

bottom side handhold be located not more than (21) inches from top tread of sill step—.

Thrall Car built 629 covered hopper cars beginning in 1995 which have the bottom side handhold located (21–3/8) inches from the top tread of sill step.

Car series:

CCBX 58595 thru 59000 = 406 cars.

FMLX 62001 " 62040 = 40 cars.

OCPX 70901 " 70944 = 44 cars.

UTCX 49148 " 49287 = 139 cars.

49 CFR 231.27(e)(3) requires in part that the bottom side handholds be located not more than (21) inches from top tread of sill step—.

Thrall Car state that this discrepancy originated with the introduction of a new car in June of 1995 and continued until discovery. Design corrections have been made with all subsequent covered hopper cars.

Thrall Car request to continue the use of these subject cars as they do not believe this condition presents a safety concern due to the small variance from the standard.

Interested parties are invited to participate in these proceedings by submitting written views, data, or comments. FRA does not anticipate scheduling a public hearing in connection with these proceedings since the facts do not appear to warrant a hearing. If any interested party desires an opportunity for oral comment, they should notify FRA, in writing, before the end of the comment period and specify the basis for their request.

All communications concerning these proceedings should identify the appropriate docket number (e.g., Waiver Petition Docket Number—SA-96-2 and must be submitted in triplicate to the Docket Clerk, Chief Counsel, Federal Railroad Administration, Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590.

Communications received before August 19, 1996, will be considered by FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that date will be considered as far as practicable. All written communications concerning these proceedings are available for examination during regular business hours (9 a.m.–5 p.m.) in Room 8201, Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590.

Issued in Washington, DC, on July 1, 1996.

Phil Olekszyk,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Compliance and Program Implementation.

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Notice of Application for Approval of Discontinuance or Modification of a Railroad Signal System or Relief From the Requirements of 49 CFR Part 236

Pursuant to 49 CFR Part 235 and 49 U.S.C. App. 26, the following railroads have petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) seeking approval for the discontinuance or modification of the signal system or relief from the requirements of 49 CFR Part 236 as detailed below.

Block Signal Application (BS-AP)—No. 3402

Applicant: Burlington Northern Railroad Company

Mr. William G. Peterson,
Director Signal Engineering,
1900 Continental Plaza,
777 Main Street,
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-5384.

The Burlington Northern Railroad Company seeks approval of the proposed discontinuance and removal of the traffic control system (TCS), associated with the installation of an automatic block signal (ABS) system with track warrant control, on the single main track between Appleton, Minnesota, milepost 578 and Hettinger, South Dakota, milepost 925.9, on the Willmar and Yellowstone Divisions, Appleton, Mobridge, and Hettinger Subdivision, a distance of approximately 348 miles. The proposed changes include: conversion of "Big Stone Power Plant" and "West Aberdeen" Control Points to remote-controlled interlockings, replacement of all power-operated and spring switches with circuit controller monitored hand-operated switches, removal of all switch electric locks, and modification of signal placement and spacing.

The reasons given for the proposed changes are that reduced traffic patterns do not justify the high cost to maintain an aging TCS, and this application will retain the safety of train operations provided by an ABS system while providing economic relief from having to maintain the additional plant associated with TCS.

BS-AP-No. 3403

Applicant: Burlington Northern Railroad Company

Mr. William G. Peterson,
Director Signal Engineering,
1900 Continental Plaza,
777 Main Street,
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-5384.

The Burlington Northern Railroad Company seeks approval of the proposed reduction to the limits of the automatic block signal system, on the single main track, between "P.A.

Tower", milepost 109.9 and Grand Forks, milepost 107.6, North Dakota, Fargo Division, Grand Forks Subdivision; consisting of the discontinuance and removal of automatic block signals 107.9, 107.8, 108.3, 108.4, and 109.2, and conversion of automatic block signal 109.3 to a distant approach signal.

The reasons given for the proposed changes are the reduction in train movements over the trackage and to provide a more efficient operation.

Rules Standards & Instructions Application (RS&I-AP)—No. 1101

Applicant: Florida East Coast Railway Company

Mr. Charles R. Lynch,
Vice President-Maintenance,
One Malaga Street,
P.O. Box 1048,
St. Augustine, Florida 32085-1048.

The Florida East Coast Railway Company (FEC) seeks temporary relief from the requirements of 49 CFR, Part 236, Section 236.566 of the Rules, Standard and Instructions, for a 30 day period, to the extent that FEC be permitted to operate non-operational automatic train control (ATC) equipped locomotives, over FEC's entire ATC territory by way-side signal indications of the traffic control system, to accommodate modifications to both the onboard and roadway ATC equipment.

Applicant's justification for relief: To implement changes to the ATC system code rates in order to enhance and improve the reliability of the system, associated with the designed elimination of cab signal flips.

Any interested party desiring to protest the granting of an application shall set forth specifically the grounds upon which the protest is made, and contain a concise statement of the interest of the protestant in the proceeding. The original and two copies of the protest shall be filed with the Associate Administrator for Safety, FRA, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590 within 45 calendar days of the date of issuance of this notice. Additionally, one copy of the protest shall be furnished to the applicant at the address listed above.

FRA expects to be able to determine these matters without oral hearing. However, if a specific request for an oral hearing is accompanied by a showing that the party is unable to adequately present his or her position by written statements, an application may be set for public hearing.

