be as detailed as possible? I know it's been quite a few days since so just do the best you can.

MR. [redacted]: Yeah, I mean, I'm just not sure what there would have been to leave out. Basically, just was finishing up on that valve change and dispatch called said that there was an explosion, just went over there.

Sorry, do you remind repeating that then?

MR. LYNUM: Just anything heard, seen or anyone you may have talked to.

MR. [redacted]: Oh. I suppose I did receive calls from [redacted], [redacted], [redacted]. And then I got a call from [redacted], who's, I believe, the service lead on the call; that's [redacted]. I think those are the only two I received calls from on the way over there.

MR. HESS: [redacted], this is Reid Hess from Enbridge. Do you recall what the conversations were with both Chad and Thyan?

MR. [redacted]: Yeah, typically on a fire call or gas leak, you'll just get questions about, mostly they were actually asking if I was there yet or if I knew what was going on yet. I kept telling them I hadn't arrived yet.

MR. HESS: Reid Hess again. Do you recall either of them asking if you needed assistance?

MR. [redacted]: Yes. [redacted] asked if we needed more resources there so sure.

BY MR. LYNUM:

Q. Sean Lynum again with NTSB. Who's your first-level supervisor?

A. [redacted], [redacted], [redacted].

Q. Who was first on scene?

A. Myself as far as from our company.

Q. And you did describe a little bit about what the scene looked

like, can you talk a little bit about, and I know there's, talk about what you saw as far as the house, can you describe that scene a little bit more?

A. Yeah. It almost looked like it was a little bit caved in, you know what I mean, and then there was some damage to the house to it's left which I guess would have been to the north.

And then the garage was kind of across the street. I couldn't, I assumed it was blown that way, but unless the fire department drug it over there which I doubt.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess again, just for clarification purpose, you say the garage was across the street, was that the entire garage or the garage door?

MR. [redacted]: Garage door pieces, excuse me.

MR. LYNUM: Sean Lynum with NTSB.

BY MR. LYNUM:

Q. I think you said earlier the house was still on fire by the time you got there?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you know about how long after you got there when the fire was put out?

A. Ooh.

Q. Best guess, I mean, you don't need exact timings.

A. I mean, it depends on how you determine if it was just a little smoldering bits and things were, if that still counts as a fire I suppose, but another hour or two I suppose.

Q. Let's see. Any other responders on scene and, if so, who, that you saw?

A. I saw the fire department and then I think a Rocky Mountain Power representative as well, as far as I remember.

Q. When you were there, when you first got there, was the gas turned off to the house, or did the fire department already do that, or did you have to do that?

A. No. Oh, that's a good, that's a detail. So, the gas meter, where the gas meter was rather, was covered in parts of the house so it was not accessible at the time.

The gas was still on, but our gas line is installed with what's called an EFV so it limits the gas flow when it detects excessive flow.

That being said, so the fire department ultimately did shut the gas line off when we were able to clear it later, but the gas line, the gas meter was still on.

Q. Did you notice if the EFV actuated?

A. Ooh, I believe it -- I couldn't say. I'm sure it did.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge again. Do you recall seeing any signs of fire coming from the riser bottle in there?

MR. [redacted]: No, in fact, actually, Battalion Chief [redacted], [redacted], he actually requested that we go dig up and isolate the line to shut it off because it would occasionally flare up during the fire essentially.

And the reason for that is when the EFV activates, it'll still release just a little bit of pressure so that it'll eventually reset itself. But it must have been just enough that it was still occasionally catching a little bit of that flame nearby and it would activate again or, you know, there would be a little flame.

MR. HESS: Reid Hess again from Enbridge. Do you recall seeing the service valve and whether or not it looked like it had been exposed to any flame or part that looked burnt?

MR. [redacted]: No. The gas meter itself did not appear to be burned or anything like that.

MR. HESS: Thank you.

MR. LYNUM: Sean Lynum, NTSB. When you mentioned isolating, how did you conduct that, how did you do that?

