



1411 E. Mission, PO Box 3727  
Spokane, WA 99220-3727

June 19, 2012

Mr. David Lykken  
Pipeline Safety Director  
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission  
PO Box 47250  
Olympia, WA. 98504-7250

RECEIVED

JUN 20 2012

State of Washington  
UTC  
Pipeline Safety Program

Re: Avista's response to the Natural Gas Public Awareness Inspection Letter dated March 30, 2012

Dear Mr. Lykken:

On March 13-14, 2012 the WUTC, along with OPUC and IPUC, conducted an inspection of Avista's Natural Gas Public Awareness Effectiveness Program. We appreciated the manner in which the inspection was conducted and the information shared by all three inspectors. It was a positive learning experience for Avista, much due to the fact it was obvious the inspectors' intent was to help Avista improve and understand the requirements and importance of Public Awareness requirements. The following responses document the actions Avista is taking to address the findings from the inspection.

**1. 49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (a) *Except for an operator of a master meter or petroleum gas system covered under paragraph (J) of this section, each pipeline operator must develop and implement a written continuing public education program that follows the guidance provided in the American Petroleum Institute's (API) Recommended Practice (RP) 1162 (incorporated by reference, see § 192.7).*

**Finding(s) - Written Public Education Program:**

Avista failed to correct Clearinghouse deficiencies.

**Avista's Response:**

During the inspection outbrief, there were no Clearinghouse deficiencies mentioned. Avista understands, however, subsequent to the inspection outbrief that inspectors found the existence of some outstanding Clearinghouse issues. Avista acknowledges past gaps in our Public Awareness record keeping and is increasing personnel resources to address these and other program shortfalls.

2. **49 CFR § 192.616 Public Awareness.**

(a) *Except for an operator of a master meter or petroleum gas system covered under paragraph (j) of this section, each pipeline operator must develop and implement a written continuing public education program that follows the guidance provided in the American Petroleum Institute's (API) recommended Practice (RP) 1162 (incorporated by reference, see § 192.7).*

a. **Finding(s) - Management Support:**

Avista failed to provide evidence of adequate resources used to carry out the PAP.

**Avista Response:**

Avista acknowledges that additional resources are necessary to administer the program and has approved the addition of a Public Safety Specialist to be added to compliment. This position has been posted, advertised and we expect to fill the position before the end of the third quarter 2012. This position, along with additional operational support in the field will provide the necessary resources to address the deficiencies identified in the inspection.

Avista supports the Public Safety Program with resources throughout the company including management participation as defined in the Company's Public Awareness Plan (PAP) Document (PAP Document). With the addition and coordination of the Public Safety Specialist and assistance from Gas Operations and Gas Engineering Departments, we are confident these resources will be able to successfully carry out the requirements and obligations of our Public Awareness Program.

b. **Finding(s) - Management Support:**

Avista failed to provide evidence or indication of management's participation in the development and implementation of the PAP.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that a better job of presenting and providing the evidence of managements support needs to be incorporated into Appendix B of the PAP Document.

Avista will further develop the responsibilities and support expected of Managers, Directors, and Senior Leaders and will conduct training in this area by the end of 2012 to ensure participation and support of the Public Awareness Program. The organizational structure and responsibilities will be evaluated with the addition of the Public Safety Specialist and a review of current roles and responsibilities will be completed.

Avista has devoted the time of many management individuals to promote and support Public Safety and our PAP at the local, regional, state, and national level. These efforts include representation at the national level with an Avista VP on the Board of Directors of the Common Ground Alliance (CGA). In addition, Avista has provided a loaned executive to the American Gas Association (AGA) to help develop and support public safety efforts at the highest levels. Also, Avista provides an individual who serves as the Executive Director and a board member for the Inland Empire Utility Coordinating Council (IEUCC) and the President of the Washington Utilities Coordinating Council (WUCC). There are many other areas where Avista has been successful in supporting Public Awareness locally, regionally and nationally and these will to be incorporated and documented into the next revision of PAP document.

c. **Finding(s) - Management Support:**

Avista failed to provide oversight of external support resources regarding implementation and evaluation efforts of PAP.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that there can be improvements in the PAP as it relates to the documentation and clear expectations and oversight for the company's external support resources. Although a great deal of this is already occurring, there can and will be better documentation and procedures incorporated into the PAP. This will be reviewed, updated and documented by the end of 2012. This will allow for the enhancements to be accomplished prior to year end and give time for adjustments and changes to be made in our evaluations and decisions regarding the responsibilities of the new Public Safety Specialist position.

3. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

(b) *The operator's program must follow the general program recommendations of API RP 1162 and assess the unique attributes and characteristics of the operator's pipeline and facilities.*

**Finding(s) -Unique Attributes and Characteristics:**

Avista failed to define the specific pipeline assets or systems covered in the program and assess the unique attributes and characteristics of the pipeline and facilities.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista will better define specific pipeline assets, systems, unique attributes and characteristics as it pertains to Public Awareness in the next revision of the PAP document. These improvements to the plan will be included in the next PAP revision by year end 2012.

4. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (d) *The operator's program must specifically include provisions to educate the public, appropriate government organizations, and persons engaged in excavation related activities on:*
- (1) *Use of a one-call notification system prior to excavation and other damage prevention activities;*
  - (2) *Possible hazards associated with unintended releases from a gas pipeline facility;*
  - (3) *Physical indications that such a release may have occurred;*
  - (4) *Steps that should be taken for public safety in the event of a gas pipeline release; and*
  - (5) *Procedures for reporting such an event.*
- (e) *The program must include activities to advise affected municipalities, school districts, businesses, and residents of pipeline facility locations.*
- (f) *The program and the media used must be as comprehensive as necessary to reach all areas in which the operator transports gas.*

**Finding(s) - Stakeholder Audience Identification:**

Avista's Program Administration failed to provide evidence of a plan that effectively identifies stakeholder audiences including recordkeeping and oversight. Specific examples follow:

- a. Avista identified use of GIS but failed to identify the frequency and data sources used to identify each stakeholder audience.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that although the frequency and data sources used are known by the program administrator, it needs to be recorded in the program documents. Avista will amend the language in the PAP document to clearly identify the frequency and indicate the source of the data. These improvements are in process and will be included in the next revision of the plan.

- b. Avista does not have a process to complete recordkeeping and oversight activities in their plan.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the process needs to be better defined for completing the recordkeeping and oversight activities in the PAP. Although the steps are defined in the plan, there needs to be a process to ensure it has been completed and recorded properly. The plan has provisions that state these activities need to be performed, but our efforts to show this to the inspectors failed to provide them the assurance that it had actually occurred. A strategy is being formulated to ensure that there is a clear understanding of

the roles and responsibilities of each individual. The plan will be updated by the end of third quarter 2012 to clarify this process with training to be completed by year end 2012.

- c. Avista failed to verify and review the accuracy of their stakeholder audience lists.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the PAP document did not clearly state how the reviewing of audience lists for accuracy would be accomplished. Avista will clarify by the end of 2012 in our next revision to the PAP document, the method and frequency that the audience lists will be reviewed for accuracy.

- d. Avista failed to provide comprehensive records used to determine each Stakeholder audience.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista agrees to investigate improved options for obtaining addresses for each of the identified stakeholder audiences and will document the process used for this enhancement in the next revision to the PAP document which will be completed by year end 2012. All efforts will be made to ensure that the most comprehensive and accurate records are obtained and utilized moving forward.

5. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) - Message frequency and message delivery:**

Avista failed to implement and deliver their baseline and supplemental message information in accordance with their written program for all stakeholder audiences for all locations.

- a. Avista failed to provide documentation that audiences were provided all of the information content described in their plan.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that our PAP plan was not sufficiently specific and did not allow for the discretion to provide some or all of the options to each specific audience or location. By the way the plan was written, it could be interpreted that all methods and options would be provided to all audiences and locations. In addition the plan did not provide a method to record what options were selected and implemented for each audience and location. The plan will be modified to describe the options and the documentation of the options provided to each audience and

location. These changes are being incorporated into the plan in the third quarter of 2012.

