

List of Subjects in 49 CFR Part 192

Pipeline safety, Class location, Testing.

In view of the foregoing, OPS proposes to amend 49 CFR Part 192 as follows:

PART 192—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for Part 192 is revised to read as follows:

Authority: 49 App. U.S.C. 1672 and 1804; 49 CFR 1.53.

2. Section § 192.611(a) would be revised to read as follows:

§ 192.611 Change in class location: Confirmation or revision of maximum allowable operating pressure.

* * * * *

(a) If the segment involved has been previously tested in place for a period of not less than 8 hours, the maximum allowable operating pressure must be confirmed or reduced to a level not to exceed 0.8 times the test pressure for Class 2 locations, 0.667 times the test pressure for Class 3 locations, and 0.555 times the test pressure for Class 4 locations. The corresponding hoop stress may not exceed 72 percent of SMYS of the pipe in Class 2 locations, 60 percent of SMYS in Class 3 locations, or 50 percent of SMYS in Class 4 locations.

* * * * *

Issued in Washington, DC, on January 12, 1988.

Richard L. Beam,

Director, Office of Pipeline Safety.

[FR Doc. 88-785 Filed 1-14-88; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-M

49 CFR Part 192

[Docket No. PS-98; Notice 1]

Exception From Pressure Testing Non-Welded Tie-in Joints

AGENCY: Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: This notice proposes to amend the gas pipeline safety regulations to except non-welded tie-in joints from the pressure test requirements. The regulations currently except welded tie-in joints; and the rationale for this exception applies equally to non-welded tie-in joints.

DATE: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this proposal by February 29, 1988. Late filed comments will be considered to the extent practicable.

ADDRESS: Send comments in duplicate to the Dockets Unit, Office of Hazardous Materials Transportation, Room 8426, Research and Special Programs Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590. Identify the docket and notice numbers stated in the heading of this notice. All comments and other docket material will be available in Room 8426 for inspection and copying between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. each business day.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bernard L. Liebler, (202) 366-2392, regarding the subject matter of this notice, or the Dockets Unit, (202) 366-5046, for copies of this notice or other material in the docket.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The New England Gas Association (NEGA) submitted in January 1983 a petition for rulemaking (P-20), supported by letters from Washington Gas Light, Northeast Utilities, and the Southern Connecticut Gas Company. Subsequently, in May 1984, NEGA modified its petition. The modified petition was also supported by a letter from the Southern Connecticut Gas Company.

The petition concerns Subpart J of Part 192, which prescribes pressure test requirements to detect potentially hazardous leaks and, in some cases, to substantiate the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP). Section 192.503(d) exempts tie-in joints made by welding from these pressure test requirements (Tie-in joints are the connection of separately constructed pipelines.) As modified, the petition requests amendment of § 192.503(d) to except from the pressure test requirements of Subpart J tie-in joints that are made by methods other than welding, such as by compression coupling.

OPS agrees with NEGA that, regardless of the joining method (welding, mechanical, or otherwise), a post-installation pressure test of tie-in joints cannot be effected practically. Either an additional segment must be tested, creating new tie-in joints to be tested, or other parts of the pipeline must be overpressured. In addition, while tie-in pipe or coupling devices can be pretested, the actual joint can only be tested in place.

In practice, testing has not been enforced through the recognition by field personnel of the near impossibility of compliance. The integrity of a non-welded tie-in joint is nevertheless assured because such joint is subject to the requirements of Subpart F governing

the joining of materials in pipelines other than by welding.

OPS proposes to revise § 192.503(d) by substituting the word "joint" for the word "weld." The proposed revision would eliminate the unnecessary and impractical requirement.

The petitioners also requested that § 192.619(a)(2) be changed to state explicitly that the MAOP established for a test segment applies also to the tie-in joint. OPS does not believe that such revision is necessary, since exception of tie-in joints from the pressure test needed to establish the MAOP of a test segment under § 192.619(a)(2) would implicitly except each tie-in joint from the requirements of § 192.619(a)(2).

Impact Assessment

The proposal is considered to be nonmajor under Executive Order 12291 and not significant under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034; February 26, 1979). Since this proposal would have a minimal effect on the economy by codifying existing compliance practices, the economic effect has been found not to require further evaluation. Based on the facts available concerning the impact of this rulemaking action, I certify pursuant to section 605 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act that the action will not, if adopted as final, have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

List of Subjects in 49 CFR Part 192

Pipeline safety, Test, Tie-in, Joint.

Proposed Revisions

For the reasons set forth in the Supplementary Information, 49 CFR Part 192 is proposed to be amended as follows:

PART 192—[AMENDED]

1. The authority citation for Part 192 is revised to read as follows:

Authority: 49 App. U.S.C. 1672 and 1804, 49 CFR 1.53.

2. Section 192.503(d) would be revised to read as follows:

§ 192.503 General requirements.

* * * * *

(d) Each joint used to tie-in a test segment of pipeline is excepted from the test requirements of this subpart.

Issued in Washington, DC, on January 12, 1988.

Richard L. Beam,

Director, Office of Pipeline Safety.

[FR Doc. 88-786 Filed 1-14-88; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-M