



Christine Clancy, P.E.
City Engineer

Date: November 15, 2018
TO: Eileen Donoghue, City Manager *EJD*
FROM: Christine Clancy, P.E., City Engineer; Chief Kelly Richardson, Police Superintendent

SUBJECT: 11/6/2018 Motion C. Leahy- Req. City Mgr. Along with Engineer Department Get an Explanation from National Grid Regarding Various Repairs Being Done Throughout the City

National Grid met with City officials on 11/14/18 and 11/15/18 to discuss ongoing work in the City and safety protocols. National Grid specifically met with the Police Department to discuss the recent reports about National Grid employees or contractors knocking on resident's doors to either investigate a leak or take readings at a meter. National Grid has been requesting access into buildings to read meters because they are required to read meters approximately every 3 years. There are approximately 19,000 buildings in the City of Lowell with meters inside the building. New meters or replacement meters are typically placed exterior to the building. National Grid reported that they are almost complete with their current assessment but there are still some buildings that they will be accessing within the City. National Grid confirmed that all employees and contractors are required to wear badges that identify themselves as being a National Grid employee or contractor. Should a resident encounter a situation where an employee does not have National Grid identification, the police department or National Grid should be notified. National Grid discussed that they will be checking in with the police department on a weekly basis to alert them if they are in a neighborhood to read meters. If National Grid or its contractor are knocking on a door as it relates to a reported gas leak, as unexpected as that might be, National Grid employees and contractors should still have the appropriate identification with them in these cases.

At the meetings held with City officials on 11/14 and 11/15, National Grid did not have an update regarding the current moratorium that the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) has placed on National Grid as of October 8, 2018. The moratorium includes a work stoppage on all gas work with the exception of emergency repair and safety assurance work until further notice from DPU. This moratorium applies only to the gas utility. National Grid Electric does not have any current restrictions. To further expand on the current moratorium restrictions, National Grid gas is currently permitted to perform Grade 1 and Grade 2 emergency repairs, safety assurance, and roadway restoration work. New services, gas main or service replacement, and Grade 3 leak repairs are not permitted to proceed under the current DPU moratorium.



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Grade 1 leaks are typically within 5 feet of a building or other structures and require immediate repair. In these instances, National Grid and/or 911 responds to the emergency and the protocol includes notification of the Police, Fire, the City Manager's office, and DPW/Engineering Department. Grade 2 leaks are deemed to be non-hazardous with no immediate risk to public safety. A Grade 2 leak must be monitored every six months and scheduled for repair within one year but are sometimes repaired sooner. Prior to replacing Grade 2 leaks, National Grid provides a plan of the repair location and applies for the necessary City permits. Grade 3 leaks, which are not currently permitted to be repaired under the DPU moratorium, do not pose any immediate risk to public safety and only require to be monitored until the pipe is planned for replacement or if the grade leak identifications changes.

The other work that is currently allowed by DPU and permitted through the City includes safety assurance work and restoration of previous work. Safety assurance work includes encroachment repairs, abandonments (cut and caps), and corrosion control installation on existing mains. Restoration work that is ongoing includes milling and overlay of trenches and temporary patches from completed work performed earlier this year. This work is permitted through the City in advance of the work occurring. Milling and overlay of trenches will not continue past November due to weather restrictions. Trenches left to be permanently restored will be restored in the Spring of 2019.

Lastly, the City does not have any updates regarding the National Grid Lockout. It was discussed at the 11/14 and 11/15 meeting with City officials that once the unions come to an agreement and the Lockout is over, that there will be a transition period where National Grid and their subcontractors are recertified as necessary and ramp back up to work.

Please feel free to contact either one of us if you have any questions regarding this motion response.

Thank you

Cc: Jim Donison, DPW Commissioner