

Compliance Inspections – Attachment 3 – 4/19/00 ltr. from DOT/RSPA



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Research and
Special Programs
Administration

400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

April 19, 2000

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Thomas P. Morgan
Vice President, Transmission Operations
El Paso Natural Gas Company
P.O. Box 1492
El Paso, TX 79901-1492

Dear Mr. Morgan:

I would like to thank El Paso Natural Gas for its interest and support of the Office of Pipeline Safety's System Integrity Inspection Pilot Program, (OPS SII). We believe the SII concept provides an opportunity to improve and increase the value of our pipeline safety oversight process by focusing company and regulator resources on the most significant system integrity issues. Through this pilot program, we hope to evolve an inspection approach that will provide added value to both the operator and the regulator, as well as improve the public confidence in the safety of the pipeline industry.

The OPS SII Team has performed a careful review of El Paso's qualifications for participation in the Pilot Program against our Screening and Selection Criteria. After considering the information provided during the screening phase review and your company's formal presentation to my Regional Directors, we believe that El Paso's proposed project satisfies our selection criteria. Thus, we formally invite and welcome your participation in the SII Pilot Program.

As you are aware, OPS is currently moving toward a rulemaking designed to promote, improved, and more consistent integrity management programs across the gas pipeline industry. We see the SII Pilot Program as a vehicle that will help us understand and resolve the very important practical issues that must be addressed if this rule is to provide the integrity assurance benefits we envision. We look forward to El Paso's involvement and ideas as we move forward with this important regulatory initiative.

My staff will be contacting you shortly to outline the initial steps in launching this project. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 366-4595 or Don Moore at (816) 329-3800 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich Felder". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Richard B. Felder
Associate Administrator
for Pipeline Safety**