

**BEFORE THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

**IN RE:** )  
 )  
**ONGOING REQUEST FOR** )  
**INFORMATION RELATED TO** )  
**MEASURES TAKEN DURING THE** )  
**CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 PUBLIC** )  
**HEALTH EMERGENCY** )  
 )

**ATMOS ENERGY CORPORATION’S MARCH 31, 2020 REPORT OF  
EMERGENCY OPERATIONAL AND RESPONSE PLANS**

Pursuant to the Tennessee Public Utility Commission’s March 19, 2020, Request, Atmos Energy Corporation submits the following report regarding its emergency operational and response plans and measures that have been instituted to ensure the continuity of safe and reliable service and to assist its customers during this time.

1. Atmos Energy’s employees and contractors are essential critical infrastructure workers and will continue to maintain critical natural gas services as our nation responds to the pandemic.
2. Atmos Energy will also continue to take action to support the call to limit the spread of COVID-19 while ensuring the safety of the communities, its customers, and employees.
3. Atmos Energy continues to take the steps set forth in its March 24, 2020, Report, including (i) ensuring that its critical teams continue to work from off-site locations; (ii) following a safety protocol when dispatching technicians to locations where there is a known quarantine, isolation, or other monitoring situation related to the coronavirus; (iii) suspending disconnections for non-payments, and (iv) waiving late payment fees.

4. Additional Atmos Energy messaging on safety actions taken in response to COVID-19 are available on the Company's website: <https://www.atmosenergy.com/safety/covid-19>.

5. In an effort to ensure customers understand that these steps have been taken, Atmos Energy has issued the press release attached as **Exhibit 1**, which also explains that Atmos Energy's employees will be practicing social distancing when dealing with customers.

6. Atmos Energy has requested that homeowners and contractors delay non-essential digging in the additional press release attached as **Exhibit 2**. This will improve everyone's safety by minimizing damage to underground natural gas pipelines and avoiding the resulting evacuations and other detrimental consequences.

7. In a further effort to minimize the contact between its customers and employees, Atmos Energy sought permission for a temporary amendment to its tariff allowing it to use the "soft close" procedure for transferring service from one customer to another in the same location without sending an Atmos Energy employee to the location. The letter requesting this amendment, filed on March 26, is attached as **Exhibit 3**.

Respectfully submitted,

**NEAL & HARWELL, PLC**

By: 

A. Scott Ross, #15634  
Erik C. Lybeck, #35233  
1201 Demonbreun Street, Ste. 1000  
Nashville, TN 37203  
(615) 244-1713 – Telephone  
(615) 726-0573 – Facsimile  
[sross@nealharwell.com](mailto:sross@nealharwell.com)

[elybeck@nealharwell.com](mailto:elybeck@nealharwell.com)

*Counsel for Atmos Energy Corporation*



**Media Contact:**

[media@atmosenergy.com](mailto:media@atmosenergy.com)

**NEWS RELEASE**

## **Atmos Energy Employees Doing Our Part**

**DALLAS** (March 24, 2020) – Atmos Energy has a proven track record of maintaining safe and reliable natural gas service under many adverse conditions. This current COVID-19 pandemic will be no different. During these unprecedented times, we want to assure you our focus remains the same: the safety of our 4,800 employees, our more than 3 million customers, and the 1,400 communities we proudly serve.

Atmos Energy employees and contractors will continue to maintain and operate critical natural gas infrastructure while our nation responds to the pandemic. We will perform these essential services in compliance with social distancing guidelines so that we limit the spread of COVID-19 to ensure the safety of our employees, customers, and communities.

If necessary, we have plans in place to suspend all non-emergency work to maintain the health and safety of our employees, customers, and communities.

### **Actions We're Taking:**

- Our employees who work in the community are practicing physical distancing to slow the spread; during this time, you'll see us staying six feet or more away from others as we work.
- Employees are taking prevention measures recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and those who can are working from home.
- To do our part to slow the spread, we have screening protocols in place so that we can stop some types of work and safely limit when service technicians will be in your home or business.
- We have temporarily suspended natural gas disconnections for non-payment. If you are experiencing financial hardship, we have protocols and services available to help you, including ongoing support programs such as [Sharing the Warmth](#) and [Budget Billing](#).

The situation is evolving but our commitment remains the same: safely and reliably delivering natural gas service. Customers with any questions are encouraged to please call us at 888.286.6700. Atmos Energy stands ready to safely serve our customers and take the necessary actions to protect our employees and our communities.

### **About Atmos Energy**

Atmos Energy Corporation is the nation's largest fully regulated, natural gas-only distributor of safe, clean, efficient and affordable energy. As part of our vision to be the safest provider of natural gas services, we are modernizing our business and our infrastructure while continuing to invest in safety, innovation, environmental sustainability and our communities. An S&P 500 company headquartered in Dallas, Atmos Energy serves more than 3 million distribution customers in over 1,400 communities across eight states and manages proprietary pipeline and storage assets, including one of the largest intrastate natural gas pipeline systems in Texas. Find us online at <http://www.atmosenergy.com>, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).



