



Weekly Update: November 4, 2010

APGA Board Approves Three New Members to the Public Gas Policy Council

At the November 1, Board Meeting of the APGA Board of Directors, the Board approved the nomination of three new elected officials to the Public Gas Policy Council (PGPC). The PGPC is an advocacy group made up of elected and appointed officials from public gas communities. The primary purpose of the PGPC is: (1) to assist APGA in moving legislation forward that is important to its members, (2) to oppose harmful legislation, and (3) to provide advice on other legislative related issues of importance to APGA. The group also serves as a forum for elected officials to discuss public gas issues.

New PGPC members added this year include: Jamie Tillery, mayor of the City of Bay Minette, AL; Billy McQueen, utility manager for the City of Booneville, MS; and Kathy Waldrop, vice chair of the Grey Forest, TX Utilities Board.

PGPC members come to Washington D.C. each year in May to participate in the APGA Government Relations Conference that includes meeting with their representatives to discuss public gas issues. Locally elected and appointed public officials have a strong, persuasive, and authoritative voice in Washington, D.C. with their elected representatives in both the House and Senate. Having a core group of elected officials carry the public gas message to Congress has significantly strengthened APGA's advocacy efforts. If you have an elected or appointed official from your community that would be a good advocate for public gas it is not too late to submit that individuals name for the PGPC. If you have questions about this article or the PGPC, please contact Dave Schryver at 202-464-2742 or dschryver@apga.org.

FERC Commissioner Expresses Support for Section 5 Reform

On October 29, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) upheld a decision to end an investigation into Northern Natural Gas pipeline rates. In a statement that accompanied that decision, recently appointed Commissioner LaFleur expressed her support for reform of Section 5 of the Natural Gas Act. Commissioner LaFleur's support is significant since she had yet to take a position on the issue and with her support; it once again means that the Commission is unanimous in regard to its support for Section 5 reform.

In her statement, the Commissioner communicated, "I believe that this proceeding clearly demonstrates the need for reform of Section 5 of the NGA to prevent the asymmetry of leverage between applicants under Section 4 and complainants or the Commission under section 5. As happened here, without Commission authority to set a refund effective date upon institution of a complaint or investigation under Section 5, a pipeline can threaten to file a general section 4 rate case and move those rates into effect prior to the date by which a Commission order in the section 5 proceeding could lower those rates. This situation places the parties supporting the section 5 proceeding in a difficult situation in that they may be forced to pay even higher rates without refund relief for some period of time. It also hampers the Commission's efforts to ensure just and reasonable rates. I therefore support legislative action to amend the NGA to provide the Commission with refund authority in Section 5, similar to that provided under section 206 of the Federal Power Act."

APGA had met with the Commissioner soon after she was appointed and APGA leadership will meet with her again, as well as the other Commissioners, in early December. If you have any questions on this article, please contact Dave Schryver of APGA's staff by phone at 202-464-2742 or by email at dschryver@apga.org.

PHMSA Issues Emergency Preparedness Advisory

On November 2, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) issued an advisory bulletin to remind operators of gas and hazardous liquid pipeline facilities that they must make their pipeline emergency response plans available to local emergency response officials. Federal regulations require operators to have written procedures for responding to emergencies involving their pipeline facility. Because pipelines are often located in public space, the regulations further require that operators include procedures for planning with emergency and other public officials to ensure a coordinated response. PHMSA recommends that operators provide their emergency response plans to officials through their required liaison and public awareness activities. PHMSA stated that it intends to evaluate the extent to which operators have provided their emergency plans to local emergency officials when PHMSA performs future inspections for compliance with liaison and public awareness code requirements. APGA anticipates that PHMSA will also urge its state partners to conduct similar evaluations of natural gas distribution systems that are audited by state pipeline safety agencies.

The advisory includes statements about requirements that an operator conduct emergency response drills with fire, police and public officials; however APGA believes this is in error. APGA has asked PHMSA to clarify what regulation or standard requires such emergency drills.

[Copies of the advisory can be downloaded here.](#) For more information please contact John Erickson, APGA vice president, Operations 202-464-2742, ext 1002 or jerickson@apga.org.

APGA and APGARF File Comments

AGPA filed joint comments along with AGL Resources, Clean Energy, Natural Gas Vehicles for America and Westport Innovations, Inc. on an EPA Notice of Intent regarding light duty vehicle fuel economy. [Notice available here.](#)

The APGA Research Foundation filed joint comments along with the AG Foundation, the INGAA Foundation and the Natural Gas Supply Association on DOE's Request for Information on Smart Grid Implementation. [View joint comments here.](#) APGA lent full support to the joint comments in stand-alone comments [available here.](#) The focus of the Smart Grid comments are that smart grid implementation issues should be viewed as part of a broader smart energy future where various energy value chains, including natural gas, are optimized to provide reliable, safe, clean and efficient energy to our nation's homes and businesses.

If you have any questions on these comments please contact Bob Beauregard at bbeauregard@apga.org.

FREE Webinar on SHRIMP AND GIS: How to Significantly Improve Your Return on Investment

[Join us](#) for a free webinar, "SHRIMP and GIS: How to Significantly Improve Your Return on Investment." Learn how the addition of GIS to a SHRIMP implementation will better satisfy DIMP by greatly extending system understanding.

We will also discuss how implementing GIS with SHRIMP will provide valuable capabilities including system design, mobile field navigation, field data and inspection data capturing, target marketing for customer growth, emergency response planning, outage relight planning, greenhouse gas management, and better executive decision making.

Led by Esri GIS experts, the webinar will discuss

- The basics of GIS and why geography is important
- The risk calculation model for DIMP
- How GIS works with SHRIMP
- The GIS system and why it is needed for DIMP
- Challenges and Solutions to your GIS implementation

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/556117962>

Weekly Storage Report: Storage increases to 3,821 Bcf

Here is the weekly EIA Summary Report issued on Thursday, November 4, 2010, that reports last week's storage report highlights for Friday, October 29, 2010. A 67 Bcf increase has been reported.

Summary

Working gas in storage was 3,821 Bcf as of Friday, October 29, 2010, according to EIA estimates. This represents a net increase of 67 Bcf from the previous week. Stocks were 37 Bcf higher than last year at this time and 353 Bcf above the 5-year average of 3,468 Bcf. In the East Region, stocks were 95 Bcf above the 5-year average following net injections of 39 Bcf. Stocks in the Producing Region were 209 Bcf above the 5-year average of 1,009 Bcf after a net injection of 26 Bcf. Stocks in the West Region were 48 Bcf above the 5-year average after a net addition of 2 Bcf. At 3,821 Bcf, total working gas is above the 5-year historical range.