- b. Avista failed to include/represent locations such as the cities of Goldendale and Stevenson in the plan at all.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges the failure to include Goldendale and Stevenson in the plan. Avista believed that this area had sufficient coverage from the Spokane media market when in fact it is not well represented by this market but is instead primarily covered by the Portland market where we do not advertise. We did in fact have some minor newsprint and radio coverage in these regions, but Avista agrees we need to increase the representation in these markets. Changes have been made with the advertising agency that places Avista media and as such, we will include Goldendale and Stevenson in the second half 2012 campaign and ongoing into the future.

- c. Avista failed to provide documentation of baseline and supplemental activity reaching locations such as the cities of Goldendale and Stevenson.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges this shortcoming and has revised the plan to indicate specific messages for each location to include Goldendale and Stevenson, Washington.

- d. Avista's messages are regionalized and all locations are not receiving the information identified in the plan.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the plan currently indicates that all areas will receive all information and activities. The plan is being revised to reflect the specific messages for each location along with the frequency and documentation that will occur to prove that the activity has occurred. This will be completed by year end 2012 for all locations and programs.

- e. Avista failed to address supplemental messages and activities with the required frequency for all stakeholders.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the plan does not clearly identify the supplemental messages by activity, stakeholder or location. The plan will be modified to reflect what activities will be performed for each of the groups and methods for

documenting these activities. This will be incorporated into the plan for activities being performed by the end of third quarter 2012.

6. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*
- (i) *The operator's program documentation and evaluation results must be available for periodic review by appropriate regulatory agencies.*

**Finding(s) - Written Evaluation Plan:**

Avista failed to evaluate their program implementation and effectiveness and with the required frequency.

- a. Avista failed to complete annual evaluations.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that we did not complete formalized annual evaluations on the implementation and effectiveness of the program as required. The PAP is being modified to require annual evaluations in the fourth quarter of each calendar year.

- b. Avista failed to complete all three evaluation methods in accordance with their program language and tables regarding approach, technique, and frequencies.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that we did not annually complete all three evaluations (i.e. Internal Self Assessments, Third Party Audits, and Regulatory Inspection) as written in our PAP plan. The plan will be modified to identify the evaluation method, approach, technique and frequency of each evaluation and clarify the purpose and scope of each evaluation. A recordkeeping process will be incorporated in the plan to ensure these are completed as required in the plan. This work will be finished by the end of 2012.

- c. Avista's written program evaluation plan is ineffective. Avista does not have a process to complete record keeping and oversight activities in their plan.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges the need for improvements in our PAP plan to accomplish record keeping and oversight activities within the PAP. The current Public Safety Coordinator's Guide is a good document that we believe, with some improvement, will succeed in fulfilling the need for an effective record keeping system. This Guide will be updated and training provided to the respective location managers regarding their roles and

responsibilities. In addition there will be changes made to the corporate roll-up of the logs contained within the Public Safety Coordinator's Guide, to ensure proper oversight and recordkeeping is maintained. These changes will be completed by year end 2012.

7. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (g) *The program must be conducted in English and in other languages commonly understood by a significant number and concentration of the non-English speaking population in the operator's area.*

**Finding(s) - English and other languages:**

Avista's plan failed to identify the frequency by which they will determine the need for an alternate language review.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the plan did not identify the frequency that we will use to evaluate need for alternate languages in our service territories. The plan will be updated to show the use of the Ten-Year US Census as the basis for these evaluations. We will as well investigate other sources to help determine if additional alternative languages should be utilized, to what extent and the frequency these evaluations will be conducted.

8. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (d) *The operator's program must specifically include provisions to educate the public, appropriate government organizations, and persons engaged in excavation related activities on:*

- (1) *Use of a one-call notification system prior to excavation and other damage prevention activities;*
- (2) *Possible hazards associated with unintended releases from a gas pipeline facility;*
- (3) *Physical indications that such a release may have occurred;*
- (4) *Steps that should be taken for public safety in the event of a gas pipeline release;*  
*and*
- (5) *Procedures for reporting such an event.*

- (f) *The program and the media used must be as comprehensive as necessary to reach all areas in which the operator transports gas.*

1. **Finding(s) - Message type and content:**

Avista failed to provide records to verify all information was delivered to each of the stakeholder audiences.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that we need to improve the verification of delivery of PAP resources to all applicable locations and audiences. Avista believes we have some portion of this documentation through mailroom acknowledgements, mailing service acknowledgements and postage charge records that the delivery was made, but we will add an additional step to verify that the mail was indeed sent and delivered. In addition, a

confirmation copy will be sent to the Public Safety Specialist to document the mailing has been delivered.

2. **Finding(s) - Message type and content:**

Avista's written plan failed to include a one-call notification messages for Emergency Officials.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that there was an oversight in omitting one-call notification messages in the materials to Emergency Officials. This shortcoming has been addressed and the information on 811 has been added to the newly revised brochure for all future notifications to Emergency Officials.

9. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

(e) *The program must include activities to advise affected municipalities, school districts, businesses, and residents of pipeline facility locations.*

(f) *The program and the media used must be as comprehensive as comprehensive as necessary to reach all areas in which the operator transports gas.*

**Finding(s) - Messages on pipeline facility locations:**

Avista's plan failed to include developed and delivered facility location information messages to all affected municipalities and school districts.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that it does not provide pipeline facility location information in the current brochure or letters sent to municipalities or school districts. The current program only provides the phone number and website to request facility information to municipalities. The plan is being revised to include this additional information in the materials being sent to both the municipalities and to school districts. In addition, we will be sending the natural gas brochure to school districts along with a separate letter providing them with this information. These changes will be incorporated into the next round of mailings that go out to both of these groups in calendar year 2012.

10. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

(c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

1. **Finding(s) -Baseline Message Delivery Frequency:**

Avista failed to provide records evidencing *what* they provided to stakeholders in each and every message they sent.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the inspectors did not find adequate information to ensure that each message was sent and when it was sent. For the most part, Avista believes it had this evidence. To ensure, moving forward, that we can prove it was mailed, we will include a mailing to the Public Safety Specialist for filing and verifying that each message was sent. This along with the acknowledgement from the mailroom and the mailing service will verify what was sent, to whom and when.

2. **Finding(s) - Baseline Message Delivery Frequency:**

Avista failed to provide records evidencing *when* they provided information to stakeholders in each and every message they sent.

**Avista's Response:**

By implementing the procedures identified in the previous finding, Avista will be able to show *when* we provided information and how it was provided to each stakeholder group.

11. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) - Considerations for Supplemental Program Enhancements:**

Avista considered relevant factors for supplemental enhancements but failed to effectively address them.

- a. Avista failed to provide documentation that audiences were provided all of the information content described in their plan.
- b. Avista failed to include/represent locations such as the cities of Goldendale and Stevenson in the plan at all.
- c. Avista failed to provide documentation of baseline and supplemental activity reaching locations such as the cities of Goldendale and Stevenson.
- d. Avista's messages are regionalized and all locations are not receiving the information identified in the plan.
- e. Avista failed to address supplemental messages and activities with the required frequency for all stakeholders.

**Avista's Response:**

- a) Avista acknowledges that the plan does not clearly document that all information was delivered to all locations. The plan is being modified to clearly show who receives what information and recordkeeping enhanced to

provide the documentation to support each stakeholder, audience and location.

- b) Avista acknowledged earlier in this letter the failure to recognize Goldendale and Stevenson in our PA plan. This will be corrected in all PA Program aspects moving forward.
- c) Response same as above
- d) Avista acknowledges that the plan needs to clearly show that all locations and regions are receiving the information identified in the plan and to develop a documentation process for recording and maintaining the information. Where information is not provided to a location, there will be documentation to explain the reason and justification for why it was not necessary. This will be incorporated in plan changes by the end of 2012.
- e) Avista acknowledges that the plan does not indicate or record who receives supplemental information. The plan will be modified to show who receives what information and for what purpose. This will be incorporated into the plan by the end of 2012.

12. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

(c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

1. **Finding(s) - Maintaining Liaison with Emergency Response Officials:**

Avista's plan failed to identify how they will maintain their liaison relationship with all required emergency officials.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the processes to ensure relationships with Emergency Response Officials are being maintained in all locations requires clearer definition in our PAP. The program will be updated to spell out location responsibilities as it relates to contact with Emergency Response Officials. The changes will be included in the Location Administrator's Book (used to define the responsibilities and duties of the local Public Safety Coordinators) and communicated by local training. The changes to the program to include training will be completed at all locations by year end 2012.

2. **Finding(s) - Maintaining Liaison with Emergency Response Officials:**

Avista failed to provide records evidencing the maintaining of a liaison relationship with all required emergency officials.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that there was not a process in place to ensure contact with emergency officials in all locations was accomplished. The plan will be updated to

require all locations to maintain records of all visits and training with emergency officials and submit this information to the Public Safety Specialist for each of those visits. The plan will be updated by third quarter 2012 with training completed at the local level by year end 2012.

3. **Finding(s) - Maintaining Liaison with Emergency Response Officials:**

Avista failed to provide records evidencing notification to emergency response officials of the location of their emergency response plan (EOP).

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that records evidencing notification to Emergency Response Officials of the location of our emergency response plan (EOP) are not a part of the PAP document. Avista is currently evaluating the extent of the plan document that will be shared with Emergency Response Officials. The Avista emergency response plans are very detailed and decisions need to be made as to the topic of "need to know" and the sensitivity of some information in these documents. The plan will be modified and the internally agreed upon EOP details provided to Emergency Response Officials by the end of 2012.

4. **Finding(s) – Maintaining Liaison with Emergency Response Officials:**

Avista failed to provide records evidencing what/whether emergency response organizations have adequate and proper resources to respond.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that records evidencing what/whether emergency response organizations have adequate and proper resources to respond are not included in our current PAP document. This is part of the information that is covered when working locally with first responders but there has not been a process for recording those conversations or documenting the information. Avista will evaluate how this will be researched in the plan going forward and include it in the next PAP document revision by year end 2012.

5. **Finding(s) - Maintaining Liaison with Emergency Response Officials:**

Avista failed to provide records evidencing/ensured required information was communicated to all emergency response officials including those that did not attend training/information sessions held by the operator.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges gaps in the area of communicating with all emergency response officials. Moving forward, we will assign responsibility to our local managers and Public Safety Coordinators to review and update the contact lists annually. For those that do not attend the training sessions, we will provide hardcopy materials by way of

mail. This offered training is in addition to our requirement to notify these entities, which we do by mail.

Avista also acknowledges that we haven't maintained records for individuals that are not at the training sessions and that we cannot document that they receive the training by another method. Every effort is made to provide the information and the tools for this to happen, but in many cases it is out of Avista's control and there is not a reasonable way to insure that all are covered. Avista has created DVD's, videos and other training materials to help the emergency responders to provide the information to those not able to be in attendance. The plan will be modified to record where information is provided to the emergency responders for those not able to be in attendance.

**13. 49 CFR §192.615 Emergency plans.**

- (c) *Each operator shall establish and maintain liaison with appropriate fire, police, and other public officials to:*
- (1) *Learn the responsibility and resources of each government organization that may respond to a gas pipeline emergency;*
  - (2) *Acquaint the officials with the operator's ability in responding to a gas pipeline emergency,*
  - (3) *Identify the types of gas pipeline emergencies of which the operator notifies the officials; and,*
  - (4) *Plan how the operator and officials can engage in mutual assistance to minimize hazards to life or property.*

**1. Finding(s):**

Avista failed to provide records evidencing they have established and maintained liaison with appropriate fire, police and other public officials.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the records documenting liaison with fire, police and public officials is not complete and needs improvement. A binder called the Public Safety Coordinator's Guide is kept in each gas construction office and has the information and materials needed to accomplish this requirement. The PAP plan will be modified to implement additional requirements that ensure these records are both maintained locally and provided to the Public Safety Specialist. These changes to the program, to include applicable training, will be completed at all locations by year end 2012.