**PRESS RELEASE**

**Media Contact:**

Celina Cardenas Fleites

[media@atmosenergy.com](mailto:media@atmosenergy.com)

## **Atmos Energy Urges Homeowners and Contractors to Dig Safely**

**DALLAS** (March 27, 2020) – Atmos Energy has a proven track record of maintaining safe and reliable natural gas service under many adverse conditions. This current COVID-19 pandemic will be no different. During these unprecedented times, we want to assure you our focus remains the same: the safety of our 4,800 employees, our more than 3 million customers, and the 1,400 communities we proudly serve.

The partnership between utilities, excavators and communities is crucial in maintaining safe, reliable natural gas service and now, more than ever that is true. Millions of Americans are sheltering in place to help slow the spread of COVID-19. Damaging an underground natural gas pipeline, even a minor damage, can cause a leak or rupture and lead to evacuations and have detrimental consequences. Whether you are a professional excavator or working on an at-home-project, it is imperative that you evaluate the critical need of the digging project during this pandemic.

“We want to make sure our employees, customers and communities remain safe” said John McDill, Atmos Energy vice president of pipeline safety. “Unless an outdoor project is essential, we ask homeowners and contractors to postpone digging. If you have to dig, always call 811 first.”

Because the stakes are so high, we are asking homeowners and contractors to delay non-essential digging. If you must dig, take extreme caution and make sure you ALWAYS call 811 first to have utilities marked before you dig. Call 8-1-1 at least two days before digging. Calling 811 is free and helps protect millions of miles of underground utility lines that are necessary for everyday life. Visit <http://call811.com/811-your-state> for state-specific guidelines.

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**NEAL & HARWELL, PLC**

ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
1201 DEMONBREUN STREET  
SUITE 1000  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37203

TELEPHONE  
(615) 244-1713

FACSIMILE  
(615) 726-0573

NEALHARWELL.COM

A. SCOTT ROSS

SROSS@NEALHARWELL.COM  
(615) 238-3524 (DIRECT)

March 26, 2020

David Foster  
Utilities Division Director  
Tennessee Public Utility Commission  
502 Deaderick Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Nashville, TN 37243

RE: Temporary Tariff Amendment for the COVID 19 pandemic

Dear Mr. Foster

Enclosed is a new tariff sheet for Atmos Energy Corporation (“Atmos Energy” or “Company”). This tariff sheet reflects measures the Company is seeking to implement for the duration of this public health crisis and should be inserted between 2<sup>nd</sup> Revised Sheet 61 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Revised Sheet 62 of the Company’s tariff.

Atmos Energy requests expedited approval of this temporary amendment to protect its customers and employees for the duration of the public health emergency declared as a result of the pandemic outbreak of novel coronavirus COVID-19. On March 12, 2020, Governor Bill Lee issued Executive Order No. 14 instituting emergency measures aimed to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19. A national public health emergency has also been declared by President Donald J. Trump.

Atmos Energy remains committed to providing its customers with safe and reliable natural gas utility service while maintaining the health and safety of its customers, employees, and the community at large. As set forth in its March 24, 2020, Report, Atmos Energy has taken certain steps to ensure those goals and commitments have been met in this unprecedented situation.

In addition to the steps outlined in that Report, by this temporary amendment, Atmos Energy seeks to implement an option that will allow active gas service to be transferred from one customer to another at the same location for a period of time with no actual disconnection or interruption of service. This option, known as a “soft close,” is an industry accepted practice the Company already uses in Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Texas, and Virginia and for which Atmos Energy already has a Company-wide manual. Implementing this option in Tennessee will help Atmos

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Energy further limit the interactions between its customers and employees, thereby helping to minimize the spread of novel coronavirus COVID-19.

Atmos Energy seeks to implement this amendment effective March 26, 2020, through the duration of this public health emergency and respectfully requests that the Commission issue an order on the requested temporary amendment.

Please contact me or my associate, Erik Lybeck, if you need additional information or clarification. We are both working from home pursuant to Mayor Cooper's "Safer at Home" Order, but we can be reached on our cell phones: (615) 476-1641 for me, and (615) 927-2337 for Erik.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Scott Ross". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "R".

A. Scott Ross

ASR:prd

Enclosure

cc: Erik Lybeck  
Mark Martin  
Kevin Frank

**ENCLOSURE:  
PROPOSED TARIFF AMENDMENT  
EFFECTIVE MARCH 26, 2020**

5.5. Allow Gas Service to Remain On in Absence of Customer

This option allows the transfer of active gas service from one customer to another at the same location for a period of time with no actual disconnection or interruption of service. This option applies to residential meters and accounts, but may be used in other circumstances as deemed necessary.

When a customer requests termination of gas service, this option is presented. Upon choosing this option, the customer is given a list of safety steps they are requested to follow to reduce the possibility of danger and to minimize the gas used. These steps are:

- (a) Lower all thermostats.
- (b) Check operating status of appliances and ensure all settings are in the off position.
- (c) All gas lines must be properly capped and plugged if appliances are removed from the structure.

A final meter read is performed and a final bill issued. A door tag is left notifying anyone approaching that gas service is "ON". The gas service will remain on until either 30 days or 50 Ccf of consumption occurs, whichever comes first. If the technician discovers that a tenant has moved into the location without notifying the Company, field personnel will leave a door tag with a 48-hour notice for the new tenant to contact the Company to transfer service into their name. If no contact is made within the 48-hour period, a disconnect order is issued.

A read charge of \$20.00 will be assessed where gas service has remained on in accordance with 5.5 and only a meter read is required.