

**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 APRIL 9, 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 continues to update its guidelines to employees to reflect the latest recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
2. 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 explains that employees will begin wearing cloth face coverings when working outside or around others unless doing so creates a safety risk or existing safety protocols require different personal protective equipment.
3. Atmos Energy has recommended that customers take measures to avoid increased scam activity in the additional press release attached as **Exhibit 2**. According to the Federal Trade Commission, scammers are exploiting fear surrounding the coronavirus pandemic to attempt access personal information.
4. 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.

5. Atmos Energy also continues to take the steps set forth in its March 31, 2020 Report, including (i) treating its employees and contractors as essential critical infrastructure workers needed to maintain critical natural gas services, and (ii) supporting the call to limit the spread of COVID-19 while ensuring the safety of the communities, its customers, and employees.

6. As of April 6, 2020, Atmos Energy has implemented a “soft close” procedure for transferring service from one customer to another in the same location without sending an Atmos Energy employee to the location, thereby minimizing contact between customers and employees. As stated in the Company’s March 31, 2020, report, Atmos Energy originally sought permission for a temporary tariff amendment permitting this practice. After discussions with the Utilities Division Director, however, the Company has since filed a letter in Docket No 20-00047 (a copy of which is attached as **Exhibit 3**) describing the procedure and explaining that the Company has implemented it effective April 6, 2020.

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*



## Atmos Energy Working In Your Community

**DALLAS** – April 6, 2020 – With your continued safety in mind, you will now see us wearing face coverings in your communities. In light of new data about the spread of COVID-19, along with widespread evidence of coronavirus illness in communities around the country, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended on Friday that all citizens wear a cloth face covering over their nose and mouth as an additional public health measure when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

In support of the CDC recommendations, our employees will begin wearing cloth face coverings when working outside or around others unless doing so creates a safety risk or existing safety protocols require different personal protective equipment (PPE). Atmos Energy employees may be working in and around your neighborhood, but also for your protection, we will work with plumbers or other qualified persons so we can limit in-home customer interaction.

The CDC recommends cloth face coverings instead of medical-grade facemasks, because N95 respirator masks are in short supply and should be reserved for healthcare professionals and medical first responders.

“Our commitment to safety and reliability remains unchanged, so our team will wear face coverings while also maintaining a physical distance of at least six feet from other people, along with frequent hand washing and other CDC-recommended preventive actions,” said John McDill, Atmos Energy vice president of pipeline safety. “Atmos Energy employees and contractors are essential critical infrastructure workers, and we will continue to maintain vital natural gas services while protecting the safety of others as our nation responds to the coronavirus

EXHIBIT 1

pandemic.”

Customers with any questions are encouraged to please call Atmos Energy directly at 888.286.6700 or visit <https://www.atmosenergy.com/safety/covid-19> (<https://www.atmosenergy.com/safety/covid-19>)

## 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> (<http://www.atmosenergy.com/>), Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/atmosenergy>), Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com/atmosenergy>), Instagram (<http://www.instagram.com/atmosenergy>) and YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/atmosenergyvideos>).

---

## Our COVID-19 Response

- [Atmos Energy Working in Your Community \(/node/1192\)](/node/1192)
- [Atmos Energy Recommends Measures to Avoid Increased Scam Activity \(/node/1191\)](/node/1191)
- [Atmos Energy Donates \\$1.5 Million to Feed Students, Families Amid COVID-19 Pandemic \(/newsroom/atmos-energy-donates-15-million-feed-students-families-amid-covid-19-pandemic\)](/newsroom/atmos-energy-donates-15-million-feed-students-families-amid-covid-19-pandemic)
- [Atmos Energy Urges Homeowners and Contractors to Dig Safely \(/node/1183\)](/node/1183)
- [Atmos Energy Employees Doing Our Part \(/node/1181\)](/node/1181)
- [Atmos Energy Continues to Do Our Part \(/node/1185\)](/node/1185)
- [Atmos Energy Employees Assist Customers During Coronavirus Pandemic \(/node/1179\)](/node/1179)



( / )



Beware of bogus emails.  
Always verify your  
account balance in our  
Account Center.



Ask for an identification  
badge, which displays  
the employee's name,  
photograph &  
Atmos Energy logo.



If you have concerns  
about the legitimacy of a  
call, hang up  
right away.

## Atmos Energy Recommends Measures To Avoid Increased Scam Activity

Safety | April 1, 2020

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

DALLAS (April 1, 2020) According to the Federal Trade Commission, scammers are exploiting fear surrounding the coronavirus pandemic to access bank account information, PIN codes or Social Security numbers through illegal robocalls and other nefarious tactics. In light of this increased activity, Atmos Energy reminds customers to be especially aware of scammers who are taking advantage of the ongoing public health emergency to steal money and personal information while posing as public utility representatives.