**2. Finding(s):**

Avista failed to provide records evidencing that they learned the responsibility and resources of each government organization that may respond to a gas pipeline emergency.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges records evidencing that we learned the responsibilities and resources of each government organization that may respond to a gas pipeline emergency have not been a consistent part of the PAP and that we do not have the record keeping documentation in place to prove compliance with this requirement. The plan will be updated to include this requirement and will also be added to the Public Safety Coordinator's Guides. The changes to the program to include training will be completed at all locations by year end 2012.

14. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness**

- (c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*
- (i) *The operator's program documentation and evaluation results must be available for periodic review by appropriate regulatory agencies.*

1. **Finding(s) – Measuring program implementation:**

Avista failed to complete self-audits for the years 2009 and 2010.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that self-audits for 2009 and 2010 were not completed. The plan will be revised in calendar year 2012 to require self-audits in the fourth quarter annually and will describe how they will be accomplished.

2. **Finding(s) - Measuring program implementation:**

Avista failed to measure their program implementation using all methodologies identified in their plan.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that we did not complete all three evaluations (Internal Self Audit, Third Party Audit, and Regulatory Inspection) as they are written in the plan. The plan will be modified to identify and clarify the evaluation method, approach, technique, and frequency of each evaluation and clarify the purpose and scope of each evaluation. A recordkeeping process will be incorporated in the plan to ensure these are completed as required in the plan. This work will be completed by the end of 2012.

15. **49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) – Acceptable methods for program implementation audits:**

Avista failed to complete annual self-audits in accordance with their plan which identifies three methods of self-audits are to be completed annually.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that we did not complete all three evaluations as they are written in the plan. The plan will be modified to identify and clarify the evaluation method, approach, technique and frequency of each evaluation and clarify the purpose and scope of each evaluation. A recordkeeping process will be incorporated in the plan to ensure these are completed as required in the plan. This work will be completed by the end of 2012.

**16. 49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Findings(s) - Program Changes and Improvements:**

Avista failed to perform annual assessment audits on their program in 2009 and 2010. Avista performed their first self-audit in January 2012.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the first in depth self-audit was conducted in 2012 using PHMSA Form 21. Prior audits were conducted by Gas Engineering and others, but were not as in depth and did not have sufficient documentation. Future self-audits will be performed in the fourth quarter annually and will be conducted with the assistance of Gas Engineering and/or Corporate Compliance at a minimum. Self audit requirements will be incorporated into the PAP as detailed previously.

- a. Avista failed to develop and implement changes in its program as a result of their annual assessment audit.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that we did not historically perform in-depth audits or implement extensive changes to the PAP. Some changes / improvements, however, were made and noted in the plan based on the audits and reviews that were performed since plan inception. With the annual assessment audit program being put in place moving forward, changes to the plan will be made as they are identified.

- b. Avista's plan fails to identify timeframe for changes/improvements/corrective action documented in their annual audit/review.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that there were no timeframes identified in the 2012 self-audit for changes/improvements /corrective actions. Such timeframes will be established and put in place by the end of 2012 for changes to the PAP document that were identified earlier this year in the self-audit.

**17. 49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) – Evaluating program effectiveness:**

Avista failed to complete an effectiveness evaluation of their program that meets with regulatory requirements.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista recognizes the inspector's concern regarding the methodology used in conducting the first baseline survey (effectiveness evaluation). This survey was conducted in July of 2009 using a third party vendor – Central Surveys from Shenandoah, Iowa. Central Surveys is used by many gas utilities to perform their effectiveness surveys. Avista relied on their expertise to determine the appropriate sample size for a statistically valid response. The questions were consistent with those used by other gas utilities to determine the effectiveness of their programs. This was the first effectiveness evaluation and although there are questions about the statistical validity and the comparison to other utilities, Avista relied on the expertise of the vendor that was used. Avista acknowledges changes are needed to bring the effectiveness evaluation to a higher standard and will review and improve the contents of the next effectiveness evaluation in 2013 by considering other options, methods and vendors.