MR. [redacted]: The way that we do it is we actually have to excavate it and then actually get to the gas line itself and then we have specific squeeze tools that can pinch down the line and stop the gas flow to it.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge. Were you present when this line was shut down? Were you present, were you with the group of individuals that shut the line down?

MR. [redacted]: I was actually, I was in the vicinity, but I was beginning to bar hole for, so I was not actually involved in the shut down of the gas line.

MR. HESS: So, you didn't see the specific steps that were

taken to shut the gas line down then?

MR. [redacted]: No, I did not.

MR. HESS: Okay, thank you.

MR. LYNUM: Sean Lynum, NTSB.

BY MR. LYNUM:

Q. Any evacuations were done and, if so, who conducted those evacuations?

A. I couldn't say. I believe the family was nearby, but I think the fire department was conducting that situation.

Q. Would you, now, you said that potentially the fire department may have done it, is it possible that Enbridge would conduct evacuations on your own based on your training and understanding of the gas in the situation?

A. Yes, that certainly happens, whether it's a gas-filled structure or a situation that requires it, yes.

Q. So, when you arrived, did you observe an incident command that was set up?

A. I actually specifically asked some of the firefighters if they had an incident command, and they just directed me to Battalion Chief Stone. That was the only direction I got from them as far as incident command goes.

Q. And when I say incident command, it doesn't have to be like a shack or an RV?

A. No.

Q. It could be the back of a trunk of a vehicle and so --

A. Sure.
Q. -- there's nothing unusual about that. How big of a safety perimeter can you recall that was set up?
A. It was probably two or, it was probably like three houses in each direction. Yeah.
Q. Let's see. So, you talked earlier, a little bit earlier about bar holing.

MR. LYNUM: Before I get into that, does anyone have any other questions about, before I start getting into bar holing?

MR. LAVALLEE: No, I assume that was going to be my question.

MR. JORGENSEN: This is Jorgensen. As far as for your training that you've had with Enbridge for OQ training, for general hazard training, do you feel for your position that you've been properly trained for the activities that you are desired to complete?

MR. [redacted]: Yes.

MR. DAWSON: I do. This is Dawson. Just a question, what are you trained to do when you respond to a fire event, like, what is your, what does a typical response for you look like?

MR. [redacted]: You know, in a typical fire, we'll generally just go ask the fire, well, whoever's in charge at the time whether they need assistance from us right away, whether that's isolating gas lines or shutting off the gas meter or anything else.

Most fires just require, or the typical thing that happens is

that they'll, the fire's either under control or very minor but then we usually shut off the gas meter and lock it and then just check for gas in the ground around the area. Usually, that's all that's really needed.

MR. DAWSON: How was this situation different?

MR. [redacted]: One, we couldn't really get to the gas meter so that was unavailable and then the, otherwise, I guess the -- hold on, let me think for a second.

MR. HESS: [redacted], this is Reid Hess from Enbridge. Have you responded to explosions in the past?

MR. [redacted]: No, not any explosions, no.

MR. HESS: What was unusual about the scene, from a normal fire scene that you've seen versus the scene of the explosion?

MR. [redacted]: I mean, just the general chaos of the event was unusual. I've been to active fires before, yeah, there was just a lot of commotion I suppose that's all. Nothing otherwise too unusual.

MR. LYNUM: Sean Lynum, NTSB again.

BY MR. LYNUM:

Q. Who were the other Enbridge employees that were on scene with you?

A. The first one that showed up was [redacted], [redacted] and then [redacted], and then later [redacted] arrived. I already spelled his name. Then later [redacted] and [redacted], [redacted], [redacted]; [redacted], [redacted].

They arrived later with the crew truck and additional resources.

Q. So, how many total people do you think from Enbridge were on scene at the maximum?

A. Sorry, I forgot [redacted] ended up showing up later, [redacted], [redacted].

So, that would have been me, [redacted], yeah, [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted] showed up. [redacted], yes, [redacted] showed up as well. [redacted]. I believe that's eight.

Q. I'm going to go ahead and get into bar holding if no one has any other questions.

Can you walk us through the bar holing procedure that you all did on scene?

