

Filed in TPUC Docket Room on
March 16, 2026 at 12:46p.m.

Fax Cover Sheet

To: KELLY CASHMAN-GRAMS.....

From: A CONCERNED GAS-UTILITY DISPATCHER.....

Re: URGENT SAFETY DISCLOSURE REGARDING DOCKET NO ~~25-0074~~ ²⁵⁻⁰⁰⁰⁷⁴
(SPIRE/PIEDMONT MERGER)

615. 741. 8953 or 615. 741. 5133

Fax: ~~615.744.5945~~.....

Pages: 2 PLUS COVER PAGE

Phone Number 615.770.6856.....

Date: MARCH 15, 2026.....

This information is being submitted simultaneously to the Missouri Public Service Commission and the Tennessee Public Utility Commission to ensure that current safety violations in Missouri are fully disclosed during the pending 'Transfer of Authority' proceedings in Tennessee.

To: Tennessee Public Utility Commission
Attn: General Counsel and Gas Pipeline Safety Division

Re: Anonymous warning about dispatch practices at a large multi-state gas utility

To the Commission:

I am writing anonymously to warn you about dispatch practices I have witnessed inside a large, publicly-traded natural gas utility that currently operates distribution systems in Missouri and other states and is seeking to expand its regulated footprint into Tennessee.

On paper and in investor presentations, this company talks constantly about “safe, reliable service.” Inside the gas-emergency dispatch room, the reality is very different.

From my time working in gas-emergency dispatch, I have directly seen:

- Overnight (third-shift) gas-emergency dispatch routinely staffed with a single dispatcher.
- Multiple incidents where that one dispatcher fell asleep on duty, leaving emergency lines effectively unattended for two hours or more—no one awake to answer gas-emergency calls, no one to dispatch crews.
- No updated, realistic written procedures or training materials for dispatchers, despite repeated incidents and major employee and management turnover. “Procedures” consist of old handbooks that do not match current staffing, technology, or expectations.
- A punitive culture where raising safety concerns or asking basic questions about policies and accommodations leads to discipline or termination. People quickly learn that speaking up about dispatch problems is treated as disloyalty, not as hazard reporting.

From inside, it is obvious this is not about one “bad employee.” It is a system deliberately run on:

- Solo overnight coverage in a high-hazard environment.
- Predictable fatigue, with no one to step in when the only dispatcher cannot stay awake.

- Outdated or invisible procedures that are not actively maintained or trained.
- A culture where employees understand that protecting themselves and their jobs means staying quiet about these failures.

I know the Commission is being asked to approve a major acquisition of a Tennessee gas distribution business by a large out-of-state gas utility. I am not asking you to guess which company I am describing. I am asking you to recognize that these are the kinds of problems that can be hidden inside any “experienced” multi-state operator that tells you its existing systems (in Missouri, Alabama, Mississippi, etc.) prove it is ready for Tennessee.

Before granting any approval, I urge you to have your Gas Pipeline Safety staff look very closely—especially in control-room/dispatch areas—at:

- Actual overnight/third-shift staffing, including whether there is ever only one dispatcher/emergency responder on duty.
- How fatigue management and control-room management are implemented in practice, not just on paper.
- Whether dispatchers/controllers have current, workable written procedures and have actually been trained on them.
- Whether there are credible, non-retaliatory ways for dispatchers to report near-misses and systemic problems.

If you do that kind of due diligence, the operators who are running dispatch the way I have described will know immediately that someone, somewhere, has started talking.

Signed,
A concerned gas-utility dispatcher