Issued in Washington, DC, on July 1, 1996.
Phil Olekszyk,
*Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety
Compliance and Program Implementation.*
[FR Doc. 96-17297 Filed 7-5-96; 8:45 am]
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Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. P-96-8W; Notice 1]

CNG Transmission Company; Petition for Waiver

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs
Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of petition for waiver.

SUMMARY: CNG Transmission Company (CNGT) has petitioned the Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) for a waiver from compliance with provisions of 49 CFR 192.611(a) requiring confirmation of the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) by hydrostatic testing. Instead, CNGT requests they be permitted to requalify the MAOP by an alternative approach involving a combination of hydrostatic testing and inspection by an instrumented internal inspection device commonly known as a "smart pig". The need to confirm the MAOP results from a recent increase in the population density along certain segments of a 26-inch diameter gas transmission line in Ohio.

DATES: Written comments submitted in duplicate must be received on or before August 7, 1996. Interested persons should submit as part of their written comments all the material that is considered relevant to any statement of fact or argument made.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be mailed or hand delivered to the Dockets Unit [DHM-20], Room 8421, Research and Special Programs Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh St., SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. Comments should specify the Docket No. stated in the heading of this document; the original and two copies should be submitted. Dockets may be reviewed and copied between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Albert C. Garnett, (202) 366-2036,
Office of Pipeline Safety, regarding the
subject matter of this notice or the
Dockets Unit, (202) 366-5046, for copies
of this notice or other materials in the
docket.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

By correspondence dated April 23, 1996, CNGT requested a waiver from compliance with the MAOP confirmation or revision provisions of 49 CFR 192.611(a) for pipeline segments where the hoop stress corresponding to the established MAOP is not commensurate with the present class location. The requested waiver applies to ten segments (totaling 10.91 miles) and located on CNGT's transmission line TL-400.

Transmission line TL-400 begins at the Lebanon Compressor Station in Warren County, Ohio, and transports gas eastward to the Gilmore Compressor station in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, a distance of 163.19 miles. The 26-inch diameter transmission line was designed and tested to operate at an MAOP of 850 psig.

The ten line segments that are the subject of this waiver request operate at a hoop stress of greater than 40% of the specified minimum yield strength (SMYS) and are located in areas where a recent increase in population indicated a change in their class location. Accordingly, CNGT complied with the provisions of § 192.609 and completed a study of the subject segments to determine: (a) their present class location; (b) a comparison of their original design, construction, and testing procedures with the provisions required for their present class location; (c) their physical condition ascertained from available records; (d) their operating and maintenance history; (e) their maximum actual operating pressure and corresponding operating hoop stress; and (f) the extent of the area affected by the population increase and other factors which may limit further expansion of the more densely populated area.

CNGT determined from the study required by § 192.609 (a) and (f) that the recent expansion of the population density had changed the subject segments from Class 1 locations to Class 2 locations. CNGT also determined from the study required by § 192.609 (b)-(e) that the ten segments were in good physical condition. Consequently, in accordance with the provisions of § 192.611 (a) and (c), CNGT must confirm or revise the originally established MAOP (850 psig) within the 18-month period ending October 19, 1996.

The hydrostatic test which established the MAOP at 850 psig was performed at a pressure of 953 psig, although a test pressure of 935 psig would have been sufficient under the

provisions of § 192.619(a)(2)(ii). After October 19, 1996, these segments may not be operated at an MAOP above 762 psig (a reduction of 88 psig) due to their reclassification as Class 2 locations. However, CNGT seeks to maintain the MAOP at 850 psig in order to meet their gas delivery commitments. Consequently, requalification by hydrostatic testing to a minimum pressure of 1,063 psig would be in accordance with § 192.611(a)(3).

TL-400 is a single long transmission line that transports gas from third parties to local distribution companies and to underground storage facilities. CNGT states that it would be unreasonable to reduce the MAOP and thereby lose gas throughput that would prevent them from meeting their contractual obligations. CNGT also asserts that hydrostatically testing all ten segments would require the line to be taken out of service for a minimum of 16 days. Additionally, CNGT asserts that the acquisition and disposal of the water used in the hydrostatic testing would be burdensome.

Alternative Approach

Instead of hydrostatically testing all ten segments, CNGT requested a waiver permitting an alternative approach which they believe would achieve both an equivalent level of safety in the subject segments and a complete evaluation of the 163.19 mile transmission line. Additionally, CNGT expects the proposed approach to be considerably less costly and to reduce the number of days that the transmission line would be out of service.

CNGT's proposal consists of two alternatives supplemented by a work plan (dated May 14, 1996). Although, not set out as such in the petition, the alternatives are identified for the purposes of this document as *Alternative A* and *Alternative B*:

Alternative A consists of the following:

(A1) Conducting a close interval pipe-to-soil corrosion survey (CIS) of the 163.19 mile line;

(A2) Hydrostatic testing four segments (totaling 4.96 miles). If no leak occurs, or only a *specified minor leak*¹ occurs and is remediated, the hydrostatic testing is completed;

(A3) Inspecting the 163.19 mile line with a geometry pig followed by a high resolution "smart pig." Any defects impacting the MAOP are promptly

¹ *Specified minor leak*—A leak from valve packings, gaskets, threaded fittings, or hydrostatic test equipment; and from localized corrosion pitting on the 26-in line pipe.