A. Yes. So, after they, or we did begin excavating that line to the house that was damaged. We immediately put some bar holes around that area, right where we were digging just to establish where we were finding gas in the ground.

Typically, this was kind of a unique situation. We met with, we found gas in the ground in kind of sporadic areas which is very unusual.

Our typical bar hole shoot is pretty simple, honestly. You kind of make almost an X pattern and establish where the gas is strongest and, typically, you find a concentration at one point and kind of work your way out until you find zero gas.

But in this case, there was little pockets of gas in various areas that were high readings that were, ah, it's hard to say,

like a, it was definitely a little unusual as far as where the concentrations were.

Q. About how far apart were the holes?

A. Usually probably about five to eight feet apart.

Q. What was the weather like that day?

A. A pretty nice day, I mean (indiscernible).

Q. And the soil, had it been raining previously, was it soft, was it hard baked clay?

A. I mean, there were parts, in fact, a couple parts of the soil, I think it was just wet from the sprinklers or in line with the water from the fire hoses and things like that, but there were (indiscernible) all sorts of soils. There'd be a few parts that we had to dig a bar hole in different spots 'cause the soil there is rocky and things like that. Also, it's landscaping and all sorts of different soil types, I suppose.

Q. Any problems with water retreated in some of your bar holing?

A. Yeah, that happened. We have bar hole probes and on an occasion, one filled up with water so we had to replace it with a separate one.

Q. How did you establish a perimeter for the bar holing? I know you talked about the X, I mean, did you work your way from the center out, did you go from the out in?

A. Usually we, if there's a concentration of gas, we'll usually start from there. But this case, we actually started at the T which is the part of the gas main where it branches off to the

service line that goes to the line that goes to the house essentially.

We started there, found some gas and we started our way towards the house just to see if there was any gas over the service line going over to the house and then, but then we ended up bar holing along the main in each direction. That's kind of how we started our T and then it ended up just trying to follow the gas in different directions.

Q. Was there more than one person doing the bar holing at the same time?

A. Not at the same time, but we did have to switch off from time to time.

Q. Any issues with getting the bar hole reads?

A. No, no issues with getting the readings from the machine.

Q. What type of equipment were you using?

A. It's a SENSIT GOLD G3 gas detector.

Q. How do you calibrate that?

A. We take it into our office at Eagle Mountain. We have a machine that we just hook it into and it'll calibrate itself for the most part.

Q. How often do you do the calibration?

A. Once a month.

Q. Once a month. Who actually does the calibrations, is it a separate technician that does that?

A. No, we just do it ourselves.

Q. And you got the OQs everything for training to conduct that?
A. I wouldn't say there is an OQ to that one for calibration.
Q. But you think you used specific training and documenting?
A. Yeah, we know how to do it.
Q. Do you wear any type of gas monitor when you're on scene?
A. On our person?
Q. Yes.
A. No.
Q. Was there any air monitoring going on, on scene that you could recall?
A. Not as far as I can recall.
Q. You mentioned earlier about having maps to know where the lines were, just walk me through a little bit, in relation to the front of the house versus the rear of the house or the side so on, as to which line did you go to first and then transition to any other lines potentially leading up to and including the service line?
A. Yeah. I only stayed on the front side of the house which is where all our gas mains were except for the ones of 3200 West over there, but we just started on the gas lines, the gas main that goes in front of the house.

And then our leak investigation ended up going from the gas main directly in front of the house to the houses on either side and then those service lines for those two houses as well.

Was that your question, sorry?

Q. Yes.
A. Okay.
Q. I know I'm asking a lot of questions, sorry. How far out was, did your bar holing go away from the house itself?
A. I mean, anywhere from up to the service line that we actually ended up bar holing even across the street towards the circle and then, you know, we check the sewer mains, like, sewers and storm drains and things like that as well.

Yeah, the leak screening extended to the houses on either side and then actually on the north side even just to the house beyond that as well.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge. Did you get to a point on the north and south end of those where you had zeros, had no gas?

MR. [redacted]: Yes, we did.

MR. HESS: Because I'm familiar with the scene, to the west of it, to the west of the homes, did you get any readings on the west side of 3210?