**18. 49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

- (c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) – Measure program outreach:**

Avista failed to measure program outreach by tracking actual program outreach for each stakeholder audience within all areas along all assets and systems covered by their program.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that the measuring of program outreach for each stakeholder audience within all areas along all assets and systems covered by the program was not adequately accomplished in the effectiveness evaluation. Changes will be made to the next PAP plan revision in 2012 to ensure that the necessary outreach measurements of all audiences will be covered in future evaluations.

**19. 49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

*(c) The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) – Measure percentage of stakeholders reached:**

Avista failed to measure percentage of stakeholders reached. Avista failed to represent all regional areas in their study.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that it did not measure the percentage of stakeholders reached in all regional areas of the study. Changes will be made to the next PAP plan revision in 2012 to ensure that these required percentage measurements are researched in future evaluations for all required areas.

**20. 49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

*(c) The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) – Measure understandability of message content:**

Avista failed to evaluate effectiveness and assess the percentage of intended stakeholder audiences that understood and retained the key information in the messages received, within all assets and systems covered by its program. Avista failed to represent all regional areas in their study.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista submits that the survey conducted by Central Surveys provided information on the key messages of the program. We also acknowledge the inspector's concerns regarding the percentage of the stakeholder audiences that understand and retained the key information in the message received within all assets and systems covered by the program. Avista agrees that changes are needed to bring the effectiveness evaluation to a higher standard and we will review and improve the contents of the next effectiveness evaluation in 2013 by considering other options, methods and vendors.

**21. 49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

*(c) The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) – Measure Desired Stakeholder Behavior:**

Avista failed to evaluate effectiveness and examine results to determine if the stakeholders have demonstrated the intended learned prevention behaviors.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that improvements need to be made in the evaluation of program effectiveness and examination of the results to determine if stakeholders have demonstrated the intended learned prevention behaviors. Avista agrees changes are needed to bring the effectiveness evaluation to a higher standard and we will review and improve the contents of the next effectiveness evaluation in 2013 by considering other options, methods and vendors.

**22. 49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.**

*(c) The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) – Measure Bottom-Line Results:**

Avista failed to evaluate effectiveness and examine bottom-line results of its program.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges that improvements need to be made in evaluating program effectiveness and examining the bottom-line results of its program. Avista acknowledges changes are needed to bring the effectiveness evaluation to a higher standard and we will review and improve the contents of the next effectiveness evaluation in 2013 by considering other options, methods and vendors.

23. 49 CFR §192.616 Public Awareness.

(c) *The operator must follow the general program recommendations, including baseline and supplemental requirements of API RP 1162, unless the operator provides justification in its program or procedural manual as to why compliance with all or certain provisions of the recommended practice is not practicable and not necessary for safety.*

**Finding(s) – Program Changes:**

Avista failed to evaluate the effectiveness and did not document needed changes and/or modifications to its program.

**Avista's Response:**

Avista acknowledges shortcomings in the evaluation of effectiveness and documentation of needed changes to the program. Although the table on Page 20 in the current revision of the plan does list some of the results and actions, these recommended program changes will be further studied and implemented with the next program evaluation scheduled to occur in 2013. Avista agrees changes are needed to bring the effectiveness evaluation to a higher standard and we will review and improve the contents of the next effectiveness evaluation in 2013 by considering other options, methods and vendors.

Avista is committed to resolving deficiencies in our Public Awareness Program and will work to resolve the issues in a timely manner. We learned a great deal regarding the expectations and requirements around proper documentation and welcome additional feedback to continue to improve our Public Awareness Program.

Respectfully Submitted,



Don Kopezynski  
Vice President, Energy Delivery

CC: John Schwendener  
Randy Bareither  
David Howell  
Terry Bushnell  
Commission Correspondence File