

NEWS RELEASE

INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION (IURC)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 17, 2021

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\$1.1 Million in Fines Approved for NIPSCO 2019 Pipeline Safety Violations

Fine amount is highest in state history

INDIANAPOLIS – The Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (Commission) issued an Order today in Cause No. 44970 S3 approving \$1,138,000 in civil penalties for Northern Indiana Public Service Company, LLC (NIPSCO) for pipeline safety violations occurring in 2019. These violations are related to NIPSCO’s failure to locate or mark its pipelines in two days as required by its pipeline safety procedures. The more than \$1.1 million in civil penalties is the highest in state history.

These civil penalties are the 2019 installment of an original settlement agreement between NIPSCO and the Commission’s Pipeline Safety Division, approved in November 2017 (Cause No. 44970), in which NIPSCO paid \$900,000 for previous violations dating back to 2015, and agreed to pay additional civil penalties for violations it may commit going forward. Both the Commission’s Pipeline Safety Division and the utility agreed on the dollar amount for each violation NIPSCO commits in 2017, 2018, and 2019 with respect to locating its underground gas pipelines and facilities. In Cause No. 44970 S1, which was approved by the Commission in February 2019, NIPSCO was directed to pay \$765,000 for violations occurring in 2017. In Cause No. 44970 S2, which was approved by the Commission in August 2020, NIPSCO was directed to pay \$1.1 million for violations occurring in 2018.

All funds collected from approved civil penalties will go directly to the state’s General Fund. The Order states that, “We also find, consistent with the settlement supporting testimony in Cause No. 44970, none of this penalty shall be recovered from NIPSCO’s customers.”

The Commission’s Pipeline Safety Division has jurisdiction over intrastate pipelines operated and maintained by utilities such as NIPSCO. It is the Division’s charge to ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal pipeline safety regulations. If a violation is identified, the Pipeline Safety Division investigates the matter and may request penalties. Properly responding to and locating pipelines is critical to avoiding property damage and personal injury potentially resulting from natural gas explosions.

To review the Commission’s Order in Cause No. 44970 S3, as well as all related documents in this case, please visit the Online Services Portal [here](#) and search by the Cause Number.

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The Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (Commission) is a fact-finding body that hears evidence in cases filed before it and makes decisions based on the evidence presented in those cases. An advocate of neither the public nor the utilities, the Commission is required by state statute to make decisions that balance the interests of all parties to ensure the utilities provide safe and reliable service at just and reasonable rates. The Commission also serves as a resource to the legislature, executive branch, state agencies, and the public by providing information regarding Indiana's utilities and the regulatory process. In addition, Commission members and staff are actively involved with regional, national, and federal organizations regarding utilities issues affecting Indiana. For more information, please visit www.in.gov/iurc.