MR. [redacted]: Yes, but I was not the one that got those readings.

MR. LYNUM: Sean Lynum, NTSB again. So, the main, can you describe how the main is set up on that street? Is it under a sidewalk, is it under a road, you know, that kind of situation?

MR. [redacted]: Yeah. So, in this case, it was 18 feet back of curb which is the curb on that edge of the street there so it

was just behind where the sidewalk and things would be, like, kind of between, in the customer's lawn essentially.

MR. LYNUM: I'm going to proceed and ask him about the excavation so if there's any other questions on bar holing or whatever.

BY MR LYNUM:

Q. Walk us through the excavation, you know where the main is, please describe how you started excavating them, the tools you were using, the procedures you were following?

A. Sure. Actually, to be honest, [redacted], who was the construction lead at the scene, conducted the excavations and things like that.

They did bring in a mini excavator to assist with that. But the initial digging up the first T, they just did by hand actually. I was actually not involved with that.

In fact, other than just lifting a few shovels of dirt out of the separate hole that we dug later for, to try to isolate the lines, I didn't do much digging at all to be honest with you.

Q. You mentioned the excavator, about how deep was the main buried?

A. Probably three feet-ish, give or take.

Q. Can you describe as best as you could tell from the excavation and, again, I understand you may not have been there for whatever, is there a procedure when using the excavator that you're aware of on how to use that, you don't really know, or

maybe you do know how deep it is?

A. Yes, I mean, we call in Blue Stakes or emergency Blue Stakes rather to try to avoid hitting any utilities and things.

I think South Jordan had sent in some folks to try to locate the lines that went to their lamps that are in that area 'cause it's not listed by Rocky Mountain Power or anything like that.

But, yes, you're supposed to just dig and -- let's see, I'm trying to think of the best way to word it. But, yes, we just dig until you -- let me start over, I'm sorry.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge.

BY MR. HESS:

Q. When you're out excavating those lines, does the heavy equipment take the top of the soil off?

A. Yes.

Q. And then does it dig straight down to the pipeline, or does one stop and start to look for the pipeline before the excavator gets there?

A. No. We generally just take, we take the top layer off and then you kind of hand dig when you're pretty close or when it's soft enough to start digging, hand digging, then you just hand dig down to the gas line. And then once we expose it, the excavator will dig on either side to make it easier to access the gas line.

MR. LYNUM: Please describe the type of soil that you were encountering once you got just around the main? What kind of soil were you seeing?

MR. [redacted]: It was just type, it was just normal loose soil.

MR. LYNUM: Soil?

MR. [redacted]: Yeah, nothing unusual.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge again.

BY MR. HESS:

Q. When you took the top off, what was the soil like?

A. Well, the top layers were just grass and normal --

Q. I'm sorry, once you got the grass off, what was the soil like? I recognize you weren't involved in a lot of the excavations there, do you recall was it rocky and dirty, rocky dirt, or was it sand all the way down?

A. Oh, it was rocks and dirt just type of soil.

Q. When you got to the main in the, you weren't, I don't believe you were involved in the excavation on [redacted] but maybe you were on [redacted], the house north of the home that got -- when you got to the main there, do you recall if there was any sand around the main or if it was rock and dirt there as well?

A. I actually don't recall.

MR. HESS: All right, thanks.

MR. LYNUM: Sean Lynum again, NTSB. Were you there when the main itself or the area in the main that the rupture had occurred in or the leak had occurred in?

MR. [redacted]: I don't actually, I'm not even certain that I -- actually, say that again, sorry.

MR. LYNUM: So, were you able to see the condition of the pipe where the rupture occurred at some point before they actually started taking it, took it out of the ground?

MR. [redacted]: I actually was not aware that we found any rupture in the gas line.

MR. HESS: [redacted], do you recall what time you left the scene the following morning?

MR. [redacted]: It was just before 7:00.

MR. HESS: And do you know if any excavation occurred on 3200 West prior to you leaving, 3200 West where a leak was eventually found?

MR. [redacted]: We never, while I was there, we did not excavate in that area, no.

