

DCA16FP003 – 8701 Arliss Street, Silver Spring, MD – House Explosion and Fire Accident.

Washington Gas should provide response to the following;

- 1. Explain in details what research, engineering assessment and management decision that the gas company had considered to enable your installation of commercially available propane methane gas detectors (natural gas detector) at a location in all structures and buildings where your gas meters and pipeline facilities are located inside the building. This natural gas detector, installation should be reliable and geared to protect life and property by accurately sensing the release of natural gas in air, inside the room, and generate an audible alarm.***

RESPONSE:

The Company is not actively working to install natural gas detectors in customer's premises. The odorization of gas is the method used by the Company to create local awareness of the presence of gas in air. It has been a reliable and effective means to warn of the presence of leaks and accidental releases. However, since May of 2015, the Company has supported efforts to explore hurdles to customer adoption of gas detection technologies through its involvement in Research and Development (R&D) efforts at the Gas Technology Institute (GTI), specifically the Residential Methane Detectors Program. The objective of the effort is to create a comprehensive program for achieving full customer adoption of cost effective, reliable, accurate and readily available residential methane detectors. The program includes technology development and evaluation, codes and standards development, stakeholder engagement and economic and market analysis.

Below is an excerpt to a previously provided data request (DCA16FP003-ER-8.23.2016-DR.001.GTI) that discusses how Washington Gas is working with GTI on residential methane detection. A revised version of this data request is attached.

Residential Methane Detectors Program – The objective for this initiative is to create a comprehensive program for achieving full customer adoption of cost effective, reliable, accurate and readily available residential methane detectors. The initiative will include technology development and evaluation, codes and standards development, stakeholder engagement, and economic and market analysis. The effort is currently initiating a comprehensive field pilot program to evaluate the commercially available detectors that performed well during laboratory evaluations conducted in an earlier phase.

In addition, below are some (publically available) links showing GTI presentations describing their R&D efforts on methane detectors:

GTI Presentation to Northeast Gas Association – [Sept 2014]  
[http://www.northeastgas.org/pdf/p\\_armstrong\\_res\\_methane.pdf](http://www.northeastgas.org/pdf/p_armstrong_res_methane.pdf)

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Residential Methane Gas Detector Testing Program (OTD proj no. 1.9.h) – July 2010 – updated [March 2013]

[http://www.ttoolbox.com/documents/OTD\\_TOC/13-0003\\_TOC.pdf](http://www.ttoolbox.com/documents/OTD_TOC/13-0003_TOC.pdf)

GTI Presentation to Energy PA - Residential Methane Detector Pilot Study – OTD [March 2016]

<http://www.energypa.org/assets/files/2016/June%20%203/Presentation%20Papers/Presentation%20-%20Bob%20Morris.pdf>

GTI presentation to VASCC [October 2015] & to NAPS [Sept 2015]

<https://www.scc.virginia.gov/urs/pipe/pres/15PSC7.pdf>

- 2. Explain in details, if there is any condition that could hinder such effort and what plans you are pursuing to overcome the situation, and to ensure that propane methane gas detectors (natural gas detectors) are installed on inside building, located gas meters throughout your pipeline system.**

RESPONSE:

The work conducted at GTI will improve the Company's understanding of the anticipated consumer behavior, the fitness for purpose of available equipment from the standpoint of detection level and false positives, repeatability, the effect of the location of devices within premises on performance, and the adequacy of existing standards such as Underwriter's Laboratories (UL). Through the execution of the program, the Company's understanding of how these detectors perform and are used will allow determinations on the proper role of this technology in its safety public awareness programs by offering technically validated information regarding the reliability and enhanced safety that in-home methane detectors might provide.