"During these unprecedented times, our focus remains the same: the safety of the public, our employees and our system is our highest priority, and this includes helping protect our customers from the harmful impact of a utility impostor scam," says Jeff Martinez, Atmos Energy vice president of customer service. "Unfortunately, scammers continuously adapt and occasionally fool even the most sophisticated customers. Customers should always be aware of telephone, mail, email, door-to-door and other in-person scams that involve criminals posing as Atmos Energy representatives and demanding immediate payment or personal information."

Scammers typically use three strategies – in-person, online or phone – to target utility customers' money, property and personal information. Atmos Energy recommends customers take the following steps to protect themselves from fraud:

### EXHIBIT 2

## Employee Impostors

- Always ask for an employee's identification badge, which displays their name, photograph and the Atmos Energy logo.
- If you suspect an impostor, immediately call the Atmos Energy customer service number at 888.286.6700 to verify the employee's identity and contact local authorities.
- Beware of impostors demanding payment at your door. Atmos Energy employees will never collect cash payments in person.

## Email Scams

- Beware of bogus emails requesting immediate payment of your bill, particularly with prepaid debit cards.
- Verify that your account number is listed accurately.
- Do not click on any links in the suspicious email, as many contain viruses.
- Verify your account balance through the online Account Center at <https://www.atmosenergy.com/accountcenter> (<https://www.atmosenergy.com/accountcenter>)

## Telephone Scams

- Telephone scams are also on the rise, where criminals pose as utility employees and demand immediate payment of past due balances.
- If you ever have concerns about the legitimacy of a call, please hang up and call the Atmos Energy customer service number at 888.286.6700.

For more information, please visit our website with steps to protect your family from fraud:

<https://www.atmosenergy.com/customer-service/beware-utility-scams>

(<https://www.atmosenergy.com/customer-service/beware-utility-scams>)

## 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> (<http://www.atmosenergy.com/>), Facebook

EXHIBIT 2

(<http://www.facebook.com/atmosenergy>), Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com/atmosenergy>), Instagram (<http://www.instagram.com/atmosenergy>) and YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/atmosenergyvideos>).

###

---

## Beware of Utility Scams

(<https://www.atmosenergy.com/customer-service/beware-utility-scams>)

Nationwide utility scams are on the rise, and we recommend customers take the following steps to protect themselves from fraud. If you suspect you are a victim of a scam, then please contact our

Customer Contact Center at **888-286-6700**

(tel:8882866700) Monday - Friday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. (central).

Learn more about scam safety. > (<https://www.atmosenergy.com/customer-service/beware-utility-scams>)

## Company

[About Atmos Energy \(/company/about-atmos-energy\)](/company/about-atmos-energy)

[Careers \(/careers/working-atmos-energy\)](/careers/working-atmos-energy)

[Filings, Rates and Tariffs \(/company/utility-operations\)](/company/utility-operations)

[Investors \(/company/stock-information\)](/company/stock-information)

[Newsroom \(/newsroom/newsroom\)](/newsroom/newsroom)

[Safety \(/pipeline-projects/pipeline-safety\)](/pipeline-projects/pipeline-safety)

EXHIBIT 2

**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)

April 6, 2020

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

Re: *Emergency Petition to Suspend Service Disconnections Filed by the Consumer Advocate Unit of the Financial Division of the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General, Docket No. 20-00047*

Dear Mr. Foster

As part of its efforts to protect its customers and employees for the duration of the current COVID-19 public health emergency, Atmos Energy Corporation (“Atmos Energy” or “Company”) plans to immediately 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, Louisiana, and Texas, and for which Atmos Energy already has a service procedure manual. A copy of that manual, which Atmos Energy would follow in Tennessee, is attached as **Exhibit 1**. Implementing this option in Tennessee will help Atmos Energy further limit the interactions between its customers and employees, thereby helping to minimize the spread of novel coronavirus COVID-19.

Atmos Energy is implementing this soft close option effective immediately through the duration of this public health emergency.

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 and Governor Lee’s Orders, 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', written on a light gray rectangular background.

A. Scott Ross

ASR:prd

cc: Erik Lybeck  
Mark Martin  
Kevin Frank

### ***Soft Close Procedure***

The Soft Close Procedure describes a method which allows the transfer of active gas service from one party to another at the same location over a period of time with no actual disconnection or interruption of service.

This standard is written to apply to residential accounts but may be used in other circumstances approved by state specific regulations.

Once a technician receives a MVTMORD order, the technician will:

Verify the address and meter number from the service order.

1. Verify if the inlet meter valve is positioned off or on
2. Observe meter for abnormal consumption on the meter which could indicate a problem. Hard close the meter set if necessary.
3. Complete the field service order appropriately

If the technician verifies gas service to be ON, then:

- a. Leave the gas meter on
- b. Record meter reading on the field service order
- c. The technician will leave the appropriate door tag to notify the new customer that the gas is currently on.

If the technician verifies gas service to be OFF, then:

- a. Secure the Meter (see the Turn Off Procedure)
  - b. Complete service order and (if applicable) include meter reading in service order notes.
4. Paint for protection from atmospheric corrosion and appearance as necessary.