MR. JORGENSEN: Can I clarify that 7 that you mentioned, that was 7:00 a.m. in the morning?

MR. [redacted]: Seven a.m., correct.

MR. JORGENSEN: Thank you.

BY MR. DAWSON: This is Dawson.

Q. How long after your arrival did you recognize that there was a potential gas leak?

A. You know, it was probably not until we began excavating the service line when we initially found some gas in the ground that I started to suspect, which was probably about an hour after I got on scene 'cause Battalion Chief [redacted] initially just had us standing by and waiting to, you know, stay out of the way a little

bit and then just wait for instruction. So, it took a little while for us to actually start doing anything in regards to the gas lines.

But at the time, there was, up until that point, I didn't have any idea if there was any kind of gas at all.

Q. At that point that you recognized there may be a gas leak, how does that your change on scene operations?

A. Except that we were much more concerned about the adjacent houses at that point, you know, if there was gas filling up in those structures or not.

We did ultimately end up clearing those houses with our SENSIT. By that I mean, we just went inside and ensured that there was no gas build up inside those houses. But that's really the only different thing that we would have been doing.

Q. This is Dawson still. Did you detect gas in any of the adjacent houses?

A. I will, there was, in the strongest reading that I got in the house to the north was five percent LEL which is the lower explosive event in one room that had the windows blown out, but the rest of the rooms were, there were trace amounts but less than that.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge. Was it five percent LEL, or was what it point five percent LEL that you found inside the home?

MR. [redacted]: It was five percent.

MR. HESS: Okay, thank you.

MR. LAVALLEE: [redacted], this is Scott Lavallee with NTSB. You mentioned that in that home, and we just clarified a five percent LEL, Lower Explosive Limit, is five percent a clear and present risk for explosion or if there is a level at which that then becomes kind of an eminent danger, what is that level?

MR. [redacted]: No, so 100 percent LEL would be the level at which the gas hypothetically could combust.

MR. LAVALLEE: So, 100 percent meaning we have a severe risk of combustion whereas that five percent that you talked about, that would be relatively low risk, is that correct?

MR. [redacted]: That's correct.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge. At what level do you evacuate because of natural gas inside the home?

MR. [redacted]: Twenty percent LEL, one percent gas.

MR. HESS: Thank you.

MR. LYNUM: Sean Lynum, NTSB.

BY MR. LYNUM:

Q. When you got on scene, did you smell natural gas?

A. Surprisingly, no.

Q. During your work on the scene, when did you start, if you can recall, when did you actually start smelling or the odorant of natural gas?

A. You know, actually, I'll admit, I didn't smell any during the, pretty much the whole time which was surprising given the

levels that we were finding in the ground.
Q. Is it possible that while you were there, your nose could become numb to that smell, or do you pretty much when you're working, you're like, no, I could be there for two hours, I'm still not smelling it kind of thing?
A. It's possible but, generally, you'll smell it, yeah, especially in concentration.
MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge. Do you know if anybody did any odorant level testing on the job site that day, are you aware of any?
MR. [redacted]: Yes. As far as I know, [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], from, I want to say pipeline safety, you know, the safety pipeline, measurement control, excuse me, he came and they checked that for proper odorant levels in the area.
MR. HESS: Reid Hess again. Did you hear whether those levels were present or not, did you hear the results of the testing?
MR. [redacted]: Yes. I wasn't directly involved in the conversation but as far as I know, he said that they were, the odorant levels were normal and the way they should be.
MR. HESS: Thank you.
MR. LYNUM: Sean Lynum, NTSB.
BY MR. LYNUM:
Q. Did you have an opportunity to talk to some of the occupants in the adjoining houses, or were you present when they were talked

to by other representatives that were on scene? Did they mention anything about the smell of natural gas or having the smell of the odorant?

A. The neighbors to the north just asked that we come in and, one of them did say that they thought they smelled gas in their house so they would just like us to go clear it or check it for gas real quick.

On the first time that we went in their house, it was actually Mason that ended up going in there so I didn't talk to them much at that point.

I think later in the evening, we just checked the houses again just for, you know, just to be sure that nothing was building up or anything like that and just had some casual conversations with them then.

But by that point, it wasn't because they smelled it, it was just more for our peace of mind essentially.

Q. Do you recall the house that you, they said you, they wanted you to go in, what direction from the scene?

A. Oh, to the north.

Q. The first house to the north?

A. The first house and the second house, yeah.

MR. HESS: First and second, okay. Thank you.

MR. LAVALLEE: Scott Lavallee, NTSB, [redacted].

BY MR. LAVALLEE:

Q. You had mentioned that you arrived on scene somewhere between

15:30, 15:50, and you, was your first action to try to contact the incident commander with the fire department?

A. Yes, I went straight up to Battalion Chief [redacted] and just asked if there was anything I could do to help. He just requested that I stand by probably.

Q. Lavallee again. Point of clarification, I just wanted to make sure 'cause I jotted down from your previous response that you were directed to Battalion Chief [redacted]?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay, so your initial contact would have been with a fireman to ask who do I need to talk to then you were directed to [redacted]?

A. That's correct.

Q. Just wanted to clarify on that. And you had also mentioned in some of your previous testimony that the fire department had asked that initially you kind of maintained a little bit of standoff, right, to allow the fire department to do their job, am I correct in that?

A. To clarify I guess, his actual words were, would you mind standing by.

Q. Okay. Just sort of standby.

A. He didn't restrict my movement or anything like that if that's what you're asking.

Q. And the point of my question would be, did that initial, hey standby, did that impede your tasks at all in any way, shape or form?

A. Yes. I mean, essentially that means, you know, just to wait for their instruction. I wasn't going to go in the way of other firefighters when they were actively putting out the fire, I mean, at least logically that wouldn't make sense.

Q. Understood. In your opinion, was that request from the battalion chief to standby in the interest of your and your work group safety or what --

A. I'd imagine so.

Q. I'm sorry?

A. I imagine so.

Q. Imagine so, okay. But in the overall scheme of things, do you feel that you could have performed your job more efficiently had you not been asked to standby?

A. Not necessarily, no.

Q. Okay. So, your overall efforts were not impeded?

A. Oh, no, sorry.

MR. LAVALLEE: All right. That was what I was trying to get to, thank you.

MR. LYNUM: Sean Lynum, NTSB again. Just real quick, this probably will be last question. Prior to leaving, I think you said sometime at 7:00?

MR. [redacted]: Just before 7:00 a.m.

MR. LYNUM: How much trenching had been done that you could see in the location of the trenching?

MR. [redacted]: The only trenching that had occurred to that

point was up by the side of the explosion up on, in the neighborhood where we had just excavated the gas lines to pressure test them essentially.

MR. LYNUM: And specifically, are we talking service lines, the main?

MR. [redacted]: Mostly just the main and the Ts where they branch off, those were the only places that we exposed. So, for the most part, just the main and then just little tiny sections of the service line.

MR. HESS: [redacted] do you -- Reid Hess from Enbridge.

BY MR. HESS:

Q. Do you recall what separate sections of main and service lines were tested that night?

A. Yes. Specifically, we dug up the service line to the house that had the explosion, the house to the north and then the house to the south so exposed the Ts and the mains on all three of those houses.

Q. And then --

A. And then one other one across the street leading to the circle where we ultimately tested the section going under the road as well.

Q. Hey, Reid Hess again from Enbridge. Do you recall how many sections of main were tested that night?

A. I believe it would have been two because it would have gone from the house on the north and the south side of the house that

exploded and then the section from the house on the north side to across the street so that would have been two, I believe.

Q. Thank you. Do you recall, was there anything unique that had to be done to enable the ability to test the main that was running from the two inch on the east side of the, to the cul-de-sac on the west?

A. Oh, yes. So, I believe what you're asking is, so the main that led to the circle which was across the street, it dead ended at the end there.

The only way, so in order to keep the gas supplied to the customers that were there, we had to bring in a CNG trailer -- oh, that does remind me [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], was called to show up later with a CNG trailer, is what it's called, Compressed Natural Gas, to help supply gas to those houses in the circle while we conducted the pressure test on the gas line that went under the street, across the street if that makes sense.

MR. HESS: Thanks, [redacted].

MR. [redacted]: Yes.

MR. LYNUM: I lied, I have one more question. Sean Lynum, NTSB. So, could you talk about the depth of cover for the service lines that you, just about how deep were the lines in there?

MR. [redacted]: About three or four feet, something.

MR. LYNUM: Thank you. That's all the questions I have.

MR. LAVALLEE: Scott Lavallee, NTSB.

BY MR. LAVALLEE:

Q. So, the depth of three to four feet that you described from the services lines and the mains that were being excavated and tested, is that set standard? Would we expect to see them any deeper or shallower than that?

A. As the lines go closer to the houses, they'll get a little more shallower, up to 18 inches I believe.

Q. But nothing irregular with what you saw as far as the depths of the lines?

A. Nothing unusual.

Q. Okay. Just to kind of recap here. I believe we established that you eventually left at about 7:00 the following morning?

A. True.

Q. During that time with all the bar holing that had been done, the isolation and pressure testing of lines, by that time, by the time you left, were you aware of a clear source or leak of any of the gas that you had been finding through your bar holing efforts?

A. Actually, up to that point, no. The gas mains were actually holding the pressure find, no leaks showing up there. Yeah, and as far as I know, we even pressure tested the line that went up to the house that exploded, and it held pressure so it didn't show any indications of a leak.

Q. So, just to be clear, [redacted] -- this is Scott again, Lavallee, NTSB. Throughout all the isolation, the efforts, the bar holing, we're still finding gas concentrations within the soil

sporadically, I think were your words, right, but no known source at that point by the time you left, is that correct?

A. That's correct.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge. Prior to you departing that day, do you recall being involved in any bar holing on 3200 West?

MR. [redacted]: Yes, I was --

MR. HESS: Can you talk a little bit about what occurred over there and what was find?

MR. [redacted]: Sure. It was still very early on, on the 3200 West side, but we relocated all of our efforts to that area. We had the crew truck drill holes down the center strip of 3200 West and bar holed down those drill holes to get readings over there.

MR. LAVALLEE: Scott Lavallee, NTSB. [redacted], what then caused that shift from the immediate neighborhood and that branch main that was running through the customers' front yards, what caused that shift now to the 3200 West side which would have been the backside of that house? What caused that shift, what led us to then to start bar holing there?

MR. [redacted]: Well, we had concluded pretty much all our efforts on the initial side, you know, the front side of the property. But I don't recall who it was, but somebody from Enbridge said that they discovered gas over there I think, and that they wanted to get more information about it essentially.

MR. LAVALLEE: Okay. So, just to kind of clarify, all the bar

holing isolation testing within the front half of that neighborhood, that main going through the street and the service lines, that had all not bared any fruit as far as a leak evident and then just prior to you leaving, it seems as though you're describing those efforts now shifting to 3200 West because some of the bar hole readings in the general area might have suggested that that's where our leak was coming from, is that correct?

MR. [redacted]: That is correct.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge again. Do you, are you able to estimate the distance of the main or the bar holes in the center of 3200 West to the homes that were affected versus the distance of mains that were on the east side of those homes?

MR. [redacted]: Yeah. I'm kind of bad at just guesstimating distances, but it was, you know, from the -- actually, would you mind repeating that one more time?

MR. HESS: The distance of the, approximate distance of the main from the affected structures to the main on 3200 West. And if you can't guess, you can't guess, that's fine.

MR. [redacted]: Well, no, the only issue is that I never actually saw the -- I don't know, I did it --

MR. HESS: Let me rephrase, to the bar holes in the center of the road.

MR. [redacted]: Oh, right. From the center of the road to the houses, it was a good probably 150 plus yards away from the house.

MR. HESS: Okay.

MR. LAVALLEE: Lavallee, NTSB.

BY MR. LAVALLE:

Q. About 150 yards is what you're saying from the house?

A. Yes, correct.

Q. That's to the, from the houses to the main on 3200 West, is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. Versus, how about the distance between the house to the main that we were initially bar holing around in the neighborhood?

A. Yeah, probably 25 to 30 yards or so.

Q. Okay. The initial main that you were testing and the service lines within the neighborhood was much closer than the 3200 West, is that correct?

A. That's correct, yes.

Q. So, with that being said, would it be fair to say that focusing your efforts on the neighborhood main first --

A. It made sense.

Q. -- would make the most sense?

A. Uh-huh, absolutely, yeah.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge again. Just to clarify, you were obtaining natural gas readings on the main on the 3210 West side, the ones that were close the homes? You were obtaining natural gas readings during the entire investigation, right?

MR. [redacted]: Yes, consistently.

MR. LAVALLEE: Scott Lavallee, NTSB.

BY MR. LAVALLEE:

Q. Any obstacles to your efforts or the efforts of Enbridge in general that evening that you can speak to?

A. No, nothing that --

Q. Okay. Is there anything that in retrospect looking back on the events of that day that would have made your task, your jobs, your response easier or better?

A. No, nothing to unusual.

Q. And my final question, would there be anyone that you would suggest that this panel interview to kind of get some clarification? Anyone that you think we should talk to?

A. No, nothing, nobody specific.

MR. LAVALLEE: I have no additional questions. I'll turn it over to Jake from PHMSA. Jake, anything additional?

MR. JORGENSEN: No further questions, thank you.

MR. LAVALLEE: Reid, Enbridge, anything further?

MR. HESS: Nothing from me. [redacted], thank you.

MR. [redacted]: Of course.

MR. LAVALLEE: And, finally, Sean Lynum, NTSB, anything for you, sir?

MR. LYNUM: I hate to say yes. I do have one last question. I hope, my last question is this. Sean Lynum, NTSB. The main in the front of the house as well as in the rear, can you describe the size of the line and the makeup of that main, what type of

plastic are we talking about here?

MR. [redacted]: Yes. They're polyethylene lines. The gas main going across the street I know for sure was inch and a quarter I believe. I believe that the main going across was two inch, like, maybe they're both, I can't recall.

But inch and a quarter to two inch for sure on the side, the neighborhood side, I believe 3210 West.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge Gas. What colors were the mains that you exposed on the 3210 West?

MR. [redacted]: They were yellow.

MR. HESS: And do you, were you present when the main on 3200 West was exposed?

MR. [redacted]: No.

MR. HESS: Thank you.

MR. LAVALLEE: Scott Lavallee, NTSB. One final just since it was brought up, a clarification for my part. What is the significance of the color of the pipe?

MR. [redacted]: Oh. So, we have a lot of older gas lines in our system called, that's Aldyl A and it's more of a tan kind of pink-ish color. Functionally, they're the same but it's just worth noting the difference 'cause the age of the pipe. The yellow pipe's generally a lot newer.

MR. LAVALLEE: Is the composition of the yellow pipe different than the pink-ish pipe that you described?

MR. [redacted]: I think the material's a slight different

makeup, but they're both plastic essentially.

MR. HESS: [redacted], Reid Hess from Enbridge. Are you knowledgeable about the different makes, a makeup of different plastic pipes?

MR. [redacted]: It's not my specialty I suppose.

MR. HESS: Okay, thank you.

MR. LYNUM: No more questions. Sean Lynum, NTSB, no further questions.

MR. LAVALLEE: With that, [redacted], we may have some follow-up questions for you, would you mind if we contact you given the contact information that you provided me with prior to the interview?

MR. [redacted]: Sure, no problem.

MR. LAVALLEE: Okay. Then, [redacted], on behalf of NTSB and the panel assembled here today, I would like to thank you for your time and cooperation.

MR. [redacted]: Happy to help.

MR. LAVALLEE: That concludes the interview. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	FATAL NATURAL GAS EXPLOSION IN SOUTH JORDAN, UTAH ON NOVEMBER 6, 2024 Interview of [redacted]
ACCIDENT NO.:	PLD25FR001
PLACE:	South Jordan, Utah
DATE:	November 10, 2024

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.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Transcriber